

Date: _____ These suggestions are helpful for _____

Audiologist: _____

Audiologist Contact Information: _____

It may be difficult to notice that a child has mild hearing loss. This is because under ideal listening conditions, the child is able to hear the majority of the spoken signal. However, there are certain listening situations which can be difficult:

- **Hearing in the presence of background noise:** Children with high frequency hearing loss may have more difficulty understanding speech in noise than their normal-hearing peers. The difficulty may be exacerbated if the speaker is located far away from the child.
- **Hearing certain word distinctions:** Children with high frequency hearing loss may have more difficulty hearing the consonant sounds, which include sounds that denote tense, plurality, possessives, etc. This becomes much more difficult when background noise is present. This can be particularly challenging for children, as they are still learning language and cannot fill in those missing pieces of speech as well as an adult can.
- **Listening at the end of the day:** Children with high frequency hearing loss typically experience increased fatigue due to the increased listening effort needed to perform at the same level in listening tasks as their normal-hearing peers. You may notice that you child is especially tired at the end of the day. Understand that your child may need time to rest after school before beginning school assignments or participating in other activities.

IMPACT OF MILD HEARING LOSS

Studies of children with mild hearing loss have indicated that speech and language skills often develop normally. However, studies have shown that when no special educational services are received, these children perform poorer academically than their normal-hearing peers. In fact, they may be more likely to repeat a grade than their peers. Studies have also found that these children are more likely to feel more stressed over school and exhibit poorer self-esteem than their normal-hearing peers. It is vital for children with mild hearing loss to have a consistent support system in place at school as well as at home.

HELPING THE CHILD WITH MILD HEARING LOSS AT HOME

The suggestions below can help your child everyday listening situations, in conjunction with recommendations from the Audiologist.

- Gain the child's attention before giving important instructions.
- Allow the child to face you when speaking whenever possible.
- When you call your child from different room, let him/her know where you are ("Maggie, come here, I'm in the kitchen!"). Do not attempt to have a conversation from a different room.
- Reduce unnecessary background noise during conversation (like the TV or radio).
- Your child's ears should be protected from damage from loud noise. Music through earphones should be monitored for volume and length of time used per day. Earplugs should be worn when attending loud concerts, using power tools, mowing the lawn, etc.
- Encourage your child to ask for repetition as needed.
- Alert your child's school and teacher about the hearing loss so proper accommodations can be made.

HEARING RE-EVALUATIONS

Your child's audiologist will help you determine how often the hearing should be rechecked. You may schedule a hearing evaluation any time, if you have concerns that the hearing may have changed. This will be especially important if your child has frequent ear infections.

TECHNOLOGY OPTIONS FOR MILD HEARING LOSS

No one option is right for all children with mild hearing loss. Audiologic management and interventions will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Your child's audiologist will work with you to determine the best technology plan for your child.

Conventional Amplification: For mild degrees of hearing loss, a hearing aid may increase access to sounds. Hearing aids may be recommended if your child is experiencing difficulty in daily environments such as school and at home.

Classroom/Personal FM System: A classroom or personal FM system may benefit your child in a classroom setting. Using this system, the teacher wears a microphone which transmits his/her voice to receivers on the child's ears or to speakers in the classroom. This helps improve the child's ability to hear the teacher's voice clearly and consistently. The audiologist will be the one to make this recommendation and send a letter to your child's school.

Please do not hesitate to call your child's audiologist with any questions!