

Prerequisites for the Holistic Development of Children with Hearing Impairment

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Abstract: Human beings aspire for success in every sphere of their lives. Success is a state or condition of fulfilling a certain limit of human expectations. Success for a person can mean living a happy and fulfilling life. For a person to be successful, he must have several prerequisites. Prerequisites establish the necessary basis and conditions for success in various spheres of a person's life. On fulfillment of these prerequisites, a person acquires the basic knowledge, skills, abilities and readiness required to achieve his goals. These pave the way for progress and personal development and ultimately increase the chances of achieving the goals set by the person. There are several prerequisites for the all-round development of hearing impaired children. Hearing impaired children have prerequisites for proper development in the areas of hearing, speech, language, communication, education, family, social, psycho-social, emotional, psychological, personality, emotional etc. By fulfilling these prerequisites, they can be helped in their progress and in achieving their full potential. Many efforts need to be made for this. In this article an attempt has been made to present various prerequisites responsible for the all-round development of hearing impaired children.

Index Terms: Prerequisites, Hearing impaired, Speech, Language, Family, Society, Psycho-social, Emotional, Psychological, overall development etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

Prerequisite means 'something or condition that is necessary beforehand to accomplish another task or purpose'. A prerequisite can be anything that is required to be accomplished or achieved before doing another task. Prerequisites establish the necessary basis and conditions for success in various spheres of life. When these prerequisites are met, individuals acquire the basic knowledge, skills, abilities and readiness required to achieve their goals. These pave the way for progress and personal development and ultimately increase the chances of achieving the goals set by the individual. There are several prerequisites for the all-round development of children with hearing impairment. These include early identification and intervention, access to appropriate hearing technology and support services, speech, language, communication needs, effective communication strategies in the classroom and a supportive and inclusive learning environment, among others. Apart from these, promoting a positive attitude and providing individual support is important for their academic, social, emotional and other development. The most important of all is normal hearing. Normal hearing is essential for the development of many areas including speech, language and communication. Timely and appropriate interventions, including hearing aids or cochlear implants and language development programs are important to maximize the child's potential. A supportive and accepting environment at home with encouragement for communication and social interaction is essential for the child's overall well-being and access to effective communication methods, whether oral language with amplification or sign language is essential for learning and social integration.

Various Types of Prerequisites for the Holistic Development of Children with Hearing Impairment:

There are various prerequisites for the holistic development of hearing impaired children. Fulfilling these prerequisites can help hearing impaired children progress and achieve their full potential. These prerequisites are as follows-

(I) Auditory Development:

The ear, auditory nerve and brain areas responsible for hearing must be structurally healthy. The ability to perceive and process sounds correctly is essential for learning and communication. Exposure to sounds, especially during critical developmental periods, is important for language acquisition. Caregivers play an important role in promoting communication and language development through interaction and stimulation. Social interaction, especially with peers, can help compensate for any developmental delays caused by hearing loss. The child's access to early intervention programs is essential. These programs include fitting hearing aids, undergoing auditory training, learning language and participating in educational strategies.

(II) Speech Development:

Hearing, vision and other senses are important for gathering information and learning about the world, including language. Gross and fine motor skills are required to produce speech sounds and engage in physical communication. The respiratory, phonological and articulatory systems must work together to produce sound. Decoding, comprehension, memory and generalization of language are essential for both receptive and expressive language. A nurturing environment with opportunities for interaction, exploration and exposure to language is important. Verbal and nonverbal communications are all crucial for proper speech development.

(III) Language Development:

Healthy functioning of all senses is important for receiving and processing information from the environment, including linguistic input. Gross and fine motor skills are important for speech production and other aspects of language use. Pronunciation requires coordinated movements and fine motor skills are important for things like writing. The ability to attend to, remember, decode and generalize information is crucial for understanding and using language. This includes the ability to understand verbal or sign language and use it to express oneself. Language development requires a nurturing environment that provides opportunities for communication, interaction, and exploration. Language acquisition requires access to a language, whether spoken, signed, or written. Early and continued exposure to a language is important.

(IV) Oral Language Development:

Identification of hearing loss as early as possible is important; as it allows intervention during the sensitive period for language acquisition. Early fitting and consistent use of hearing aids, cochlear implants or other assistive devices is essential to provide access to sound. Early intervention from specialists is important for parents and children to learn strategies to develop listening and spoken language skills. A child needs well-developed sensory abilities including hearing, vision and proprioception to gather and process information for language development. Fine motor skills and gross motor skills are essential for speech production and overall body coordination, which are prerequisites for oral language. Coordinated functioning of the respiratory, phonological and articulation systems is essential to produce sound and speech. A nurturing and stimulating environment with ample opportunities for exploration and communication helps promote language development. Parents and caregivers act as important speech models. This includes teaching the child to produce sounds and words and developing lip reading skills to supplement auditory input. Many specialists offer guidance and training to parents, and offer expertise in speech and language development for children with hearing loss. Professionals specializing in working with deaf children can provide vital educational and linguistic support.

(V) Sign Language Development:

Natural sign languages, like spoken languages, are fully accessible to deaf children because they are visual. A deaf child's brain is prepared for language during a specific early developmental period. Delay in language learning can have negative effects. The early milestones of sign language learning show many similarities with oral language

development, emphasizing the need for similar early experiences. Like oral language, sign language should be taught from birth or very early in life. Studies show that starting sign language learning at an early age leads to better language outcomes. A child needs consistent input from fluent sign language speakers, such as Deaf parents, family members or teachers, to learn sign language naturally and at the same time as spoken language. Deaf children are sensitive to visual linguistic information. They need a rich, stimulating visual environment that provides consistent access to language through signs and gestures. Having Deaf adults in their lives is important, as they serve as powerful language models, role models and sources of cultural connection for Deaf children. Families should be supported in learning sign language to facilitate early communication with their Deaf child. Access to the wider Deaf community helps provide a wide range of language experiences and social support. (VI) Prerequisites for communication development:

(VI) Communication Development:

Healthy senses, especially hearing and vision, are important for gathering information and facilitating language development. Hearing loss, even mild, can have a negative impact on speech and language acquisition. Gross and fine motor skills are essential for speech production and overall communication. The respiratory, phonological-conductive and articulatory-conductive systems must function properly to produce speech sounds. Decoding, comprehension, memory and the ability to generalize are important for effective communication. A nurturing environment with opportunities for interaction, play and exploration is essential for language development. Verbal and non-verbal communications are all important.

(VII) Educational Development:

Early detection of hearing loss, ideally in infancy, allows for timely intervention with hearing aids, cochlear implants and other assistive systems. It is important for children with hearing loss to provide access to visual language such as sign language along with oral language development. Active parental involvement in the child's education and language development is essential for continued support at home and school. A supportive educational environment, including qualified teachers, access to assistive technology, and inclusive practices, is critical for academic success. Early intervention programs that focus on language, communication, and social-emotional development can have a significant impact on a child's long-term educational outcomes.

(VIII) Development:

Early identification of hearing loss and initiation of appropriate interventions such as hearing aids or cochlear implants and speech therapy are important for the optimal development of a hearing impaired child. Hearing loss may impede learning of oral language, so early introduction to sign language, visual communication and other alternative communication methods is extremely important. A family environment that is understanding, patient and actively involved in the child's communication and learning is essential. Collaboration between audiologists, speech-language pathologists, teachers and other specialists ensures a comprehensive approach to the child's needs.

(IX) Social Development:

Early diagnosis of hearing loss, timely interventions such as hearing aids or cochlear implants should be provided to facilitate the child's language development and social interaction. Providing access to oral or sign language is important for his communication and social development. For oral language, this may include speech therapy and auditory training. It is important to create inclusive environments in schools and communities where persons with hearing loss can interact with their peers and adults. This includes providing facilities such as sign language interpreters, visual aids and accessible learning materials. The family plays an important role in the child's social development. This includes providing emotional support, advocating for their child's needs and promoting dialogue within the family. Direct teaching of social skills, such as initiating and sustaining conversations, understanding social cues and managing emotions, may be beneficial.

(X) Psychosocial development:

This is important for language acquisition and social interaction. For children with hearing loss, this may include visual communication methods such as sign language, auditory access through amplification and visual warning devices. Parents play an important role in the child's psychosocial development. It is essential to accept the child's hearing loss, understand its impact and provide a supportive environment. Opportunities to interact with peers, family and other adults are important for developing social skills, emotional understanding and a sense of belonging. Learning to recognize, understand, and manage emotions is critical for healthy social interactions and overall well-being. According to the National Institutes of Health, early intervention programs and access to appropriate educational settings can have a significant impact on language development, social skills, and overall psychosocial well-being.

(XI) Emotional Development:

The foundation for emotional development in children with hearing impairment rests on early access to a strong communication system, whether it is verbal or sign language. This gives them the opportunity to express their needs, understand emotions, and engage in social interactions. Opportunities to interact with both deaf and hearing peers are important for developing social skills, building confidence, and promoting a positive self-concept. Strong family dynamics, including acceptance of the child's hearing impairment and active participation in his or her development, are important for emotional well-being. Access to qualified professionals such as audiologists, speech-language pathologists, and teachers who understand the specific needs of children with hearing impairment is essential. Encouraging children with hearing impairment to express their needs, understand their rights, and advocate for themselves empowers them to cope with social situations and gain independence.

(XII) Psychological Development:

The child's secure and responsive relationships with caregivers, especially in infancy, are fundamental for building trust, self-esteem and the ability to form healthy relationships later in life. Language development is the cornerstone of cognitive and social-emotional development. Hearing plays a critical role in learning and understanding language, making hearing loss a significant factor in delaying language learning. A variety of social situations, interactions and communication with peers and adults are essential for developing social skills, understanding social cues and learning about the world. Cognitive development depends on sensory input, including auditory information, which can be affected by hearing loss and potentially affect problem-solving, reasoning and other cognitive abilities. The ability to manage emotions, behaviors and attention is important for academic success, social competence and mental well-being. Hearing loss may affect the development of self-regulation skills due to limited access to social cues and communication.

2. CONCLUSION

Children with hearing impairment have prerequisites for proper development in the areas of hearing, speech, language, oral language, sign language, communication, education, family, social, psychosocial, emotional, psychological, personality, emotional, etc. By fulfilling these prerequisites, they can be helped in their progress and in achieving their full potential. Many efforts need to be made for this. Early hearing identification and intervention programs are very important for their all-round development. Early intervention programs and supportive environment can help children with hearing loss to develop strong social skills and emotional well-being. Providing information to parents about hearing loss, communication strategies and available resources is important for effective intervention. Appropriate amplification devices such as hearing aids and cochlear implants can significantly improve children's access to sound. Appropriate family, social and educational strategies and support can strengthen the aspirations of children with hearing impairment.

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