

Module 3: Hearing Aids: The Basics

Section: Troubleshooting



Activity 3.4: Providing Strategies for Getting a Child to Keep on a Hearing Aid

- A. Encourage families to make putting on the hearing aids a part of the child's daily routine. Have the hearing aids become a part of getting dressed in the morning can help the child view the hearing aids as a regular part of starting the day, like putting on his or her shoes. By having the child routinely put on his or her hearing aids early in the day, the child starts the day with access to sound; it is not something that is added later.
- B. Sometimes a child may initially wear the hearing aids willingly without bothering with them or protesting their use. Tell parents not to be surprised, however, if the child then goes through a period in their development when they try to take off the aids or object when you put them on. Explain that this typically occurs when children mature developmentally to a point where they can reach, touch, and remove the hearing aids and are becoming more curious and want to explore them. Or perhaps they are now simply independent little people who want to decide when and what they do. Whatever the reason, this is a point in time when the family needs to be consistent in maintaining hearing aid use (although it may be a challenge). If the family can move the child beyond this point, it makes it easier to expand time with using the hearing aids as opposed to going backward to not using them because the child is taking them off. Look to identifying times to use the hearing aids when the child is busy with eating or playing and less interested in focusing on the hearing aids.
- C. Include activities that use books and toys that show babies and toddlers who wear hearing aids:
- Bring board books to home visits with images of small children with and without hearing aids on. Point out the hearing aids in the book to the parent and the child. Some books to include are *Oliver Gets Hearing Aids* and *Maxi's Super Ears*.
 - Bring a baby doll or stuffed animal with hearing aids to home visits. Discuss possible children in their child's community who may wear hearing aids.

- Help family members identify possible resources available that sell books or toys which include children wearing hearing aids.
- D. Get creative and crafty with families who might enjoy making their own books or modifying dolls and stuffed animals. Encourage families to share these toys and books with other family members and other members of their community to help them learn about hearing aids.
- E. If a child suddenly objects to wearing his or her hearing aids, it is important to check to make sure that:
- the hearing aids are working correctly and fitting comfortably (go through the steps reviewed in the care and maintenance section of this module),
 - the child does not have an ear infection or wax that is causing discomfort with the hearing aids, and/or
 - the child does not have a possible change in hearing levels (contact the child's audiologist if this is considered).
- F. See [Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss](#). This website provides information on many ideas to encourage hearing aid use.
- G. As children get older, they may express definite ideas of what they like to wear. This may extend to their hearing aids. Hearing aid companies offer a variety of styles for earmolds (e.g., varied colors, patterns, even glitter). Additionally, there are varied stickers and colored covers for cases. Sometimes picking out a special color or stickers will make the hearing aids more exciting and fun to wear.
- H. Children with identified disabilities may need extra support when using hearing aids for the first time. Sometimes it is helpful to work up to wearing the hearing aids throughout the day (increasing time each day), particularly if the child is sensitive to changes to his or her sensory environment.

Additional Resource:

- [*How Can I Help My Baby Adjust to Wearing Hearing Aids - Practical Tips*](#)

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