Unilateral Hearing Loss

Unilateral hearing loss is a hearing loss in only one ear. It can range from a mild loss to total deafness. Causes of unilateral hearing loss are congenital, from trauma or infection.

Your child’s doctor and audiologist may recommend a hearing aid. Some children with unilateral hearing loss may benefit from a hearing aid.

**Helpful Guidelines for Hearing Health Care:**

- Stay away from loud noises. Use earplugs if loud sounds cannot be avoided.
- Get medical care right away for any signs of ear infections.
- Avoid putting anything in your child’s ear, such as cotton tipped swabs.
- Tell your child’s doctor about the hearing loss.
- See an Ear, Nose and Throat doctor and an audiologist once a year and as needed for a hearing check-up.
- Do not get advice or treatment from anyone other than a qualified Ear, Nose and Throat doctor or an audiologist.

**Once my child is identified with a unilateral hearing loss, what else should be done?**

- Recheck your child’s hearing 6 months after the initial diagnosis is made.
- Your child will be referred to Parents as Teachers, and in Kansas to the Hartley Family Center or other appropriate resources.
- At 18 months of age, a complete speech evaluation is recommended.
- Your child should have a hearing test every year.

Children with chronic ear infections should have their hearing tested more frequently. Often a hearing aid will be recommended sooner.

**Communication Tips for Unilateral Hearing Loss:**

- Have the child look at you before speaking. Be sure he knows that you are talking to him.
- When your child does not understand something you say, say it in a different way. Rephrase it rather than repeat it.
- Use visual cues whenever possible.
- Ask for classroom seating near the front of the room by the teacher. This will allow your child to see the teacher talking better.
- Keep background noise to a minimum. Turn off the television and radio when you are talking.