

# Tips for Teens/Young Adults

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## Words of Wisdom

- Be proud of who you are - the only thing that will hold you back is yourself if you allow it.
- Be honest with yourself - knowing your strengths and limitations can help you advocate for what you need.
- Maintain a sense of humor and balance in everything you do.
- Seek information about your hearing loss and what you can do to maximize your communication skills.
- Understand your communication and technology options.
- Develop a set of strategies to help you when communication breakdowns occur.
- Let people know your preferred mode of communication - misconceptions and assumptions can only lead to frustration and communication breakdowns.
- Understand and use your legal rights to help you obtain what you need to be successful.
- Develop knowledge of where you can get support (e.g., financial, emotional, educational, occupational) if and when it is needed.
- Develop a support system.

## Finding Services after Secondary School

### *Locating an Audiologist or New CI center after Leaving Home*

Once you graduate from secondary school and decide where you are going to live or go to university, it is important to consider whether or not your current audiologist or cochlear implant center is within a reasonable driving distance. If you are staying local, you are in luck and can resume the services that you have. If you are moving a great distance, or out of state, it is necessary to locate a new audiologist or cochlear implant center.

Why? Even though you leave for university with working equipment, there is no guarantee that your equipment will not break down. It is best to get established with a new, local audiologist immediately so that you can have your personal hearing aids or cochlear implant serviced.

One way to locate a new audiologist is to find out if the university that you are attending has an audiology program. If so, you may be able to receive services on campus. If the university does not offer a program, you can locate an audiologist by researching websites. If you have a cochlear implant, ask your current cochlear implant center audiologist if they are aware of centers in the area that you are planning on moving or attending university. Another option is to contact the cochlear implant manufacturer and ask for contact information for cochlear implant centers for that area.

### *Locating Interpreter and Captioning Resources*

If you are going to university you need to investigate services on campus for accessibility/disability assistance. A university may have an entire office responsible for

accommodations such as requesting sign language interpreting, captioning, or other support services. Documentation of your hearing loss will be required.

If you need a sign language interpreter for a medical, legal, or other service appointment, make sure that you indicate this when you schedule the appointment. Depending on the size of the office, these services may or may not be provided. If the office does not provide the service you may need to seek support through a local community disability agency. It is also a good idea to research on the internet the sign language and other services that are available in the area that you are moving to.

If you need a sign language interpreter for a job interview or job training, make sure you indicate this accommodation at the time you schedule the appointment. Most employment settings must provide the requested accommodations unless they meet the hardship criteria under ADA

### *Documentation of Important Information*

It is difficult to remember when your hearing aids were last tested, what the results were, what type and model of technology you are currently wearing and what the warranties are. To keep all of this information together, start a notebook with all of your documentation. Purchase an inexpensive 3 ring binder with tabs to organize all of your information. Some ideas of sections (tabs) that you would want to organize include:

- **Contact information** of audiologists, ear specialists, interpreters, agencies and any other specialists. Include their names, address, phone number, and fax number.
- Your **audiograms and test results**. It is important to have a record of all of your hearing test results so that the next professional that works with you can understand if your hearing loss has remained stable, fluctuated, or is progressing. If you have copies of CI mappings, include those in this section.
- A record of your **hearing aid or CI model** including manufacturer warranties. If you have purchased hearing assistance technology, keep your model, purchase and warranty information in this section too. It is a good idea to keep your all of your receipts in case you need to return a defective unit.
- Copies of your **educational records**. If you filled out the Personal Profile and Accommodations Letter, print it out and keep in this section.
- Any **other information** that relates to your hearing loss and accommodations that you may need.