



Urbana District #116 – Administrative Agent

CASE Audiology
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TO: THE TEACHER OF

FROM:

DATE:

The above named student in your class has a **unilateral hearing loss in the right ear**. This means s/he has normal hearing in the left ear and has significant hearing loss in the right ear. Research indicates that children with unilateral hearing loss often experience difficulties in the areas of vocabulary development, reading, language arts, spelling, and listening skills. The auditory skills that will be especially difficult are localization and listening in noise. This type of hearing loss can lead to serious academic difficulties. In fact, children with unilateral hearing loss are ten times more likely to repeat a grade than the normal population.

The effects of a unilateral hearing loss can be deceptive. These children generally hear quite well when they are near you and the room is quiet. They may have significant difficulty, however, comprehending speech under less favorable conditions. They are often mistakenly identified as inattentive or unmotivated.

Your student may or may not benefit from personal amplification (e.g., hearing aid, bone anchored hearing aid, cochlear implant, assistive technology), depending on such factors as degree of hearing loss and academic achievement. If personal amplification has been recommended, please encourage your student to wear it consistently. Remember (a) hearing aids make sounds LOUDER but not necessarily c-l-e-a-r-e-r and (b) the use of personal amplification does not mean the student now has normal hearing.

There are steps you, the classroom teacher, can take to help this student:

1. Be aware that this student does have a hearing problem and may become easily fatigued. Your continued awareness of the hearing loss may be the most beneficial help that can be provided.
2. Hearing and understanding speech when there is background noise is one of the most difficult listening situations for someone with hearing loss. Typical classroom noises that are problematic include: fans & blowers, playground & hall noise, media equipment, shuffling papers, and scraping chairs. Unfortunately, these sources of noise are often beyond your control, but an awareness of how much difficulty they can cause will be beneficial for your student.
3. Having this student strategically seated in the classroom will be very beneficial. S/he should be:
 - a. near the area of the classroom from which you usually address the class.
 - b. away from noise sources. This should help her/him concentrate on your voice.
 - c. seated favoring face-to-face communication or with the left ear (good ear) toward you.
 - d. seated so that s/he is easily able to turn and face other students during class discussion.
4. Be aware that this student will probably have difficulty localizing sound. This means that s/he may not be able to tell where a sound is coming from, like the teacher's voice or an environmental sound. Localization is important for street safety and care should be taken when the student is around traffic.
5. Speak naturally to her/him, as you would speak to anyone else. If what you say is not understood, rephrase it, rather than repeating. Obtain feedback regularly from your student to check on her/his level of understanding.

If you notice the student's grades slowly deteriorating or if there is a sudden change in her/his performance and participation in class, please contact CASE Audiology. We can help you determine to what extent the hearing loss is a factor, and whether or not interventions or accommodations are indicated. We are also available to help you with units you may be presenting to your class related to communication, the ear, hearing, hearing differences, hearing conservation, personal amplification, assistive technology, Deaf Culture, sign language and other D/HH role models.