

### What is a Hearing Impairment?

A hearing impairment is another continuum disability. A hearing impairment may be slight, mild, moderate, severe, profound, or deaf and it may occur in just one ear or both. The definition is defined by IDEA as "an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance."

### How does a Hearing Impairment Affect a Student's...

**Development:** Immediate attention to a hearing loss is imperative. Language and communication skills develop most rapidly in childhood, especially before age 3, if the hearing loss is undetected students will delay in developing these skills.

**Learning:** Being HI does not affect a student's intellectual capacity or ability to learn, however they do need to receive services to receive an adequate education such as speech therapy, amplification system, captioned videos, and possibly even an interpreter.

**Performance:** Learning vocabulary and other aspects of verbal communication will be difficult for students with HI and will require special work on communication and language development. However as of 2008, half of students with HI were educated in the general education classroom.

**Social Interactions:** To foster social interactions teachers need to teach hearing students about hearing loss as well as teach them ways to communicate with a student who is HI.

### Tips to help a student with HI access, participate, and succeed with inclusion:

- Technology is an important part of improving educational opportunities and outcomes for students who have HI.
- Students with HI communicate in several ways and each student with HI may communicate differently, these communication options are:
  - ✓ Auditory Oral: Students learn to listen and speak but do not learn sign language.
  - ✓ Auditory-Verbal: Students become an auditory communicator. Neither speechreading nor sign language is taught.
  - ✓ Cued Speech: Students learn to both "see" and "hear" spoken language focusing on mouth and hand shapes.
  - ✓ Sign Language: Taught as the student's first language, English may then be taught as a second language.
  - ✓ Total Communication: Above methods are combined.

### References for further information:

Strategies for teaching students with HI:

<http://www.as.wvu.edu/~scidis/hearing.html>

Best practices and related articles:

<http://specialed.about.com/cs/teacherstrategies/a/hearing.htm>

Information geared towards students:

[http://kidshealth.org/teen/diseases\\_conditions/sight/hearing\\_impairment.html#](http://kidshealth.org/teen/diseases_conditions/sight/hearing_impairment.html#)