

# Glossary

- **Audiogram**

An audiogram is a graph which records the results of the pure tone audiometry test and other similar tests. It shows information about your child's deafness in a visual form.

- **Behind-the-ear hearing aid (post-aural hearing aid)**

A hearing aid which sits behind the ear. It has a tube (or elbow) which passes over the top of the ear and connects with the ear mould.

- **Body-worn hearing aids**

This type of hearing aid is worn on the body, often using a chest harness, and is connected to the earmould by a lead.

- **Bone-Anchored Hearing Aid (BAHA)**

This type of hearing aid is attached to a titanium screw implanted into the skull and transmits the vibrations from the sounds to the skull, which then conducts them to the inner ear.

- **British Sign Language (BSL)**

Over 70,000 people within the British Deaf community use BSL. It is a visual language using handshapes, facial expressions, gestures and body language to communicate. BSL is an independent, complete language with a unique vocabulary. The grammatical structure of BSL is different from that of written and spoken English. Just like other languages, BSL has evolved over time and developed regional and national dialects.

- **Cochlea**

The part of the inner ear that is shaped like a snail shell. The cochlea contains thousands of tiny hair cells which vibrate in response to sound. These vibrations are converted into electrical signals which are carried to the brain by the auditory nerve to be interpreted and given meaning. Damage to these hair cells can be a cause of sensori-neural deafness.

- **Cochlear Implant**

A cochlear implant is inserted into the cochlea to replace the hairs that have been damaged. It provides the brain with electrical signals giving a sensation of sound. Electrodes are surgically implanted into the cochlea within the skull. The electrodes are connected to a receiver which is implanted into the skull behind the ear. The external part consists of the speech processor (which is either body-worn or sits behind the ear), a lead, a transmitter coil, and a microphone.

- **Ear mould**

An ear mould is the part of the hearing aid that fits into the ear. It should fit tightly into the ear to make sure that all the amplified sound from the hearing aid travels into the ear.

- **Glue ear (otitis media)**

Fluid builds up in the middle ear which makes it harder for the sound to travel from the outer ear to the inner ear. This can cause temporary deafness which may come and go.

- **Hearing aid**

Hearing aids make sounds louder. Some achieve this through boosting the sound coming into the ear; some by transmitting vibrations to the skull and some through the use of implants inside the inner ear.

- **Hearing aid retainer**

A hearing aid retainer is a latex ring with bands that fit around the hearing aid. The latex ring fits around the whole ear to keep the hearing aid in place.

- **Loop system**

A loop system consists of a microphone amplifier and a loop of cable which emits a magnetic field. If the child wears a hearing aid switched to the 'T' position and is inside the loop the hearing aid picks up sound coming through the microphone from the magnetic field. This also cuts out most background noise. A loop can be worn around the neck or can be positioned around the whole room.

- **Radio aid**

A radio aid consists of a transmitter (used by the person who is talking) and a receiver (used by the deaf child/adult). A microphone picks up the speaker's voice and sounds are then transmitted by radio waves to the receiver.

- **Speech and language therapy**

Speech and language therapy helps children to develop communication skills. These skills may include receptive language (what your child understands) expressive language (what your child says or signs) speech skills (how your child pronounces words) and interaction skills (how your child uses language in conversation).

- **Statement of Special Educational Needs**

A Statement or Record of Needs is a document written by the local education service. It states the needs your child has in order to learn, and the support that the education service will give your child to help meet their needs.

- **Textphone (Text telephone or Minicom)**

This is a type of telephone with a small keyboard attached which transmits text down the telephone line. Someone using a textphone can communicate directly with other textphone users or with a voice telephone user via Typetalk operator.

- **The 'T' position**

Setting the switch, on your hearing aid, to the 'T' position allows the telecoil in a hearing aid to be switched on or off. When it is switched on it enables the hearing aid to pick up the sounds transmitted from devices such as a loop system (see definition above), and cut out background noise. Some hearing aids also have an 'MT' switch which allows both the telecoil and the microphone to be operating. This means that the hearing aid user can pick up the sounds from the loop system and from conversations going on around them.

Deaf Connexions produces a range of information sheets covering all aspects of hearing loss and deafness. If you would like further information contact :

**Deaf Connexions**

Unit 14 Capitol House, 2-4 Heigham Street, Norwich, NR2 4TE

**Telephone/fax** : 01603 660889  
**Minicom** : 01603 661113  
**E mail** : [deafconnexions@btconnect.com](mailto:deafconnexions@btconnect.com)  
**Website** : [www.deafconnexions.org.uk](http://www.deafconnexions.org.uk)