

conversation starters

FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL

MASKS

- Both cloth and disposable masks can muffle speech sounds. This makes visual cues for DHH students even more important. Will clear masks or face shields be available for all staff interacting with the student?
- If masks will be required for students, will peers that the DHH student is interacting with also have clear masks?
- Masks with ear loops can make wearing hearing aids and cochlear implants more uncomfortable or more prone to damage. Ear savers or masks that tie around the head can help.
- Anti-fog spray or dish soap can be used to cut down on fogging when clear masks are used.

HEARING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (HAT)

- Students should take HAT with charger, audio cable, and all components home if any instruction will be taking place at home via e-learning or hybrid instruction.
- Masks and face shields will affect how the microphone on the transmitter picks up sound. It is important to test how the HAT works with masks and shields in different learning environments in order to choose the most appropriate seating position for the DHH student.
- Transmitters should be disinfected between each user. Never spray any solution directly on the transmitter. Spray onto a cloth and wipe off.
- Multiple lanyards should be purchased for the transmitter so that each user has their own.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Consider how desks being spread out and facing away from classmates will affect the ability of the DHH student to hear. Completing a functional listening evaluation could help gain a fuller understanding of the student's access.
- Planned seating positions may need to be adjusted due to classroom set up changes.
- If instruction will be taking place outdoors, consider HAT performance limitations and whether the DHH student will have full access.

CLOSED CAPTIONING/PRINTED MATERIALS

- Virtual instruction should take place on a learning platform that has access to closed captions.
- Teachers should make sure their face is visible when recording videos or teaching virtually.
- All videos used should have closed captions.
- Having lessons presented in the classroom accompanied by printed material or a PowerPoint will help DHH students increase their access to instruction.

IEP MEETINGS

- The student's IEP should be updated ASAP with any necessary changes to services or service delivery as well as accommodation changes due to virtual/hybrid instruction or social distancing.
- Consider scheduling regular check-ins to review and add or change accommodations on the IEP since new issues may come up as students and teachers navigate this school year.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Department of Education on Providing Services to Children with Disabilities During Covid-19
https://bit.ly/DOE_COVID19
- Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss
https://bit.ly/HOH_Success
- Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Continuing Guidance
https://bit.ly/DHH_Ed



If you have questions or would like more information, feel free to contact Elynn McCall at elynn.mccall@hearindiana.org or 317-828-0211.