

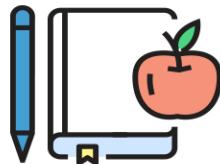
Audiology

SERVICES IN SCHOOLS

Untreated hearing loss can **affect a child's academic and social success**, especially if they don't have a strong language foundation. Educational audiologists address the listening needs of children in a school setting. They diagnose and treat hearing loss and other hearing-related conditions. They also recommend accommodations to help students do well in school.

DID YOU KNOW ?

Roughly **15% of school-aged children** (6–19 years of age) in the United States have some degree of hearing loss in one or both ears.





WHO:

Educational audiologists work with students of all ages, from preschool through high school. A primary goal of educational audiologists is to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing students have full access to language and communication—specifically, auditory information—in their learning environments.

WHAT:

Educational audiologists are a part of a team of professionals that provides support to deaf and hard of hearing students. Here are some responsibilities of educational audiologists:

- **Conducting hearing screenings and hearing tests** for both the general population of children (those with no known hearing issues) and those who have already been diagnosed with hearing loss (to monitor for any changes in hearing).
- **Increasing awareness in the school community** about the importance of identifying children with hearing loss and providing intervention services—as well as informing students, families, and staff about hearing loss and hearing loss prevention.
- **Educating school staff** about how untreated hearing loss may affect a student’s communication skills, social development, and academic performance—as well as training staff on how to use the different types of hearing technologies.
- **Counseling families about their options for deaf and hard of hearing students**, which may include use of hearing technologies; habilitation services (e.g., auditory training, speech reading); and various language and communication methods (e.g., American Sign Language, cued speech).
- **Fitting hearing devices for a student** and making sure these devices are working properly as the student continues to wear them. The educational audiologist can also teach students and parents/caregivers how to use and care for these devices.
- **Making recommendations to teachers about their classroom setup** to create a better listening and visual environment for students.
- **Making referrals to other professionals**, who may include speech-language pathologists, otolaryngologists, social workers, deaf educators, and other professionals.
- **Advising on students’ individualized education programs (IEPs)**, which are the written plans that specify a student’s goals and supports.

WHERE:

Many schools have an educational audiologist assigned to the school, even though they might not be at the school every day. The principal or other school staff can help parents/caregivers connect with their school’s audiologist. When at the school, educational audiologists may be found in the classroom or cafeteria, on the playground, or anywhere that students gather—to help students listen and communicate successfully.

HOW:

Federal law ensures that children attending public schools or publicly funded private schools receive support services when needed.

- Educational audiologists work with early intervention programs, parents/caregivers, and school staff **to identify children who are deaf and hard of hearing**.
- Children must *qualify* for services from educational audiologists and other professionals.

In general, to qualify, a student’s hearing loss must be affecting their academic success. School staff evaluate the student (with a parent or guardian’s consent) and meet with their family to determine qualification. The school can provide accommodations and services through a 504 plan and/or an IEP.

- The family **may appeal if their child doesn’t qualify**. More information about this process is available through websites such as www.ParentCenterHub.org.

WHY:

Children with mild to moderate hearing loss **may fall one or more grade levels behind in school if they don’t receive support services**. All children should be screened for hearing loss on a regular basis—and taught to protect their hearing.