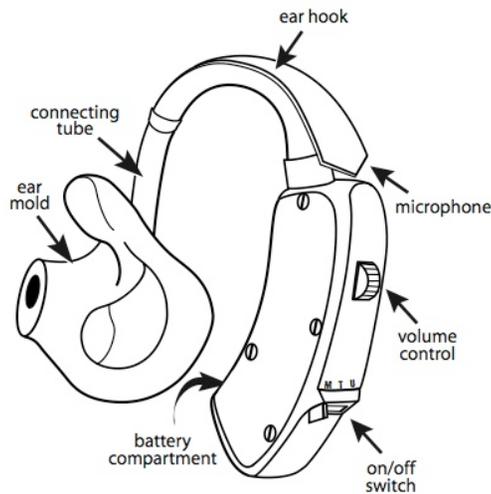




HEARING AIDS AND YOU!

CHHA- BC Youth Peer Support Program



Behind the Ear hearing aid

What is a hearing aid?

A hearing aid is a small electronic device that you wear in or behind your ear. They amplify sound so that you can better listen, communicate, and participate in daily activities. Essentially, hearing aids are like a funnel, directing sound towards the ear.

There are 3 basic parts of a hearing aid, the microphone, amplifier, and speaker.

- 1) **Microphone:** The microphone is where sound is received. It converts sound waves to electrical signals and sends it to the amplifier.
- 2) **Amplifier:** The amplifier receives the electrical signals and increases the power, or amplifies, the signals and sends them to the speaker.
- 3) **Speaker:** The speaker receives the amplified sound and allows you to hear noises.

Hearing Aids in Class

Using a hearing aid in a classroom setting can be challenging. Classrooms often have lots of background noise, such as chairs screeching, books moving, and pens writing. Understanding how to use your hearing aid in a classroom can help you learn better and feel more comfortable in school. It is important to **take responsibility** for your hearing and hearing aids. Make sure that you know what kind of hearing aid you have and know how it works best in class. Below are some additional tips to use your hearing aid in class:

Talk to your teacher

Prior to class, speak to your teacher about what accommodations they can make to help you learn better. This can include speaking slower, getting your attention before speaking, and facing you when speaking. Talk to your teacher about a **signaling system** that allows the teacher to know when hearing is difficult for you.

Sit near the “point of instruction” and away from noise

The “**point of instruction**” is the area where the teacher is giving instruction. This does not mean that you have to sit in the front of the class if the point of instruction is elsewhere. In addition, try to sit away from sources of noise, such as air conditioning/heating units, windows, hallway doors, etc.

Why are hearing aids important?

Our sense of hearing is an important sense. It can help us communicate, alert us to danger, and it can help us learn. Hearing is a main tool in communication and it enables us to interact with others at school, work, or at home. It helps us to be part of social conversations and allows us to participate in life more fully!

“Without my hearing aid, I feel excluded from conversations.”

While adjusting to a hearing aid may be a bit tough, it is important to understand the importance of wearing one.

Studies have shown that wearing hearing aids can help to:

- Keep the mind healthy
- Boost self-esteem
- Achieve goals
- Improve attention

The important thing is to take responsibility for your hearing. Understand why your hearing aid is important and work towards feeling comfortable with it.

How to Disclose your Hearing Loss

Sharing that you wear a hearing aid can be intimidating. However, **self-advocating** for yourself and your needs is the key to success. Here are some tips to help you disclose your hearing aid:

1. Speak Up

It is important to let the person you are speaking with know that you communicate differently. Do not be afraid to **be upfront** about having a hearing aid and adjusting the environment to be able to communicate better. Here is an example of how you can disclose your hearing loss: “Hi my name is _____. Before we get started, do you mind if we change our arrangement? I have a hearing loss and use a hearing aid, which helps me hear you clearly.”

2. Speak Out

After telling someone you have a hearing loss, there will likely be many questions about what kind of hearing aid you use and how it works. A good tip is to have a script about how it works that you can repeat to those who ask. Remember, someone asking you about your hearing aid is not someone poking fun at you; many people genuinely **want to understand** more about your communication needs. On the next page, is a sample dialogue to explain a hearing aid. After reading the dialogue, try to come up with your own script on how to speak about your hearing aid.



Communication is key!

Ben has a hearing loss and is speaking with a new friend at school.

Friend: “Hey Ben!”

Ben: “Hey!”

Friend: “How was your weekend?”

Ben: “Sorry, do you mind if you turn away from the sun? I have a hearing loss. It helps me when I can see the person’s face while speaking to them.”

Friend: “Sure! But if you have a hearing aid why do you need to see my face? I don’t really know what a hearing aid is...”

Ben: “That’s a good question. A hearing aid is a device that I wear which helps amplify the sound so I can hear it. While it makes the sound louder, it does not make it clearer so seeing your face is another way to help me communicate better. Does that make sense?”

Friend: “Yes, totally! Did you see the new Star Wars?”