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**Academic Decline Could be a Sign of Hearing Loss**

Have your child’s hearing checked by an audiologist, if you suspect hearing challenges

**RESTON,** **Va., August 28, 2019—**As many children across the U.S. begin a new school year, the American Academy of Audiology warns parents that a drop in academic performance could be a sign of hearing loss. [According to the National Institutes of Health’s National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders](https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/statistics/quick-statistics-hearing), about two to three out of every 1,000 children in the United States are born with a detectable level of hearing loss in one or both ears. The total number of children with some type of hearing loss is unknown and many cases go undiagnosed.

Children with mild hearing loss may go undetected but could experience an impact on their learning ability and schoolwork. The American Academy of Audiology recommends that any parents experiencing a decline in their children’s academic performance or any sign of hearing loss should take them to an audiologist to have their hearing tested.

While most infants’ hearing is tested, ear infections in subsequent years and exposure to loud noises as well as various illness can cause hearing loss. Five out of six children experience ear infections in their first three years.

“A child with just minor hearing loss can be missing a significant amount of the classroom discussion,” said Lisa Christensen, Au.D., president of the American Academy of Audiology and with Cook Children’s Medical Center in Fort Worth, Texas. “There are children who have been diagnosed with a learning disability when really what they need are hearing aids.”

Lack of hearing can lead to behavioral issues, lack of focus, even depression in children. Children with hearing loss often don’t recognize that they can’t hear and parents don’t always know the signs.

Here are some of the signs parents and teachers should look for:

* Child has difficulty following through with assignments and often doesn’t seem to

understand the task

* Child often doesn’t understand questions and either does not respond or doesn’t respond appropriately
* Child’s speech is different from other children the same age. He/she may struggle to pronounce simple words or is unable to repeat a phrase. May have problems articulating or language delays.
* Child often asks you to repeat things or watches your face intently trying to understand what you’re saying
* Child has difficulty hearing on the phone
* Child speaks loudly when not warranted
* Child has chronic ear pain
* Child often complains of noises he/she cannot identify
* Child cannot keep up academically

# “Often parents and teachers overlook the fact that a child’s behavior may be a sign of hearing loss,” Christensen explained. “If parents suspect an issue, they should have their child evaluated by an audiologist. Audiologists have the tools and training to identify hearing loss, degrees of hearing loss, and can recommend solutions.”

# The American Academy of Audiology provides a list of licensed audiologists on its website: [www.audiology.org](http://www.audiology.org). Click on “Find an Audiologist.”

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The American Academy of Audiology is the world's largest professional organization of, by and for audiologists. Representing the interests of approximately 14,000 audiologists nationwide, the Academy is dedicated to providing quality hearing care services through professional development, education, research, and increased public awareness of hearing and balance disorders. For more information or to find an audiologist, go to [www.howsyourhearing.org](http://www.howsyourhearing.org).

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