

Top Tips for making the most of lockdown from a Speech & language therapist near you...



• HEAR TOGETHER •

For children between 2- 7yrs

We all feel differently about being in lockdown and some days we feel fine and other days feel really difficult. Here are a few handy tips to try during this time when your child is not at school. Most importantly they are not to overwhelm you but to reassure you with that a few simple things in place, a bit of TLC, you can ensure that your child is still maintaining and even making progress with their listening and language.

- **Technology**
- **Listening and Language**
- **Connection and Communication**

1. **Technology:**

Is it on?:

It is very tempting when we are spending a lot of the day in pj's to not put hearing technology on. It's important to try for at least 10 hours of the day with CI's, hearing aids or BCI's on.

Is it working?

To make sure you have enough batteries, tubing to maintain your hearing technology click this link for audiology services and guidance around getting hold of batteries etc:

<https://www.facebook.com/HearTogether2020/videos/853885871689321/>

How do I know the sound is getting through?

At nursery and school your support team would be doing a daily check to make sure that your child's hearing technology is working. They do this by using the LING sounds. You may have heard of these and use them too? Here is a reminder of the 6 LING sounds.

These sounds represent the entire speech range from low to high frequency. If your child can hear these sounds they will be able to hear all of the sounds of speech.

1. *mm*, as in me
2. *oo*, as in boo
3. *ah*, as in car
4. *ee*, as in see
5. *sh*, as in wish
6. *s*, as in us



To find out more about the test and how to best carry it out go to the following link for MED_EI's rehab at home:

<https://blog.medel.com/all-about-the-ling-six-sound-test/>

Top Tip: If your child has two audio processors/ hearing aids, do the test once for each device alone, to make sure each device is working well and then once with them together.

After the LING sound check the best way of checking that they are working is have a short conversation with them and see how they respond.

A bonus: With a bit more time at home this could be a great opportunity to build self advocacy and independence in your child for managing their own technology. Encourage them to:

Put their own hearing technology on in the morning

- Check that they have enough batteries
- Report if their technology is working
- Report if there is a problem
- Put them away in their dry box at night
- Put batteries on charge



FM Systems and Streamers:

When you're at home, be aware of background noise like the TV and adjust it if you can, especially if you're playing, chatting or reading together.

To listen to the online videos, Cbeebies, BBC bitesize you can use your child's streamer to pair your laptop with their hearing technology. If your child is using FaceTime or zoom to keep in contact with friends, they can stream the sound directly to their hearing technology.

You can use their personal FM's for your daily walks or cycle rides, so that they can hear you clearly even from a distance.

Remember your local teacher of the deaf or speech & language therapist is a great resource and would be a phone call or zoom call away to help you set up the technology.

This clip will describe how Patrick uses his mini mic to stream videos from his tablet through his cochlear implant.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30Os4Jg-TFg>

Here is another article from "Success for children with hearing loss" describing different streaming and blue tooth options.

<https://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/for-professionals/bluetooth-streaming-options/>



2. Listening and Language:

As speech & language therapists, we always say language is caught not taught. Here are a few ways to make sure your child's pot of language is full of new words and ideas by the time they get back to school:

If the online learning platforms are driving you and your child mad, go old school and just PLAY. Here's some easy themes to inspire you!

You could choose a theme that you change every few days, for example:

- **Set Sail:**

Turn a table upside down and it quickly becomes a boat. Talk about the different lands, real or imaginary that you could set sail to. You may even want to sail to your local park and have a swing and a turn on the slide. Imagination makes all things possible.

Remember to include important verbs such as Imagine, guess, explore, dream, explore....

- **Space Invaders**

Space, the planets, sun, moon and stars is an exciting theme. If you do nothing else you could make a moon chart and follow the phases of the moon, along with it's vocabulary crescent, new moon, gibbous, craters, shine

BBC bitesize have got some great resources to watch:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zkvv4wx/resources/1>

- **Camping and a campfire**

Even just once during lock down set up a little camp fire and tent. If you don't have a tent, a few chairs and sheets will do the trick. There is so much lovely language and vocabulary around this activity...verbs (push, pull, hoist, blow, hammer, think, plan, guess) and nouns (tent, logs, matches, sparks, pegs, canvas, zips, inflatable mattress, cushions, torch)

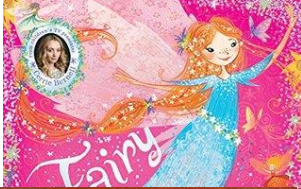
Rainbows: on your daily walk try this scavenger hunt:



Read a book together:

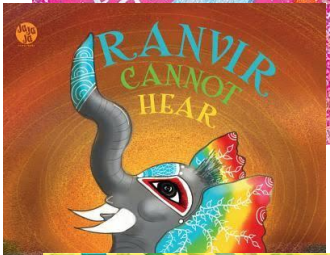
If you simply cannot face the thought of making a fort or a campfire one of the best language tools you have is a comfy couch and a book to share together. Even if you choose the same two books all week, the repetition of language, labels and discussing the pictures will introduce new words to your child's vocabulary. Sitting and having a cuddle and a read together will also promote listening skills. Don't feel you have to stick to the words on the page sometimes just looking and laughing at the pictures is enough.

Here are some books where one of the character's has a hearing loss:



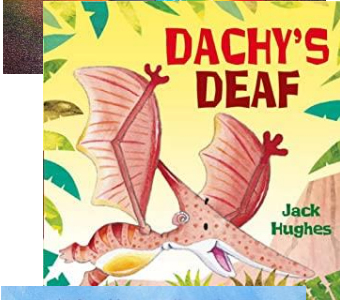
Fairy Magic, by Cerrie Burnell

When Isabelle meets a fairy called Summer-Blue, she discovers an enchanted world. Isabelle uses a hearing aid and is delighted when she realises that the fairy can talk to her in very special ways. But Isabelle's family don't believe in fairies... A magical picture book by CBeebies presenter.



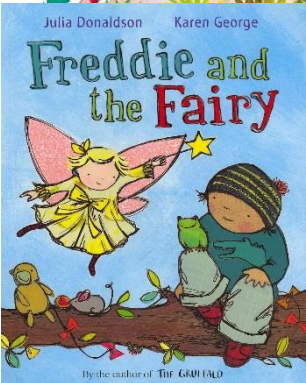
Ranvir Cannot Hear by Genevieve Yusuf

A magical story set in the plains of India and is about a little elephant who goes on a long journey in search of his hearing. On his travels he meets some wonderful friends along the way who can't do certain things but tell him about the things that they can!



Dachy wears a hearing aid by Jack Hughes

Dachy's hearing aid is great but sometimes, when his friends get too noisy, he likes to turn it off to get some peace and quiet. One day, when his hearing aid is off, Dachy falls asleep and ends up floating down the river towards a waterfall and a hungry crocodile. Can his friends rescue him in time?



Freddie and the Fairy by Julia Donaldson

Freddie is desperate for a pet, so when he rescues Bessie-Belle and she offers to grant his wishes he knows just what to ask for. The only problem is that Bessie-Belle can't hear very well, and Freddie tends to mumble. Whatever can they do?

3. Connection and Communication

So much language is absorbed, and connections built by just joining in with everyday household chores and the daily practice of routines:

By having a running commentary as your child sidles alongside you as you get everyday tasks done is a highly effective way of building vocabulary, and also foster skills like planning, sequencing and predicting what might happen next.

- Helping sort laundry is a great way for building vocab around sorting, sizing, labelling, colours, textures.
- Clearing out cupboards is another super language activity for guessing where things go, which lids fit, what is broken or can be mended.
- Preparing a meal or a baking activity practices planning and predicting what we need, the vocabulary around sieving, mixing, whisking, cracking, scooping....

Useful Links:

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/blog/coronavirus-and-support-for-deaf-children-information-for-families/>