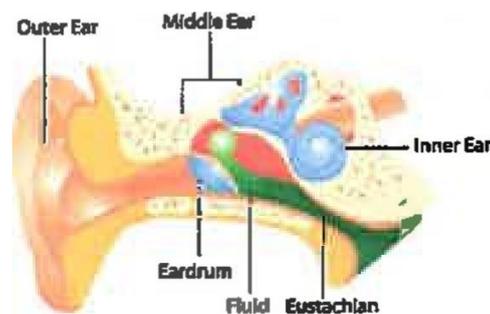


# Children with a Conductive Hearing Loss "Glue Ear"

## What is Glue Ear?

Glue Ear is a fluid build-up behind the ear drum which can occur due to colds, ear infections and allergies but may occur without other symptoms. Glue Ear is a common form of hearing loss as the fluid build-up makes it harder for sound to travel through the ear. The hearing loss can be mild or moderate and may fluctuate from day to day.

Glue Ear is usually temporary but can take up to 6 weeks to resolve. If it does not resolve then a referral to Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) may be needed. Some children may have longer term difficulties as a result of more persistent Glue Ear.



## How common is it?

80% of children will be affected by Glue Ear at some point before they reach 10 years old. Early Years settings are likely to have several children with Glue Ear at any one time.

## How can you help a child with Glue Ear?

- Reduce background noise e.g. turn the TV off, close doors to noisy environments, turn off noisy electrical equipment like fans and computers
- Get down to the child's eye level and face them when speaking to them so that they can see your face
- Make sure the child is sitting in a good position to hear and see you e.g. at the front of the classroom, with their better ear facing towards you
- Use visuals such as signing and photographs to help the child to understand what you are saying
- Cover hard surfaces with fabric to reduce reverberation and distortion of sound e.g. carpet, curtains, blinds, corkboards, cloth bags for toys instead of plastic boxes

How might Glue Ear affect a child?

- The child may say 'what?' or 'pardon?' a lot
- The child may watch your face to gain clues as to what you are saying
- Hearing people speaking (especially in background noise)

Listening and concentrating

- The child may not be aware that you are talking to them when you are out of sight and may look surprised when they see you
- The child may appear distracted and not respond to you
- The child may get tired more quickly as trying to hear speech against background noise is more challenging

Engaging with others

- The child may become frustrated because they don't understand what is going on
- The child may appear demanding of attention
- The child may play in their own world
- The child may lack confidence and be withdrawn
- The child may wait for cues from others to know what to do

Developing speech and language skills

- The child may struggle to produce speech sounds clearly because they cannot hear them clearly

## What support is available?

Audiology Services in East & North Herts and West Herts Audiology Services provide assessment of hearing, advice regarding hearing aids and can identify if further support may be required for a child.

## National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)

This charitable organisation offers information, advice and support for families of children with hearing impairments. They have specific information for parents/carers of children with Glue Ear [Causes of glue ear | Information about glue ear \(ndcs.org.uk\)](#)

### Hertfordshire Family Centre Service

Your local Family Centre Service, including Public Health Nursing, can provide ongoing health advice to families on a range of topics. They can offer practical advice and signposting to other sources of support in your local area.

### Hertfordshire Integrated Services for Learning – Deaf and Hearing Support Service

The Specialist Advisory Service offer specialist support for children with moderate, severe and profound deafness. They also provide advice and support to preschool, nursery and school settings on the best way to support children with difficulties hearing.

[Deaf and Hearing Support Service \(hertfordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

### Children and Young People's Speech and Language Therapy Service

The Speech and Language Therapy Service supports children with identified speech, language and communication needs. The Advice Line service offers support for families without the need for a referral and where concerns have been raised about a preschool child's communication development, families can attend a drop in screening clinic for further support.

[Children & Young People's Therapies Service | Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust \(hct.nhs.uk\)](#)