

Radio aids at first hearing aid fit

POSITIVE FUTURES FOR DEAF CHILDREN

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Radio aid at first fit

- The Quality Standards for the use of Personal FM Systems have been revised
- Change of emphasis
- Recommendation that radio aids should form part of a deaf baby's personal amplification package at first fitting
- Implications for:
 - Baby and parents/family/carers
 - Professionals



Implications for deaf babies and their families

- Research shows benefits of early identification of hearing loss
- Babies are screened within a few days of birth
- Hearing aid fitting can take place within the first month of life
- Acceptability of radio aids as part of amplification package?



Implications for deaf babies and their families

- Limitations of hearing aids
- Amount of time babies and children spend in less than ideal listening environments

- Noisy family life
- Car
- Pushchair
- Noisy nursery
- Overhearing



Implications for professionals

- Working in partnership with families
- Closer multidisciplinary working
 - Understanding of roles
 - Education and health
- Funding
- Responsibility for equipment



Project in West Berkshire

- Fitted 25 young children (age 0-3 years) with radio aids
- The successes encouraged us to overcome the hurdles and this became routine practice
- Parents asked to complete a log of the benefits and challenges

Comments from parents

He listened to me while I was peeling the carrots, I didn't realise he couldn't hear me before.

P was able to hear me much better and responded much better when we called her name.

She was calmer when I was out of sight as I could tell her where I was. I could talk to her in the buggy and she responded well.

She seemed to be more alert during group time and story time.

C is leaving the aids in without arguments and sometimes asks for them.

Comments from parents

Amazing! Able to talk to E whilst driving without turning round. Went for walk and she chatted away. Cooking and talking over oven noise.

Big difference in her ability to concentrate and take part in group time.

He was more chatty in the car.

Safety aspects much improved as daddy could tell her to be careful etc and go and find her brother.

If I'm further away at other end of the dining room and N is in the lounge, I can call his name and he looks around immediately

Feedback

We use it in the car a lot, also at children's parties or situations where there are lots of other children and it is used all the time he is at nursery.

We used the radio aid when there was a lot of background noise like at the supermarkets, in the car or just generally out and about. It was also used at nursery and when there was a lot of children around.

We used it in busy/noisy environments, generally out of the home such as restaurants, shopping centres, children's parties etc. Since starting school L uses it every day in the classroom as well as still using it in busy/noisy environments such as parties, restaurants etc.

Overall it has been really helpful and the negatives are far outweighed by the positives. I would not be without it now.

Discussion

- What do you think?
- Education and health working together
- Funding
- Responsibility for equipment

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