



Isle of Man
Government
Reillys Ellen Vannin

Department of Health and Social Care

Rheynn Slaynt as Kiarail y Theay



Children's Hearing Aid Service

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Tel: 642634
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Introduction

There are different reasons why your child may require a hearing aid.

Some children have a permanent hearing loss and need one to enable them to hear and understand speech and everyday sounds.

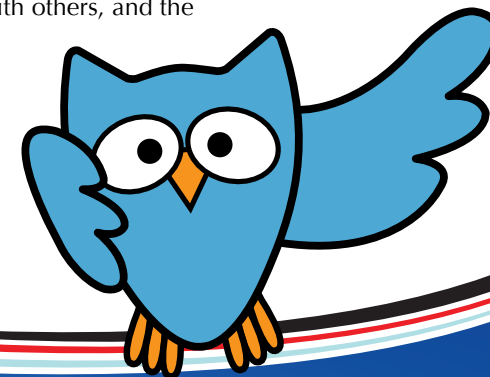
Others may use a hearing aid for a short time while their hearing is reduced because of middle ear problems, such as “glue ear”.

Some children may have a very mild hearing loss or a loss in one ear which does not normally require any assistance, but have difficulties from time to time because of occasional middle ear problems, and wear a hearing aid until this resolves.

The hearing aid fitting process is designed to ensure that the hearing aids are fitted in a way that maximises your child’s ability to hear and understand speech comfortably in all of the different listening conditions they will experience.

By doing this, we can provide the most appropriate amplification to support your child in their communication with others, and the development of their speech and language skills.

The information contained in this booklet should ensure your child gets the maximum possible benefit from their hearing aids.



General information about the children's hearing aid service

Introduction

Your child has been provided with 'state of the art' digital signal processing hearing aids by the Children's Hearing Clinic.

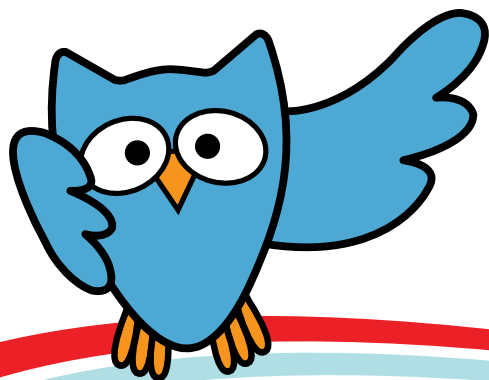
These aids are technically provided to a user 'on loan'. However, we will not ask for them back unless they are of no further use to you.

Hearing aids are expensive and, while they are provided to you at no charge, we ask you to please take good care of them. At the present time the maintenance, repair and replacement of hearing aids is carried out at no cost to a user.

However, if hearing aids are persistently lost or damaged as a result of neglect, we may ask you to contribute to the replacement costs.

Appointments

Children usually require frequent visits to the Children's Clinic for earmould impressions, hearing tests and fine tuning or updating of their hearing aids. We will often send you an appointment for these to be done. If the appointment is not suitable, we ask that you advise us as soon as possible so that we can rearrange a more convenient time, and use the original appointment to see someone else.



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The different types of hearing loss

Conductive Hearing Loss - Conductive Hearing Loss occurs when sound is not conducted efficiently through the outer ear canal to the eardrum and the tiny bones (ossicles) of the middle ear. Conductive hearing loss usually involves a reduction in sound level or the ability to hear faint sounds. This type of hearing loss can often be corrected medically or surgically.

Sensorineural Hearing Loss - Sensorineural hearing loss (SNHL) occurs when there is damage to the inner ear (cochlea), or to the nerve pathways from the inner ear to the brain. Most of the time, SNHL cannot be medically or surgically corrected. This is the most common type of permanent hearing loss.

Mixed Hearing Loss - Sometimes a conductive hearing loss occurs in combination with a sensorineural hearing loss (SNHL). In other words, there may be damage in the outer or middle ear and in the inner ear (cochlea) or auditory nerve. When this occurs, the hearing loss is referred to as a mixed hearing loss.

Levels of hearing loss

Degree of hearing loss	Hearing loss range (dB HL)
Normal	-10 to 15
Slight	16 to 25
Mild	26 to 40
Moderate	41 to 55
Moderately Severe	56 - 70
Severe	71 to 90
Profound	91+

Source: Clark, J. G. (1981). Uses and abuses of hearing loss classification. *Asha*, 23, 493-500.

How to care for your hearing aids

The more you know about how to care for and maintain your child's hearing aid, the more benefit they will gain.

You will probably need to take care of the instruments at first and, as your child gets older, they can learn some of the tasks.

It can be difficult for some children to tell if their hearing aids are not working correctly, so we recommend you follow this simple daily routine:

- Check there is a good working battery in the instrument
- Check that the earmould and tubing is clean and unclogged
- Listen to the hearing aids using a stetoclip (provided with your hearing aid care kit)
- Keep hearing aids dry and away from excessive heat
- When not being worn, keep hearing aids in their protective cases
- If the hearing aid whistles, check the moulds are a good fit.



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Batteries

A personal audiology record (green book) book should have been provided along with a supply of batteries to power the hearing aid(s). Please bring your green book with you when you attend clinic appointments. Batteries are provided free of charge and do not need to be returned - please dispose of them at home.

New batteries can be obtained by post or by collection at the clinic. Please ring the clinic to arrange this.

Earmoulds

Earmoulds are required on a regular basis as your child grows. Please phone the clinic on the number given on the back page when new earmoulds are required and these will be arranged as soon as possible. Earmoulds can be posted directly to your home to avoid the need to attend clinic again to collect them.



Sound advice for communicating with children

- 1 Face your child and make eye contact when you are playing and/or talking together. Help them to make it a habit to watch the speaker
- 2 Don't cover your mouth when talking
- 3 Speak naturally and don't exaggerate facial expressions
- 4 Do not talk while eating or chewing
- 5 Always position yourself with good light on your face. Speak clearly and slowly at a distance of 3 - 4 ft
- 6 Lip movements, gestures and facial expressions all give clues. If your child can see you clearly then they have the best chance of hearing and understanding you
- 7 Always try to reduce background noise (turn down/off TV, etc)
- 8 Try re-phrasing sentences. Don't raise your voice as much as this introduces distortion
- 9 Teach your child not to interrupt the speaker. They may not hear information at the beginning but may catch the end of the sentence
- 10 Encourage your child to summarise what they have heard
- 11 For older children captioning can help when watching TV
- 12 Encourage your child to keep his/her sense of humour
- 13 Lastly, remember your child may tire easily. Listening is hard work!

Checklist

Please ensure you regularly do the following to your child's hearing aids:

- Put the hearing instruments on your child**
- Turn them on and off**
- Check and change the batteries**
- Adjust the volume control (if applicable)**
- Change the programmes (if applicable)**
- Check and change the tubing**

Initially it may seem very daunting needing to wear hearing aids. It is quite normal to feel this way, but with practice and perseverance it will become much easier.

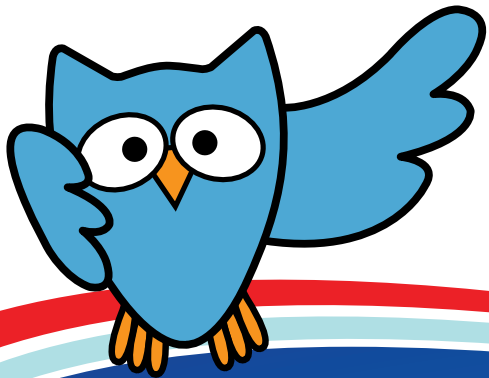
Tips:

- For small babies it may be best to insert aids just before they wake up from their nap
- For older children try and engage in an activity, reading books, playing with toys, so as to distract from the sensation of the mould in the ear
- Extend usage as much as the child will allow.

Listening activities

- 1) Go on a listening walk around the house, garden or shops. Keep quiet and concentrate on the sounds you can hear
- 2) While your child's back is turned, make some sounds and see if they can work out what you are doing, eg opening a can of fizzy juice, shaking a cereal box, putting coins in a piggy bank
- 3) Make music, with real instruments or improvise with saucepan lids and wooden spoons
- 4) Listen to different kinds of music and discuss the instruments and what type of music you prefer
- 5) Help your child to feel vibrations from sound. For example, lay their head on a table and let them feel the sound when you tap on it.

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