



# TOOLS for TODDLERS

Helping Babies and Toddlers get a **Strong Start**



## EXPLORING COMMUNICATION OPPORTUNITIES

As a parent of a child with significant hearing loss choosing a communication option(s) for your child and family can feel overwhelming. Use all resources available to you as you research each option. Speaking with local early intervention professionals, audiologists, educators, and teachers of the deaf will help you learn the specifics about each communication option and help you determine what is best for your child and family. Speaking with other families who have walked this path can also provide valuable wisdom and support. See the Find Support box for information about organizations which can connect you with mentors and provide guidance as you learn more about the different communication options. Below is a brief overview of each communication option.

### FIND SUPPORT

#### **Bionic Ear Association**

[hear@advancedbionics.com](mailto:hear@advancedbionics.com),  
[advancedbionics.com/bea](http://advancedbionics.com/bea)

#### **Hands and Voices**

[handsandvoices.org](http://handsandvoices.org)

#### **Guide By Your Side**

[handsandvoices.org/gbys](http://handsandvoices.org/gbys)

#### **Family Voices**

[familyvoices.org/](http://familyvoices.org/)

### Listening and Spoken Language (LSL)/Auditory Verbal

*Goal: To teach children spoken language through listening*

- Children taught this approach will use spoken language and listening to communicate with others.
- Full time and consistent use of appropriately fit amplification is necessary for children to succeed with this approach.
- Parents will communicate with their children through spoken language.
- Parents are coached by professionals and are the primary language teacher.
- Academics are typically taught in a mainstream classroom beginning in the early years.
- An interpreter in the mainstream classroom is not necessary if this approach is successful.
- This is considered an oral approach. Manual communication is not used.
- Guiding Principles:
  - ✓ For children who are deaf and hard of hearing to grow up in a mainstream learning environment, enabling them to become independent, and contributing citizens of society
  - ✓ A developmental approach which follows typical milestones
  - ✓ Promotes early identification of hearing loss and use of appropriate hearing technology
  - ✓ Professionals guide parents on strategies and techniques to teach a child how to listen and talk
  - ✓ Parent-centered approach that encourages the use of naturalistic conversation and the use of spoken language to communicate

**For further information about LSL/Auditory Verbal, visit:**

[agbell.org](http://agbell.org)

[hearingfirst.org](http://hearingfirst.org)



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## Auditory-Oral

*Goal: To teach children spoken language through listening, speech reading, context, and visual clues*

- Children taught this approach will use spoken language, speech reading, and listening to communicate with others.
- Full time and consistent use of appropriately fit amplification is necessary for children to succeed with this approach.
- Parents will communicate with their children through spoken language.
- Parents must carry over instruction from therapy and/or the classroom to maximize their child's success.
- Academics may take place in a self-contained classroom in the early years but children will typically mainstream.
- An interpreter in the mainstream classroom is not necessary if this approach is successful.
- This is considered an oral approach. Manual communication is not used.
- Guiding Principles:
  - ✓ For deaf and hard of hearing children to grow up in a mainstream learning environment, enabling them to become independent, and contributing citizens of society
  - ✓ Children will enter the mainstream after they have time to strengthen their language, social, and cognitive development
  - ✓ Promotes early identification of hearing loss and use of appropriate hearing technology

**For further information about Auditory-Oral, visit:**

[agbell.org](http://agbell.org)

[hearingfirst.org](http://hearingfirst.org)

## Cued Speech

*Goal: To enable a child to understand spoken language by helping a child distinguish the sounds of speech through a visual cueing system that is used in combination with speaking*

- Children who are taught this approach learn a system of eight hand-shaped cues that represent the different sounds of speech to help them understand what is being said. Spoken language or a sign based communication methodology may be used for communicating with others.
- Full time and consistent use of appropriately fit amplification is necessary for children who are learning to express themselves through spoken language.
- Parents will need to learn to use the eight hand shaped cues in four different locations in combination with spoken language to communicate with their children.
- Parents are coached by professionals and become the primary language teacher.
- Academics may be taught in a mainstream classroom with support services or may be taught in a self-contained environment.
- Use of an interpreter will be necessary in the mainstream classroom.
- This method is considered a visual approach to spoken language.



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- Guiding Principles:

- ✓ Literacy is a primary goal of Cued Speech, by providing the appropriate phonemic language base for learning to read
- ✓ Children with hearing loss who use cued speech will learn language much the same way as a child with normal hearing but through vision rather than audition alone
- ✓ Cued speech makes spoken language clear by allowing children to distinguish sounds that look the same on the lips
- ✓ Cued Speech is not considered its own language but a visual signing system that can supplement spoken or sign language
- ✓ Cued Speech supports the development of lip-reading, auditory discrimination, and speech
- ✓ A system for children who may not be able to learn entirely through listening alone

**For further information about Cued Speech, visit:**

[cuedspeech.com](http://cuedspeech.com)

## Total Communication

*Goal: To learn language through all means of communication; formal signs, natural gestures, fingerspelling, body language, listening, speech reading, tactile cues, and speech*

- Children who are taught this approach will use signs, gestures, speech reading, and spoken language and listening to communicate with others.
- The use of amplification is necessary to support the development of auditory skills.
- Parents will communicate with their children through the use of signs, gestures, spoken language, and listening.
- Parents will need teaching and support to develop proficient sign language skills.
- Academics may be taught in a mainstream classroom with support services or may be taught in a self-contained environment.
- Use of an interpreter in the mainstream classroom may be necessary based on the student's needs.
- This method uses both manual and oral/auditory components.
- Guiding Principles:
  - ✓ Language development is optimized in whatever way is most effective for the individual child
  - ✓ Communication is developed through a combination of hearing, vision, and tactile cues

**For further information about Total Communication, visit:**

[raisingdeafkids.org/communicating/choices/tc.php](http://raisingdeafkids.org/communicating/choices/tc.php)



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## American Sign Language (ASL)

*Goal: To learn a complete and complex visual language system that uses hand signs, facial expressions, and postures of the body to communicate*

- Children taught this approach will use American Sign Language to communicate with others.
- Amplification is not required for communication.
- Parents will need to learn ASL to communicate with their children.
- Parents will need teaching and support to develop proficient skills in ASL.
- Academics are typically taught in a self-contained classroom that uses ASL, a self-contained classroom that uses a Bilingual-Bicultural (Bi-Bi) approach, or in a mainstream setting.
- Use of an interpreter will be necessary in the mainstream classroom.
- This method is fully manual with no oral or auditory component.
- Guiding Principles:
  - ✓ Research has shown that when deaf children are exposed to a rich visual language environment (American Sign Language) they are provided the foundation for a first language and school readiness
  - ✓ A complex visual and spatial language
  - ✓ ASL is a language with its own unique rules of grammar and syntax. Each country has its own sign language and regions have dialects, like any spoken language
  - ✓ English is considered a second language

**For further information about ASL, visit:**

[handspeak.com](http://handspeak.com)

[gallaudet.edu](http://gallaudet.edu)

[deafchildren.org](http://deafchildren.org)

[nad.org](http://nad.org)



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## HELPFUL TERMINOLOGY

**Bilingual-Bicultural (Bi-Bi) Education:** Education of children who are deaf and hard-of-hearing using a child's first language, American Sign Language, as the primary language of instruction and teaching English as a second language for reading, writing and speaking. Children learn about and become part of Deaf culture and the Deaf community.

**Early Intervention:** A federally funded program that provides support and services to infants and toddlers (age 0-3 years) immediately after the detection of a disability.

**Expressive Language:** The way a child communicates wants, needs, and feelings to others through nonverbal and verbal communication.

**Interpreter for the Deaf:** A person who facilitates communication between hearing and deaf or hard-of-hearing persons by translating language from one modality to another, such as between Spoken English and American Sign Language.

**Mainstreaming:** Intergration into the classroom with hearing peers to the maximum extent possible.

**Manual Communication:** A communication approach that uses hand signs and gestures to convey messages between persons.

**Receptive Language:** The way a child receives information and understands the meaning of what is communicated to him/her.

**Self-Contained Classroom:** A classroom specifically for children with hearing loss with a smaller student-teacher ratio using a common communication methodology.

**Speechreading:** The interpretation of lip and mouth movements, facial expressions, gestures, elements of sound, structural characteristics of language, and topical and contextual clues to understand what is being spoken.

## Advanced Bionics

For questions or additional information: Toll Free 1.877.829.0026 TTY 1.800.678.3575 Monday through Friday, 5am to 5pm PST  
Web [AdvancedBionics.com](http://AdvancedBionics.com) Email [hear@AdvancedBionics.com](mailto:hear@AdvancedBionics.com) • [ToolsforSchools@AdvancedBionics.com](mailto:ToolsforSchools@AdvancedBionics.com)