

Addressing Students' Needs in Mainstream Educational Placements*

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- Children with a cochlear implant in a mainstream placement require support services and accommodations:
 - a. To access the curriculum
 - b. To develop peer relationships
 - c. To learn spoken language through listening
 - d. To remediate language deficits caused by a profound hearing loss for the period of time prior to implantation
 - e. To afford ongoing monitoring of the cochlear implant for regular re-programming and to assure appropriate functioning of the device
 - f. To conduct regularly scheduled professional assessment of skills including psychological, educational and speech-language evaluations.
 - g. To provide individual instruction to the student for difficult to acquire academics
 - h. To prevent significant regression in skills, consideration must be given to providing related services through the summer months

- Regular education teachers will require support:
 - a. Training must be provided to the teacher regarding hearing loss, equipment and teaching strategies
 - b. Ongoing consultation should be available as a resource to the classroom teacher
 - c. The assistance of a trained para-professional or teacher of the deaf should be provided to pre-teach and review, to assure understanding and to maintain effective communication among all team members, especially the parents.

- The speech-language pathologist must:
 - a. Provide an individualized speech, language and auditory therapy program with specific goals
 - b. Should have experience and expertise in the auditory-based spoken language development of children who use a cochlear implant
 - c. Should be in regular contact with the cochlear implant center audiologist to report on progress, particular problems in attaining goals and questions or difficulties with equipment

- Considerations for classroom acoustics must include:
 - a. The voice of the teacher should be at least 15 decibels more intense than background noise when measured at the child's seat
 - b. The classroom chosen should be located far from noise sources in the environment
 - c. Doors to the classroom from the hallway should be closed
 - d. Rooms should be carpeted
 - e. A structured classroom environment, rather than an open or multi-group teaching environment, should be provided as it generates lower levels of noise
 - f. On large smooth surfaces, use partitions, acoustic panels or tiles and cloth hangings to reduce reverberation

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* Source: Adapted from Marilyn W. Neault, Children's Hospital Boston, marilyn.neault@tch.harvard.edu, www.childrenshospital.org

- Educational FM amplification must be provided to the student because:
 - a. FM amplification assures that the message of the primary speaker is received efficiently and clearly in spite of noise and distance from the speaker
 - b. The cochlear implant audiologist should make the recommendation for the specific FM system to be used. Audiological assessment should be conducted while using the recommended FM system to assure that it is providing the anticipated benefit.
 - c. The teacher must receive instruction in how to most effectively and beneficially use the FM microphone transmitter
 - d. Consider procuring a second transmitter for the FM for use by students in group discussions

- Other considerations include:
 - a. A “buddy system” can be used at large group or all school events, on the playground and on field trips to assure the child has heard instructions

- Since understanding the contributions of classmates to group discussions is extremely difficult, special consideration must be given to this vital learning experience.
 - a. Seat the group in a circle or horseshoe, not a cluster with all facing each other’s backs
 - b. Point to or call by name, each student who contributes to a discussion so the child can identify on whom to focus
 - c. Repeat or rephrase comments or questions for the whole class before responding or calling on another student

- Spare replacement parts for troubleshooting the cochlear implant system should be available in a secure location in the school.

- An appropriate patch cord should be available to be used with audio and video equipment.