STOWELL Learning Center

FREE RESOURCE
FOR PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Accommodations to Support Students with Auditory Processing Challenges

Classroom support tips for teachers and parents

Empathy: Here's what's going on...

Living with an auditory processing delay or a weakness with listening skills can be fatiguing and frustrating. The ear has neurological connections to nearly every organ and function in the body as well as the attention, emotional, language, and learning centers in the brain. As a result, poor listening skills can cause a person to experience difficulties with speaking, reading, spelling, comprehension, attention, communication, energy, and sense of well-being.

Good listening/auditory skills depend upon being able to take in and process a very broad range of sound frequencies. When the brain is not processing the full range of frequencies, the listener may get incomplete and inaccurate information, much like having a bad cell phone connection.

Individuals with weak auditory processing may:

- Miss details or parts of what was said
- Mishear and therefore misunderstand or misinterpret information
- Confuse similar sounding words
- Have trouble sounding out or pronouncing words
- Feel lost and confused
- Feel anxious
- Look like they are not paying attention
- Have poor attention when listening
- Give responses that don't match the question or conversation
- Withdraw or talk incessantly so that they don't have to listen
- Be overloaded and distracted by noise
- Be exhausted at the end of the day

Support Tips for the Classroom

Seating

Sit your student close to the front of the classroom where they can easily see the teacher's mouth.

- Students with Auditory Processing Disorder (APD) often need to lip-read.
- High frequency detail sounds dissipate beyond about 5 feet. Sitting closer to the teacher provides higher quality sound for students with APD and is more alerting (higher frequency) for those who struggle to attend while listening.

Notetaking

Provide support for notetaking to supplement the student's own spotty or disorganized notes. Remember, your student with APD will most likely miss much of the information even with excessive effort.

- Buddy to record and share notes
- Copy of study guide or slides ahead of time
- Watch a visual on the subject instead of/in addition to listening or reading book
  - Movie / videos
- Expect the student to do his/her best to take notes and copy assignments into planner, but also provide a copy of lecture notes and assignment sheet.
  - Record lectures

Oral Instruction

- When needing a specific action from a student, get his/her attention first and keep the instructions short and specific.
- Speak at your typical rate, but take just slightly longer pauses between phrases to give the student a little bit of extra time to take in and process the information.
- When giving oral instructions, have the student repeat back what he/she heard to either the teacher or a seat partner/buddy. This will help to fill in gaps in the information he/she was able to process and retain.
- Use visuals whenever possible. Attention and organizational skills will be stronger with a picture or visual that corresponds with the auditory information.

Writing

Provide accurate spelling on graphic organizers that the student can refer to while writing.

Homework

Provide a specific amount of time to be spent on homework and grade only on the portion completed.

- Reduce amount of homework
- Note the essential items or parts for student to complete
- Students with APD are often exhausted at the end of the day because of the amount of energy it takes to attend and get information in class

Tests

- Do not penalize for spelling errors on content area tests or assignments
- Students with auditory challenges may have difficulty filtering external auditory distractions, which can stress attention and concentration. Students should be allowed to take tests in a quiet environment to better reflect true abilities.
- Students with auditory challenges will likely require additional time to take tests compared to peers, so this should be accommodated before and/or after test periods.

Accommodations and modifications provide important support for students who struggle in school. We should give students all the support we can! BUT... **It's also important to understand that accommodations and modifications are NOT a permanent solution. They should be a temporary support while the *real* problem is being corrected.**

Many learning challenges are the result of weak underlying processing or learning skills that are not supporting the learner well enough. Brain research proves that these underlying skills can be developed: the brain can literally be retrained to process information more efficiently. It takes pinpointing the underlying weaknesses, retraining the brain, and then remediating affected academic and study skills.

Get to the root of auditory processing challenges

Talk with a learning specialist. Testing and programs are available in person or remotely, for children, teens, and adults.

Schedule a Free Call

(877) 774-0444