Hello, I'm Johnny. With my best friend Herky, I am going to see a hearing doctor. I am struggling to hear my teachers, family, and friends, so Herky says I need to get my hearing checked. My friendly ear doctor says all I need to do is listen closely for quiet beeps and raise my hand when I hear them. It sounds like little birdies! This is easy, and I get a cool Hawkeye sticker when I am done! Go Hawks!

Today the ear doctor will help me hear better with my hearing helpers by using research and equipment to fit them for my hearing loss. My ear doctor will also teach me and my caregiver how to insert the hearing helpers and how to use and take care of them. Wow! I hear so many sounds already. I think I will be able to hear all my friends, family, and my teachers! Hurray!

My ear doctor said I need hearing helpers to hear well, just like dad needs a vision helper for his eyes. I get to pick a color and a hawk-eye design for my hearing helpers. They look so cool! My hearing doctor also measures my ear canal to make sure my hearing helpers fit me and my hearing loss as best as possible. I can't wait to show them to my friends and family, and they will help me hear so much better!

I go back to my ear doctor often (in 2 weeks, then 3 months, 6 months, and yearly) after I get my hearing helpers. My hearing doctor makes sure I am doing well, monitors changes, checks and cleans my hearing helpers, and answers questions at all of my visits. I like my ear doctor and my hearing helpers, and they help me to be the best Hawkeye I can be!
Red Flags & Seeking Help

• Sound vibrations are collected by the outer ear and transmitted to the ear drum. Small bones in the middle ear make these sounds louder and transfer them to the inner ear. The inner ear processes sounds and sends them as nerve impulses to the brain— which enables us to hear sound.

• Middle ear fluids are common in children. Seek medical help if your child complains of consistent ear pain or has ear drainage. Timely medical help can prevent hearing changes.

• Monitor the hearing abilities of your child. Children may not be able to tell you what they hear and feel. Do they ask you to repeat instructions, even when they are not distracted? Do they turn up the TV or music too loud or have delayed speech milestones?

• If so, take your child to an audiologist, who can assess the hearing and ear status.

• If a hearing loss is detected, the audiologist will fit an appropriate hearing device for your child or make a referral for other intervention to provide the best access to speech, sound, and language as possible to the child.

Monitoring and Follow-Up is Important

• Repeated hearing tests allow tracking of small and large changes in hearing, which call for hearing aid amplification modifications. The proper changes in amplification will allow continued access to speech and sounds.

• Help your child use their hearing aids as much as possible. Try to make sure your child gets the best hearing treatment and services they need for development.

• Be sensitive to changes in hearing or hearing aid checks, as your child may not be able to tell you if their hearing aids stopped working/are damaged.

• Ask providers if you have questions or concerns about your child's hearing, devices, treatment, development, and services.

Wendell Johnson
Speech & Hearing Clinic
250 Hawkins Drive,
Iowa City, IA
(319) 335-8736

WJSHC Offers:

• Doctoral-level expertise of the auditory anatomy and physiology and how various assessments and treatment options interact with this system

• Use of evidence-based practice, including the latest research on outcomes for children with hearing loss

• Diagnostic hearing evaluations and monitoring

• Hearing aid evaluations and fittings using prescriptive targets, real ear measures, and fine tuning

• Individualized, family-centered care, aural rehabilitation, hearing protection, education, & tinnitus treatment

• Interdisciplinary care, valuable recommendations, referrals, and connections with UIHC and other service providers

Research Shows:

According to the Outcomes of Children with Hearing Loss (OCHL) Study:

• Children who are hard of hearing and wear hearing aids full-time have grammar and vocabulary skills like children with normal hearing. Children who do not wear hearing aids consistently, no matter how much hearing loss, are at risk for poorer language abilities.

• Wearing hearing aids at least 10 hours per day helps children learn language faster than children who do not wear hearing aids consistently, making it more likely they will develop age-appropriate language.

• The amount of benefit, or access to speech sounds, depends on your child's hearing and how the audiologist programs the hearing aids. The most benefit is achieved when audiologists use real-ear, probe microphone verification to adjust hearing aids to children's unique hearing.

• Ask your audiologist about real-ear hearing aid verification to learn more.

• Visit https://ochlstudy.org for more information about the findings above.

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