



# Hearing

**NZDSA**  
resources



A guide to hearing aids  
for people with Down  
syndrome.



# HEARING AIDS

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**There are two key messages when getting your preschooler used to hearing aids:**

1. I now wear hearing aids
2. Only Mum and Dad take my hearing aids off. If I take them off, they will ALWAYS go back in

## **Tips for hearing aid training**

- Have some treats or rewards ready that your child particularly enjoys but does not get often.
- Put the aids in with lots of praise and rewards.
- Slowly build up the length of time that your child wears their hearing aids. Start with just a few seconds several times a day.
- Gradually increase the amount of time the aids stay in. Accompany this with an activity your child really enjoys doing.
- Initially you will need to be almost holding their hands down while helping them to do something they enjoy.
- Once you can leave their arms free for a few seconds/minutes, let them play but as soon as you think they are going to pull out their aids, either hold their hands or take their aids off.
- Once the child is wearing the hearing aids for longer periods there will still be times when they will pull them out themselves. You need to ensure that you put them back on straight away with a specific phrase - eg “hearing aids stay in your ears” etc.

## **Other tips**

- Try to make putting on their hearing aids part of your child’s dressing and undressing routine. Put the hearing aids in when they get up and take them out when they go to bed. It will become normal for your child to wear hearing aids whenever they are awake.
- Hold the ear moulds in your hand for a couple of minutes before trying to put them in. This makes them warmer and less of a shock for your child.
- Have the aids attached to chords and have the chords attached with a clip to the child’s clothing-this way you don’t have to search for them if your child does manage to take them out without you noticing.
- You may find that your baby’s hearing aids whistle when you feed them or when they are lying down. The whistling is called feedback, and it happens because the microphone on the aids is close to something solid, like a mattress. Arranging pillows behind a baby, holding them in a different position or temporarily turning their hearing aids down or off while you are feeding can help.
- Your child may remove their hearing aids if they are uncomfortable or painful. If you notice your child removing their hearing aids after loud noises, or if your baby blinks often when they are listening to sounds around them, check that the settings on the hearing aids are correct and talk to your child’s audiologist.
- For older children: Hearing aids are available in different colours, so your child can choose their favourite colour. Ear moulds come in different colours and can have glitter inside the plastic.

# Hearing



## NZDSA resources

### Want to know more?

The NZ Down Syndrome website can provide more information and link you to many more articles and organisations.

[www.nzdsa.org.nz](http://www.nzdsa.org.nz)



0800 693 724

[nzdsa.org.nz](http://nzdsa.org.nz)

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