

REALTIME FILE

NCHAM-Supporting Children in Extra-Curricular Activities  
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>> Stephanie Johnson: Hello, everyone from Utah State University. It is great to see some of you joining us a little bit early for today's webinar. If you are here for Supporting Children Who Are Deaf/Hard of Hearing in Extracurricular Activities, you are in the right place. We will be starting at 11:30 Mountain Time, so just in a few minutes.

Hello, everyone. We welcome you here from Utah State University. It is good to see a few more of you joining us a few minutes early. We will begin our presentation at 11:30 Mountain Time, but if you are here for Supporting Children Who Are Deaf/Hard of Hearing in Extracurricular Activities, you are in the right place.

>> Stephanie Johnson: Hello, everyone. We welcome you from Utah State University. Again, it is great to see a few more people joining here a couple minutes early. We will begin our presentation at 11:30 Mountain Time, so in just about two minutes or so. If you are here for Hear to Learn's webinar, Supporting Children Who Are Deaf/Hard of Hearing in Extracurricular Activities then you are in the right place and we will get started in just a couple of minutes.

>> Stephanie Johnson: Hello, everyone. Welcome to today's Hear to Learn webinar brought to you by the communications disorders at Utah State University. This webinar is being recorded. For closed captioning, you can go to the live transcript pod at the bottom of your screen and click on "live transcript" and that should give you closed captioning options.

Today's presentation is entitled, Supporting Children Who Are Deaf/Hard of Hearing in Extracurricular Activities presented by Annie Huish. Annie is a teacher of the deaf in the kindergarten class at Sound Beginnings. She was a supervisor where she taught S.O.P.'s and special educators, listening and spoken language strategies used in teaching children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Please hold your questions or comments until the end of the presentation. At that time, I will open up a text field for you to submit any questions or comments this you may have for Annie. I would like to welcome Annie Huish to today's webinar.

>> Annie Huish: Thank you so much. It is good to be here. I just thank you for having me. We will go ahead and get started. There is quite a bit of content I would like to touch on today, but very first, I would look to start out why this topic is important to me.

I have a daughter who is 5 and last year, I put her in a dance camp, and after I dropped her off, I noticed all of the little girls, they were all little girls in the class, they were all dancing around. I looked in the center of the room and there was a little girl who had cochlear implants on, and she was smiling and looking up at the teacher. The thought crossed my mind, I wonder how she got to the point where she was at today, because hearing loss is not a one-size-fits all. Hearing loss is a one size fits one. And for that child, for her to get to where she was standing in that moment, it took a lot of intervention, it took a lot of -- it took a lot.

So, I then thought to myself, when I work with children who have hearing loss, I have a whole team around me. I'm a teacher in a classroom. I work closely with an S.L.P., I work closely with parents and an audiologist, there is a team that works together to support the children in my

classroom and in an extracurricular activity, that is what got me interested in this. We will talk about the principles of listening and spoken language, reasons why we put children in extracurricular activities, types of activities, and listening environments, empowering others with knowledge about hearing loss, empowering children with communication repair strategies and other means of support for children.

So, moving on. So, the principles of listening and spoken language, again, I want to touch on hearing loss is not a one size fits all. Listening and spoken language is not going to be the best option for each child. For the purpose of this slide show, we will talk about using listening and spoken language as the main mode of communication. So, the principles of listening and spoken language touch on a wide range of what we can do to help children develop these strategies, and we will focus here on helping parents create environments that support that listening and spoken language acquisition.

So, what are some of the reasons that we put our children in extracurricular activities? You know there is a very wide reason that we do that, it builds resilience, it helps to bring a sense of community. A lot of times neighbors will put their kids in the same class, it can build lasting friendships, for some of you, it can help with some coordination or exercises that will get their bodies moving and muscle memory. It gives you extra opportunities to practice communication, building language development during play and movement for both children and your parents, but the biggest reason why we do is your reason. What is your reason for putting your child in an extracurricular activity, be it swimming or some kind of a sport or a music class or art, find out what your reason is?

And then think about the listening environment that is associated with this activity. Listening environments are wherever you're at and whatever sounds are going on around you, so if you have an activity where there's gross motor movement, so soccer, dance, basketball, karate, you're going to find more distance between the child and the instructor. You're going to want to make sure that your hearing technology is fit correctly, and you are as going to want to think about the background noises. Are the other children being loud? Is it a loud sport? What about the spectators, are they cheering? What about the environmental noises that you might be hearing? Is it windy? Is it rainy? Think about the listening environment.

Another type of activity and listening environment are activities that have smaller movements, so your music class, your ceramics class, maybe some kind of a painting class, there can be less distance between your child and the instructor, but you also want to look at the acoustics of the room. I find it very interesting that in my own kindergarten classroom, I can hold a conversation with an individual and not think much of it. It seems like a quiet classroom, however, if I pause and I really listen, there is a little bit of background ambient noise.

If you're doing an activity where there's a kiln or some kind of machine moving around is, it making noise? What is the signal to noise ratio? The signal being the audio signal that your child is supposed to be listening to, what are the instructions versus the noise in the background.

There are some activities where the technology can be compromised, so if your child is swimming, if they happen to be somebody who sweats a lot or if it's an activity like baseball where they are required to wear a helmet those can be some challenging things, and where it is not a one size fits all, you have to figure out what works best for your child. It can compromise communication between a child who uses listening and spoken language and their coach. So, you do have options. You do have options to help with these things. For swimming there are Nammu hats for cochlear implants, they have helmets that have cranks on them. It could be an activity where there is a lot of movement, you can grab a lanyard and attach it to your shirt, so it doesn't get lost.

Another big thing to concern is safety, what are your priorities and what are your options? If your child is swimming and the main mode of communication is listening and spoken language, are they able to hear if somebody is behind them or if the coach is calling them to move to a different position.

So, another thing that crossed my mind is when a child an extracurricular activity, the most important person that can be their advocate would be you as their parent. As the parent, you're going to know what specific needs your child has, so be prepared to come and talk to their coach about it or their instructor. Think about where some of those breakdowns in communication will be, and the biggest area of support that your child needs and don't be afraid to talk about it. Who can talk -- think about who you can talk to regarding your child's specific needs? I know if a parent were to come to me and say they are putting their child in a specific activity, I would absolutely jump at the opportunity to help and figure out what those needs are and how we can help guide that child in that activity. There are other parents out there, hopefully, you have a good, solid group of parents that you can connect with. And also, consider creating some kind of a flyer that talks about your child and their interests and ways that these other people can help them. I'm going to show you a quick example that I have.

So, here is an example of a leaflet of a child going into a brand-new school. You can see it has the child's name a brief statement, why this pamphlet was made. It makes it personable. It talks about his technology, not only the technology that he uses, but the technology that the other person might use as well. Here is some more information put on the flyer. It gives some tackling points, some of his interests, tips on how to help him in this specific setting, and then even more places to find more about hearing loss and some of the devices that he has, so some of those -- some of these options, something you can just hand to somebody might help out as well.

One thing that is always important is making sure that your child knows they can stand up for themselves and advocate for when they have something in need, so from your child's perspective in repairing some of the communication strategies, what happens if the battery goes dead? Does he talk to the coach about it? Is there is a bag on the side of the field or in the room somewhere that he can go to, to replace his battery? Does the coach know how to replace a battery? Are you going to be there to replace the battery? Start thinking about some of those things.

If an adult doesn't understand your child, what are you going to do? One tip might be to, outside of practice, narrate everything, show your child, there are different ways to say the same thing. What happens if your child doesn't understand an adult? You can teach them some of those key phrases like "I didn't hear you" or "can you look at me" or "I heard you say this," was I right? Telling them to remind the coach, hey, let me be closer before you tell me or give me those instructions. Teaching your children to identify background noises that can be reduced, also don't hesitate to use the visual strategies. If you have a child out on the soccer field and you know, most children by nature are going to use some of those visual strategies to help guide their participation.

There are other ways we can support children, too. Before you sign up for a class, talk about what those interests might be. Have a conversation with instructors beforehand, talk to them about things like preferential locations, what I mean by that, where would they sit in the class? Would they sit closer to the instructor, do they need to sit away from the fan? Putting them in a position that might be closer to the coach. Again, this is not a one size fits all, but one thought if you're on a soccer field and the coach is screaming his instructions from midfield, have your child in midfield close to the coach where he is seeing them. If that does not work for your family, that's fine. Making sure they grasp concepts of the rules, that they have the vocabulary of the game, the terms, the rule, almost playing it with them or doing the activity with them beforehand, so you can give them that pre-knowledge of what they are going to learn.

Another idea was to find other parents who know about your child's hearing loss and include their child within the activity, so your child has a friend already there. Some conversations and activities that you can do before and after, so again those vocabulary terms, acting out or playing the game at home, reading it, writing it, saying it, drawing it, watching it, hearing it, singing it whatever you can think of will be beneficial. And it looks like we're at the end of the slide show. I went through that pretty quick, so if there are any questions or answers, go ahead and put them in the chat.

>> Stephanie Johnson: Thank you, Annie for that informative presentation. Like Annie said, we are open for question, so please type your questions in the Q&A pod and Annie will respond.

>> Annie Huish: So, it sounds like we have a few questions. Do you recommend the use of remote microphones? I do if it matches with the activity. If you're doing something like art or something where those remote microphones are available, I do recommend them. You will -- you should be getting a copy of the presentation. I believe it is being recorded, and you can always come back to it as well. Is it possible to get samples of the student flyers? Yes, I will make sure those are available. It looks like someone said, it is harder to advocate for our kids in the age of COVID, since we can't see what is happening in the classroom or during activities, any suggestions to combat these issues? That is a very good question.

Off the top of my head, my thinking is just talk to the instructor in advance and see if they have any -- see if they have any suggestions on how to combat the issues. I think that would be my only suggestion. Oh, geez. That is a tough one. Is it better to look for deaf or hard of hearing specific programs? I think that is another good question. I think that it depends on what you're

looking for in your family. If you're look for more of a language development then yes, if you're looking for a way to connect with your community around you, I think it is depends on you. I think if you have a very strong support system for your child then that's what can help you get through it. I think one underlying message that I would like you to leave with is that, yes, when you put your child in an extracurricular activity, you are to go-to person for their coaches, but you still have a team of professionals who are looking out for your child just as much as you are.

Any advice for a 3-year-old with unilateral hearing loss on how she can advocate for herself? In a small gymnastics group she had trouble and was acting out. On how she can advocate for herself, my one question is, have you had an opportunity to talk to the coach about her unilateral hearing loss? Does the coach understand who she is and those things that are going to help her? As far as her advocating for herself, I think if you teach her some strategies like, stop, look at your teacher. What is she saying? Some of those -- teaching her to put herself in a position where she can hear. So, thank you.

What are some strategies for interaction with other peers during the activity? That is a very good -- that is a very good thought that I did not think of. I think putting your child in with a friend can help bridge that gap. Really, I know really young children, preschool age, if you can find something similar, they become really good friends. Susie has polka dots on her shirt and Johnny has polka dots on his shoes. If you can help your child, find something in common with their peers that might encourage interaction.

So, Jenny, it says yes, she does. I am assuming her coach knows about the hearing loss and you had a chance to talk to her. That's great. Yeah, I really think teaching your 3-year-old some of those strategies of, where am I, what can I listen to and that will help.

>> Gunnar Thurman: It looks like we have a couple more questions.

>> Annie Huish: Thank you. What is age appropriate to explain the hearing loss to their peers in the activity? I think any age is appropriate. I think the sooner the better, because that not only allows for your child to express who they are as a person, but it just allows people to be aware of who their friend is. Do you suggest kids or their teachers addressing their hearing loss at the beginning of a school year or at the beginning of an extracurricular program to address questions later? Let me read that again. Do you suggest kids or their teachers addressing their hearing loss at the beginning of a school year? Cassie, is that addressing it with the other peers as a whole? Or just addressing it in general? Again, I think it -- yes to the whole class, OK, I think it depends, it just depends. If there is an opportunity to do that then why not? You don't want to single out a child with hearing loss, so you want to -- my opinion is you want to be careful that you're not, you know, putting them above or below anybody else. You want them to be a part of the team, but if you feel like it would be something that would help the team as a whole, I would say, why not?

How can you support a child with a coach who doesn't seem to understand or maybe care to address the child differently? My son plays basketball. It is very hard for him to focus and hear,

especially at practice. Should we wear the F.M. and try to assist? That is another tough question. If you can support your child with some self-advocacy skills, so maybe the coach isn't going to tell him to stand in a specific position, but you know, you can encourage him to stand in a specific position. I would say -- I would ask if he has friends who are willing to support him and if his friends know about his hearing loss, and then you're asking if we should wear the F.M. and try to assist, like you as the parents or saying to give the F.M. to the coach and have the coach wear it? If you can have the coach wear it, that would be great. I don't know. It might be confusing to him if he hears you and trying to hear the coach at the same time.

Does that answer your question, Melissa? I would say the biggest thing, Melissa, if you feel like his coach isn't supporting him then maybe try and reach out, maybe some of his peers can support him. So, Melissa says, we asked the coach not to look the other way when giving directions and that seemed to go in one ear and out the other. Our little one is only 6. I wish I had more for you. Try a pamphlet, try to explain it, try to have him explain it to his coach. I'm happy to answer any other questions if anyone has one they're wanting to know.

>> Stephanie Johnson: All right, it looks like we're not getting any more questions that I can see, so maybe we'll start wrapping up here. Thank you so much, Annie, for answering all of those great questions. Today, we would like to thank our Captioner, our I.T. support and all who participated online today. I do want to remind you that a video reporting -- recording will be available on our website, [heartolearn.org](http://heartolearn.org). Our next webinar will be held on March 25. The presentation is entitled, promoting parent connections and friendships. At the end of this webinar, you will be encouraged to fill out a survey. We may fill out a certification of completion for today's webinar and hope to see you back for the next one. Thank you for joining us.

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