

Parents' Evaluation of Aural/oral performance of Children and Teachers' Evaluation of Aural/oral performance of Children

WHY use the PEACH and TEACH?

To optimise effectiveness of amplification for a hearing impaired child, hearing aids should be selected using a validated prescription and verified using real-ear measurements. However, prescriptions are based on average requirements and research has shown that some children will hear speech better with a variation from the prescription. Therefore, we need a way to evaluate the efficacy of an individual's amplification. It is especially vital when fitting very young children who rely on amplification for acquiring speech and language.

To evaluate the hearing aid fittings of older children a clinical procedure has been developed using paired comparisons. However this is not appropriate for younger children and children with developmental delay. For these children we can use the PEACH and TEACH. They are functional evaluation tools that use the systematic observations of parents and teachers to evaluate the amplification prescribed. Audiologists, parents and teachers need to know how the child is responding to their amplification in everyday life. Are the hearing aids accepted? Is the child responding to speech and other sound stimuli around them in differing acoustic environments?

Parents and teachers have many opportunities to observe the child in everyday life and obtain information that is relevant and helpful for the audiologist to optimise the effectiveness of hearing aid amplification for a child. More information can be found in a conference paper presented in May 2001, posted on this website under "Further References".

WHAT are the PEACH and TEACH ([see video clip](#); [see video transcript](#))

The PEACH and TEACH are questionnaires designed to record parents' and teachers' observations of children's functional performance in a systematic way. They differ from other questionnaires that have been developed for use with hearing impaired children. Rather than relying on a yes/no response or a response on a rating scale, the PEACH and TEACH rely on examples from the child's oral/aural experience in everyday life as evidence of their abilities.

Parents and teachers are required to write down specific examples of the child's behaviour for each question that occur during the trial period specified by the audiologist and the scoring of the questionnaires is based on the number of examples given.

The PEACH has thirteen questions and the TEACH eleven questions.

Areas covered are:

- listening/communicating in quiet
- listening/communicating in noise

As the PEACH has been developed for use with babies, older children and children of differing abilities some of the questions have two alternatives. The first alternative is usually applicable for older children or more experienced listeners.

For example Question 3.

You are in a quiet place with your child (For example he/she may be sitting next to you, behind you or across the room when the TV is off). Does he or she respond to a **familiar voice** or to his or her **name** the first time you call, talk or sing if he/she is unable to see your face? For example, he/she may respond by smiling, looking up, by turning his/her head or by answering you verbally.

For
older
children

OR

You are in a **quiet** place with your child, (for example, he/she may be feeding with eyes closed or lying or sitting next to you when the TV is off). Does he or she respond to a **familiar voice** the first time you call, talk or sing when he/she is unable to see your face? For example when you talk or sing, he/she may respond by quietening, cessation of sucking, increasing rate of sucking, opening eyes, eye widening or by looking. Please list examples of when your child has ***or has not*** displayed the above behaviour over the last week, describing when and where they occurred.

For
young
children

It is important to emphasise to families that the PEACH is **not** a test. Because the PEACH has been developed for use with children of a wide range of ages and abilities some may score zero on certain questions. For example, a very young baby or developmentally delayed child may not yet be able to do a particular activity. Inexperienced listeners may also have difficulty with some tasks. Remind them that even normal hearing people have some difficulty hearing in some situations and children's listening skills will improve as they grow and develop and as they get more listening practise.

Applications of the PEACH and TEACH

The PEACH and TEACH can be used to:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of amplification. The PEACH and TEACH can be used to identify areas of concern from both the parents' and teachers' perspectives. This may lead to fine tuning of hearing aid fitting, introduction of a second program to assist in noisy environments, or the need for assistive listening devices.
2. Compare a change in amplification. For example, a child may be fitted with new hearing aids that have different hearing aid features. The audiologist could use the PEACH and TEACH to evaluate such a change. In another instance a child who wears a cochlear implant may be fitted with a hearing aid in the non-implanted ear. The audiologist may want to compare the child's oral/aural abilities with and without the hearing aid.
3. As a counselling tool to help the parents and teachers of recently diagnosed children understand the difficulties the child is experiencing as a consequence of their hearing loss and subsequently after fitting to highlight the benefits of hearing aid use. This may help in cases where parents and/or children are having difficulty accepting the hearing loss and the need for hearing aids.