

Dear Teacher,

My child has been diagnosed with a condition called Auditory Processing Disorder (APD). While they do not have hearing loss, my child may not be able to quickly and accurately digest speech like most of their peers.

In order to give my child the best chance to understand what you have to say, it is important to do the following things:

1. Get their attention before speaking to them. Call their name and wait for a response or touch their shoulder if possible/necessary.
2. Use brief instructions with slow and clear speech.
3. Use nonverbal cues to help them understand what you are saying.
4. If you are unsure if they understand what you are saying, give them the opportunity to ask questions or ask if they need further clarification.
5. If further clarification is needed, please try to find a different way to phrase what you have to say.
6. Be aware of background noise. They will have a harder time hearing and understanding you if there are other things going on. If the point is important, it may be best to talk to their in a quiet place.
7. Try not to single them out in front of classmates. Increasing anxiety to speech will not be beneficial to my child.
8. Class participation through answering questions can be extremely stressful for children with APD. If participation needs to be increased, it would be kind to tell them (maybe a day) in advance which question you will have their answer in class so that they will feel confident and competent in front of their peers.
9. When my child does fail to comply with instructions, please assume that it is most likely a failure to understand the instructions as opposed to defiance/willful lack of compliance.
10. Please show my child examples of the "finished product" if there is a new task for them to do. They may be able to understand what you would like to have them do if they have a sample to learn from.
11. If you observe the child struggling to focus on a written test or the like (i.e. looking up to any noise or distraction), you may want to consider allowing them to do the work in a separate, quiet room. This may help to fully see how the child is grasping the concepts you have taught as opposed to their ability to tolerate background noise.
12. Children with these difficulties strongly benefit from pre-teaching; anything you can send home for their parents to preview for their (before you teach it) will be helpful for them to grasp these concepts.
13. Preferential seating is highly recommended.
14. Please remove this sentence from your daily language: I'm only going to tell you this once. If a child asks for repetition of what was said, they are learning to advocate for themselves when they realize they haven't heard.

Auditory processing difficulties are unrelated to intelligence. Highly intelligent people can have APD. My child suffers from an unseen problem and will benefit greatly from your support and guidance. **The greatest factor in success for a child with auditory processing disorder is the attitude and understanding of their teachers and caretakers.**

There are a number of books on this subject, if you are interested in learning more. One I would suggest is *When the Brain Can't Hear* by Dr. Terri Bellis. A great collection of evidence-based research on can be heard in an audio lecture by Peter M. Vishton, Ph.D. called "Scientific Secrets for Raising Kids Who Thrive" (Audible.com, \$36). We highly recommend giving this a listen.

Thank you for supporting this child.

This list was compiled by: Angela Loucks Alexander, Doctor of Audiology, Taupo, New Zealand

If you have questions, please feel free to contact Angela at www.facebook.com/apdsupport or www.APDSupport.com