

LET'S GET READY: DAYCARE FOR A CHILD WITH HEARING LOSS

Is your baby with hearing loss starting daycare or childcare with a caregiver? While your child may have many new learning experiences, it could leave you with a few unanswered questions. Let's learn what you can do to make these new experiences as positive as possible for you, your baby, and the adults and caregivers around them.

I'm Dr. Teresa Caraway with Hearing First. We're here to help and support families just like yours who have a child with hearing loss. We want to empower you as your child learns to listen, talk, read, and thrive just like kids with typical hearing.

In this video, I'll be talking about preparing your child with hearing loss for daycare as well as how you can educate your child's caregivers on their hearing loss, hearing devices, and the importance of wear time. As you prepare to leave your baby in another person's care, whether you're using a nanny, family member's or daycare center, you'll want to make sure they feel comfortable and prepared.

Your child's caregivers don't necessarily need to have experience working with or caring for children with hearing loss, but they will need to be very comfortable with handling your child's hearing devices on their very own. How do you do this? Create a troubleshooting kit for your child's hearing technology including a simple guide or checklist for your child's hearing devices that they can keep at the daycare or you could even create a video on your phone and share how to check and put the hearing devices on. Then set up a time to meet with them for them to become comfortable and prepared.

Explain why it's important your child wear their hearing technology all waking hours. Show them the different parts and pieces of your child's hearing devices. Show them how to put the devices on and take them off your little one's ears, then teach them how to listen to the device to make sure it's working, how to change the batteries, and then practice putting the devices on and off together.

Be sure to give them helpful feedback and positive encouragement. Share your troubleshooting kit that you put together and will keep in their child's bag so they will know how to use it when that time comes. It should include a supply of batteries, a tool to open the battery door, a listening tube, instructions for checking that the hearing technology is working, phone numbers to reach you so that they can call or text immediately if they have any issues. If your child uses a remote microphone, make sure your caregiver knows not just how to use it, but when to use it as well.

Additional things to talk to your caregiver about before your baby's first day is what are your goals or expectations for your child, such as you want your child to play and fully engage in all the activities that surround them. Also, the importance of wear time for your baby. Explain that your child needs access to all the sounds of speech and language throughout the day so that they can learn to listen and talk and interact with those around them.

Talk about eyes open, ears on. That means that hearing devices should be on all waking hours and even after nap time. And if you have any concerns about wear time such as you pick up your child at the end of the day and they don't have their hearing devices on or they're not working, immediately talk to your caregiver and talk about that importance of continually keeping the hearing devices on and in working order.

Why, because they are brain builders right along with you. And remember to thank them for all their help to grow your child's brain. This is such an exciting time for you and your little one. They are on their way. They're off to great places, and it starts today.

Click the link below to read more about preparing for daycare. You and your child can complete the All About Me template or worksheet that we have for you. You can also join the Facebook group or Family Support community to connect with other families of children with hearing loss to find support from people who have been in your shoes and successfully had their child start daycare.

Wherever you are on this journey and however you may be feeling, you are not alone. Hearing First is here to help you every step of the way. Subscribe to the channel on YouTube for new videos and information and ideas and visit [Hearingfirst.org](https://hearingfirst.org) to find more resources and support on this journey.