

John Tracy Clinic

Free Services Worldwide for Parents of Infants and Preschool Children with Hearing Loss

Including Siblings

Family life is always busy. Although you are devoting time and energy to your child with a hearing loss, you want to be available for your other children, too. Each child needs to feel like a valued member of the family. Your positive and loving attitude along with some special moments will keep them well-adjusted and confident about themselves.

WHAT DO YOUR CHILDREN NEED FROM YOU?

Time! Can you take some time each day to play or talk one-on-one with your children? Let your child set the agenda and follow his lead. Or, schedule a special lunch, movie or time at the park. Offer your child various suggestions of what you might do on “your date” and let the child choose.

Words of love! Find ways to remind your child how much you value him and how important he is to the family. Tuck a love note in his lunch box. Display his schoolwork on the refrigerator. Carry his picture in your wallet and show it to him. Spend a moment alone as you tuck him into bed, reviewing the admirable things you noticed about him that day and ask him what he thought the highlights were.

Acknowledge his contributions as a sibling! Comment frequently on the ways you notice your child with a hearing loss benefiting from the sibling relations. “Thank you for sharing your Playstation with Sammy. He’s learning about taking turns from you.” “Sarah really seems to be learning how to ‘talk cool’ from you.”

Make him an expert! Children can take great pride in their expertise in a subject or activity. For example, your older child may be very good at using Cued Speech; or he may shine when it comes to knowing about his younger sibling’s hearing aid or cochlear implant. This knowledge is perfect for Show and Tell in the classroom or a spontaneous demonstration for another adult.

The use of these tips along with your loving dedication can provide all of your children with a sense of security about their importance in the family unit, and will reflect important expressions of your love.

