

2014

Service Coordination Practice Guide for Children Aged 0 to 3

Hearing Loss

This document provides balanced but condensed information on topics such as hearing loss, communication options, resources, service coordinator responsibilities, and family support, to assist a service coordinator in helping a family whose child with hearing loss is enrolled in Early On®.



Relationship of Degree of Hearing Loss to Child Development ¹⁴

UNILATERAL Hearing Loss	
Impact on Hearing	Potential Impact on Speech & Language Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty hearing or understanding speech in noisy or reverberant environments, especially when the better ear is toward the noise. • Difficulty in hearing or understanding speech if it is soft or distant. • Difficulty determining where sounds are coming from (localization) and who is the speaker in family or group situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language development may be delayed. • Child may not understand questions or requests. • Child may appear to not be paying attention. • Child may have related delays in social-emotional growth, cognition, adaptive and physical development, and early literacy.
BILATERAL Hearing Loss: 16-25 dB HL	
Impact on Hearing	Potential Impact on Speech & Language Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty hearing faint or soft speech. • Child likely to exhibit signs of hearing difficulty in noisy environments or with increased distance from speaker. • Comparable to listening with fingers in ears. • Child may miss words, word endings, and certain consonants. • Unaided, child may miss about 10% of speech. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and language development may be slightly delayed. • Child likely to miss subtle conversation cues that could cause the child to appear inattentive or inappropriate in his response to others. • Child will likely respond to speakers with “huh?” or confused look, especially in the presence of background noise or with increased distance. • Child will have related developmental impact in social/emotional growth, cognition, early literacy.
BILATERAL Hearing Loss: 26-40 dB HL	
Impact on Hearing	Potential Impact on Speech & Language Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty hearing soft or distant speech. • Cannot hear a whispered conversation in a quiet environment a few inches from the ear. • Unaided, child may miss up to 30% of speech, particularly in noisy environments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and language development likely to be delayed. • Child will develop some speech communication with low to medium intelligibility as heard by unfamiliar and familiar listeners. • Speech and language development likely to be marked by the absence of unstressed speech sound (i.e., articles and other unstressed words, tense markers, unvoiced consonants). • Child will have related developmental impact in social/emotional growth, cognition, early literacy.

Note: Numerical values, measured in decibels (dB HL), are based on the average of the hearing loss at three frequencies (500 Hz, 1000 Hz, and 2000 Hz) in the better ear without amplification. Access to hearing technologies and/or visual language may lessen potential impact, but without early intervention, the probability of delay remains.

¹⁴ IDEA Infant & Toddler Coordinators Association, National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management. (2011). *Part C Eligibility Considerations for Infants and Toddlers Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing*.

http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/pdf/Part_C_Eligibility_Considerations_for_Children_with_Hearing_Loss.pdf

