Hearing Assistive Technology

Assistive devices for your child with hearing loss

Hearing assistive technology are tools used with or without a hearing device to enhance communication or provide alerting or amplified sound. If your child has hearing aids, cochlear implants, CROS, or bone conduction sound processors you may find several of these to be especially useful.

You can purchase most of the devices in this document online at these websites. Insurance does not cover them.

- www.harriscomm.com
- adcohearing.com
- www.westone.com/store/
- www.amazon.com (Note: products on Amazon run the risk of being counterfeit)

Disclaimer: The inclusion of any website does not imply endorsement by Seattle Children's Hospital.

For other accessories that can be used with a hearing device, please contact your audiologist.

This handout includes descriptions and prices for the following hearing assistive technology:

- Telephones
- TV Amplifiers
- Signaler Systems
- Time Alerting Devices
Telephones

There are several phones for people with hearing loss. All are for use with land-line phones (not cell phones). They include amplified phones, captioned phones, and teleprinter/teletypewriter (TTY).

People with hearing loss may qualify for free or reduced-cost telephone equipment. For more information, please see your audiologist or visit www.dshs.wa.gov/altsa/odhh/telecommunication-equipment-distribution

**Amplified Telephones**

An amplified phone will replace a regular land-line phone and allow volume control up to 50 decibels. Some amplified telephones have additional features such as headphone, neckloop, FM transmitter, frequency control, and adjustable ringers.

**Features**

- Amplifies phone calls and voicemail up to 50 decibels
- Adjustable ringer volume
- Jack for optional bed shaker, neckloop, or headset
- Vibrate and LED lights for incoming calls
- $29 to $250

**Captioned Phones**

A captioned phone will amplify a phone conversation and have real time captions (words) that appear on all calls automatically. These captions may be turned on or off at any time.
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Features
- Tone and volume control up to 40 decibels
- Ring flasher alert
- Bluetooth enabled for hearing devices
- $50 to $130

TTY (Teleprinter/Typewriter)
TTY provides written communication for people who are deaf or hard of hearing to communicate with one another or with a hearing person. Unlike a captioned phone, both sender and recipient have to type their message. The TTY keyboard sends the typed message across the phone lines.

Features
- Up to 20 decibel amplification
- Programmable auto-answer
- Built-in ring flasher
- $224 to $548

When using a captioned phone or TTY, a Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) is available to help make communication easier. The TRS allows users to convert text to voice when communicating with a hearing person on the other end of the line or convert a spoken message to text to the TTY. For more information about TRS, visit www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/telecommunications-relay-service-trs.

Below is a visual representation of how a telecommunication relay service works.

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**TV Amplifiers**

TV amplifiers allow people to listen to the TV at a louder volume without disturbing other people or bring the sound of the TV closer to the listener. TV amplifiers have a transmitting base that connects to the TV and a unit that is worn by the listener or is close to the listener.

**Headphone TV Amplifiers**

Headphone TV amplifiers can be used without hearing devices. Larger headphones can be worn over some hearing devices.

**Features**
- $50 to $450

**Stethoscope TV amplifier**

Stethoscope TV amplifiers are worn in the ears stethoscope style and are not designed for use with hearing devices.

**Features**
- $75 to $350
**Speaker**
Speaker TV amplifiers are portable speakers that are placed next to the listener, and they bring the sound of the TV closer to the listener. They can be used with or without hearing devices.

- Small speaker for table or speakers that hang on the back of a chair or couch
- $150 to $350

**Features**

**Neckloop**
Neckloop TV amplifiers are worn around the neck.

- Used with hearing devices
- Requires that the hearing device has an active telecoil or “TCoil” (see your audiologist for more information)
- $270 to $300

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Signaler Systems

Signaler systems notify a person about different sounds in their home. Signaler systems have a receiver base that receives signals from different transmitters around the home. When a transmitter is activated by a sound or signal, the receiver base alerts the person through vibration, a loud sound, or flashing lights. You can purchase one receiver base and several different types of compatible transmitter signalers to receive alerts to different types of sounds.

Door and window signalers

This signaler alerts a person that someone rang the doorbell or has opened a window or door.

Features
- Window/door open signalers usually use two magnetic bars that activate the alert when they are separated
- $15 to $100

Sound and motion signalers

These signalers alert a person to various sounds such as an oven timer, alarm clock, baby crying, or motion in a room. They have amplified beeps or flashing lights or a combo of both.

Features
- Usually is plugged into a standard electrical outlet
- $40 to $100
Phone signalers
These signalers alert a person that the phone is ringing with an audible sound, vibration or flashing light.

Features
- Different signalers for landline phones, video phones, and cell phones
- Extra loud ringers make the phone’s ring louder
- $25 to $100

Carbon monoxide and fire alarms
Carbon monoxide and fire alarms provide an alert during an emergency. These alarm options are seen and/or felt in addition to making a sound.

Features
- 85 decibel horn or higher
- Horn, light strobe, and bed shaker alert options
- $40 to $300

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Alarm clocks, watches and timers

These products are used to help wake up or alert a person with hearing loss. They use loud “amplified” sounds, bright or flashing lights, vibration or a combination of all three.

**Alarm clocks**

Use very loud volume alarm, vibration/Bed Shaker, visual light indicator, or a combination of all three to wake the user.

Features
- Some options connect to signaler systems so the person with hearing loss will be woken up for other alerts including the doorbell, a baby crying or a fire alarm.
- Some work alone, some work with a Bluetooth-compatible cell phone
- Portable options for traveling
- $10 to $230

**Alarm watches**

Watch will alert individual with sound, vibration or both. Some options can work independently, and others can connect to a cell phone.

Features
- Set alarms, reminders and/or alerts on watch
- $10 to $130
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Timers
Timer will beep, flash and/or vibrate. For use when cooking, working or with other tasks.

Features
• Can set when, how, and how often the person wants to be alerted
• $10 to $130

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To Learn More
• Audiology
  206-987-2000
• www.seattlechildrens.org

Free Interpreter Services
• In the hospital, ask your child’s nurse.
• From outside the hospital, call the toll-free Family Interpreting Line, 1-866-583-1527. Tell the interpreter the name or extension you need.