Hearing Device Retention Accessory Information

Hearing aid retention accessories not included below were rated as less effective.
More information on survey results and strategies can be found at http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/hearing-aids-on
Ratings based on the results of the Children's Hearing Aid Retention Survey completed by 286 parents (Anderson & Madell, 2012).

Ear Gear

Spandex sleeve slips over hearing device. Has stretch cord and plastic locking clip.

PROS: Stretchy cord, allows for full range of head motion. Spandex sleeve protects from mess/damage and from hearing aids being swallowed by infants. Plastic clip to clothing has no sharp edges, is hypoallergenic and locks to make it extremely difficult for a child to remove. Spandex sleeve increases comfort of device wear; prevents and assists in healing from chafing; also diminishes wind noise. Comes in many different colors to increase child's interest and pride in wearing hearing aids. Use with hearing aids, cochlear implants and BAHA for individuals of all ages. Models can attach to one or two hearing devices.

CONS: Some difficulty installing, because earmold must be removed and then reattached.

www.gearforears.com

#1 Rated

Caps

Caps cover hearing devices securing them from busy or yanking fingers.

PROS: Effective at discouraging toddlers from yanking hearing aids off. Washable and durable. Hanna Andersson and Hearing Henry caps are cotton and have ties long enough to cross in front of neck and tie behind. Silkawear caps have mesh side panels and fasten securely under chin via Velcro. Discontinue after toddler 'yanking' phase subsides so child can practice putting on hearing aids (should be independently putting hearing aids on by age 3). Use with hearing aids, cochlear implants and BAHA. Come in various colors.

CONS: Warm for summer or southern climates.

www.silkawear.com
www.hannaandersson.com
www.hearinghenry.com

#2 Rated

Safe-N-Sound

Plastic loop slips over hearing device. Has poly cotton cord and metal alligator clip.

PROS: Easy to Install. One size fits all hearing aid and cochlear implant models. Flexible cotton cord comes in many different colors to increase child's interest and pride in wearing hearing aids. Option with barrette can be effective to discourage young child yanking out the hearing aid, while not causing discomfort when removed by parent. Used by children of all ages. Models can attach to one or two hearing devices or be used with eyeglasses. Works with hearing aids, cochlear implants, and BAHA.

CONS: Nonstretch cord. One size loop may not tightly fit all hearing instruments. The Alligator clip has nickel content, and can cause allergic reactions.

www.getsafensound.com

#3 Rated

Wig / Toupee Tape

Tape specifically made for use on skin. Attaches to both hearing device and skin. Must replace tape on a regular basis to maintain security.

PROS: Good short-term strategy. Tape does not require much of a 'tug' to remove hearing aid, but is helpful in preventing dislodging when child is just starting to use his hands to explore or when the device is large/heavy for the child's ear. Used primarily when child is young or very active. Use on all hearing devices.

CONS: The tape discourages child from pulling the hearing aid off due to possible discomfort when removed – by child or by parent. Child could learn to shy away from hearing aid because it is not comfortable when it is removed. If used frequently, tape can be expensive over time.

#4 Rated

Oto / Critter Clips

Plastic loop security system, with thin poly cotton cord and metal alligator type clip. Models that attach to one or two hearing devices.

PROS: Low cost, easy to install solution. One size fits all hearing aid models and implants. Cords come in many colors, and some models are available with cute animals on the face of the clip - encouraging small children to wear their aids. Used by children of all ages wearing hearing aids, cochlear implants or BAHA.

CONS: Breaks easily / not very durable. Cute animals can come off and be swallowed. Security level varies due to one-size fitting for all hearing instruments. The Alligator clip has sharp teeth and may pinch child's skin. Clip has nickel content, and can cause allergic reactions.

www.westone.com

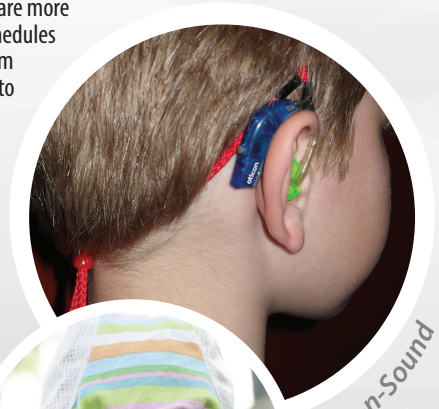
#5 Rated

Toddlers: 12-24 months.

Keeping Hearing Devices on Young Children

12-18 months During the second year, the exploring toddler learns to do many things independent of his parents ("Me do!").

- It may seem like your child is getting into everything. It isn't unusual for toddlers to go through a 'yanking off the hearing aids' stage. Your baby may be going through a stage where he is learning to control his environment and is 'testing the waters' in many ways.
- It is an especially important time to consider what the baby is getting out of taking off the hearing aids. Is he learning a new skill? Is he trying to get your attention? Is he trying to get you to do the fun thing you did last time he took out his hearing aid?
- Whatever you choose to do in response to his taking off his hearing aid, be calm and try to control your facial expression so that it is neutral. You don't want your baby to learn to associate the hearing aids with your anger, as this may make him want to avoid them.
- Temperament plays a big role throughout toddlerhood. Babies who are more laid back, have regular schedules and are easy to soothe from being unhappy are easier to train to leave the hearing aids alone as compared to a child who is very active, sensitive to changes and easily upset. Soothe your baby's upsets but do not let the hearing aids become the focus of how he can be sure to get your attention! Wearing the aids is non-negotiable!



Safe-n-Sound

Caps

About 20 months many children are learning the skill of undressing.

- The child is not willfully removing the hearing aids because he does not want to use them. He is practicing the skill of removing everything on his body. This stage will take extra time and patience.
- Once he accomplishes learning to undress to the best of his ability, praise him and then lovingly put his hearing aids back on and dress him. The novelty of his newfound undressing ability will soon wear off, only to be replaced by greater toddler independence.

Oto / Critter Clips

Non-negotiable: Be persistent. Toddlers must learn that wearing hearing aids is non-negotiable.

- Unless you suspect that he is in pain (i.e., ear infection, broken hearing aid), ALWAYS replace them if they have been pulled out. The behavior will eventually stop.
- You may need to wait for a temper tantrum to pass. Wait quietly with a neutral expression on your face, holding the hearing aids. When he tires, smile, put on the hearing aids and distract him into what comes next.
- During this period of ramped up activity, the hearing aid retention accessories you have been using may not be enough to keep him from pulling out a hearing aid. Many families use different retention strategies or use two strategies together.
- Sticky tape plus the hearing aid retention accessory or wearing a cap for a few weeks may help both of you get through this stage.

WHY DO WE NEED HEARING AIDS

Children learn almost everything by hearing. Without using hearing aids all day, every day, your child's learning will likely be significantly delayed by the time they start Kindergarten. They might never catch up!

- The part of the brain that makes sense of sound needs to be developed before hearing can be used to learn. The goal of hearing aids is to make sound louder. This allows the auditory part of the brain to grow. This brain growth has to happen before a child can use hearing to learn to understand words, to talk and to read.
- Early growth of the brain in the first two years of life cannot be made up later. To develop the auditory part of the brain, a child must hear his or her best ALL DAY long, every day.
- Your child can't learn words he or she doesn't hear. Typically hearing children hear 46 million words by 4 years old. To learn new words from what people are saying around them, your child's hearing devices need to make speech clear and loud to hear the quiet speech sounds (like s, f, t) from more than a few feet away.
- Children need to listen for 20,000 hours before their brains are ready to learn how to read.

WHEN DO WE NEED HEARING AIDS

To be ready to start school like other children, your child needs to wear hearing aids every waking hour from infancy.

- A child needs to use hearing aids all day, every day to develop speech, language and social skills like other children his or her age.
- Even children with 'mild' hearing loss may talk and understand more like 3 year olds when they enter kindergarten if they do not use hearing aids every waking hour.
- The important time for brain growth during the first two years cannot be made up later. Almost all children who enter school with learning delays do not 'catch up' once they go to school.

Children's Hearing Aid Retention Project
Karen L. Anderson PhD & Jane R. Madell PhD

© 2013 For more strategies and information go to http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/hearing-aids-on or www.JaneMadell.com/hearing-aids-on

Did you know?

Babies listen for about a year before they say their first word. A baby who wears hearing aids for only 2 hours a day may take 3 years to say his first word. Frustrations with not being able to communi-cate effectively can result in behavior and social problems.