



Connectivity for Children with Hearing Loss

Nationally, children are showing a decline in academic skills due to lost classroom time as a result of the global pandemic. Children with hearing loss are at a disadvantage when it comes to using computer technologies for learning, which is compounded for our patients from neighborhoods with limited access to technology. Sound from computers or other devices can be difficult for children with hearing aids and cochlear implants to understand, making learning even more challenging for these children.

There are assistive technologies available that can help mediate this problem. We would like to be able to provide assisted listening equipment and training to children who are receiving services through teletherapy, attending school virtually or participating in a hybrid program, and whose families cannot afford the devices. With school being conducted virtually in most jurisdictions, children with hearing loss are more vulnerable than ever to falling behind in their speech, language, academic and social skills.

There are many different devices available that are compatible with the hearing aids and cochlear implants from each manufacturer. The prices start at \$100 and go as high as \$1100. This can be out of reach for many families. Our goal is to be able to provide the devices on either a permanent or loaner basis to all of our patients who need it.

It is imperative that we provide these children with the technological assistance they need so they can continue to be fully engaged in distance learning or a hybrid model, and receive ongoing intervention through teletherapy. Without the necessary connectivity equipment and training, these children could fall behind in their language and literacy development, communication skills and academic achievement, which could have a lasting impact on their ability to succeed in the long term.

Project Budget

Direct Streaming devices for 8 children: various receivers, microphones and battery covers at an average cost of \$850 per child	\$ 6,800
Device usage training	\$ 2,000
TOTAL	\$ 8,800