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Central Auditory Processing Deficits (CAPD)

CAPD is a condition that can make a child look and act deaf. But if a child is deaf but you feel like there's something more, it can explain how to make it harder to learn, process information from a cochlear implant, or use auditory-verbal training.

What Central Auditory Processing Deficits is

Central Auditory Processing Deficits (CAPD) is when your brain has a problem understanding what sounds mean. So while your child's ears could be fine, your child may still act like he can't hear.

People call CAPD different things:

- "central deafness"
- "word deafness"
- "auditory perceptual problem"

What does CAPD look like?

All children with CAPD often have trouble with:

- Telling the difference between sounds.
- Telling the difference between the different sounds in words.
- Seeing how sentences come together to make a story.
- Following directions, unless they are very simple.

Many hearing children with CAPD look and act like they're deaf:

- They don't respond when people talk to them.
- They have a hard time talking back.
- They have a hard time sitting still and paying attention.
- They don't understand when the teacher gives them directions.
 - Sometimes noise in the background makes it hard for them to understand what the teacher said.

Even very smart children may tune out the classroom. They may also interrupt or "act up" to get attention from the teacher and other students.

Many of these children look or act "spaced out." They may also get stressed out by moving from doing one thing to another.

There are different kinds of CAPD

- a. Some children act like they have a hearing loss, even though their hearing tests say they're fine.
 - o They have trouble understanding what people say in a noisy room.
 - o They have trouble paying attention when people talk.

How to help these children

- o Make the room quieter.
- o Use an FM system or a Sound Field.
- o Make sure that they're paying attention.
- o Talk plainly, and point to what you're talking about.
- b. Some children have trouble understanding big words and hard sentences. These children need help with:
 - o Learning and practicing new words and what they mean
 - o Reading
 - o Answering hard questions.
 - o Taking written tests.
 - o Learning to pay attention even when it's very noisy.

How to help these children

- o Read in small amounts. Then talked about what you read. Help him sort out and understand the information.
- o Break down questions into smaller parts. Take 1 question at a time.
- o For taking written tests, take more breaks in between the tests. Read the questions out loud. Make sure they understand the directions.
- c. Some children have trouble with following lots of complex instructions. If they do, they may act confused, act up, or get goofy.

How to help these children

- o Use simple instructions using only one sense at a time.
- o After reading out the directions, ask your child what he heard. Write out on a board what he heard. Then write out the steps he needs to take.
- d. Some children have trouble putting a story in order.

How to help these children

- o Help them start their homework
- o Help them learn how to take notes in school
- o Help them learn how to put their school papers in order

For all kinds of CAPD, a good speech and language therapist can help a lot. Especially if she is interested in language problems and learning disabilities.

Get your child tested for CAPD

A speech and language pathologist would test your child for CAPD. Here's what she would look for:

- Can your child put sounds together in the right order to make words?
 - If not, this could explain why your child has problems speaking. It also shows if your child can understand spoken directions, or language at all.
- Can your child understand what people say when it's noisy?
 - Children learn in school mostly by listening. So if they can't understand what they hear, they may have problems learning. They may even have trouble following what's going on.

Not all children with CAPD will have trouble reading or writing. But some will. No one knows why some children can't read or write well, but others can.

Testing for CAPD

- If your child is younger than 5, find a speech and language pathologist who works a lot with CAPD. Otherwise, the test may not be as helpful.
- Once your child turns 5, a speech-language pathologist who works a lot with CAPD can test your child.
- Most tests for CAPD work best for children older than 7.

How you can help your child

This may seem like a big problem, but there is help for children with CAPD! Special teachers and therapists who know a lot about this problem can help your child learn.

You may even think about placing your child in a school or program for the deaf. Some children with CAPD do best in these programs, even if their ears are working just fine.

Teach your child how to relax

Having CAPD can be very stressful for a child. Not knowing what people are saying can make things very tough for a child! So teach your child how to calm down:

- When you see your child starting to get frustrated, show him how to take a few deep breaths and relax his body.
- Teach your child words or signs for tense, stress and pressure. But also teach words for calm, feel good and relaxed.
- Watch your child's body language. Learn what signals mean he is starting to get stressed.
- Assume that child can't tell what feeling he is feeling. Talk about feelings with your child. This will help your child to calm down.
- Try to get him to relax without watching TV, or playing video games.

Learn more about CAPD

- Read [this article \(http://www.scilearn.com/alldocs/mktg/10035-952MYoungCAPD.pdf\)](http://www.scilearn.com/alldocs/mktg/10035-952MYoungCAPD.pdf) that tells you more about what CAPD can look like. (Clicking on this link will open up a PDF file.)
- Check out the [CAPD Parents' Page \(http://pages.cthome.net/cbristol/capd.html\)](http://pages.cthome.net/cbristol/capd.html) to find out more about CAPD. (Clicking on this link will open up the site in a new window.)
- Read these [pages on CAPD \(http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/medical/ears/central_auditory.html\)](http://www.kidshealth.org/parent/medical/ears/central_auditory.html). (Clicking on this link will open up the site in a new window.)
- Check out this [list of books on CAPD \(http://www.listen-up.org/h_books/capd.htm\)](http://www.listen-up.org/h_books/capd.htm).

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<http://www.raisingdeafkids.org/special/capd/>