

The background is a solid dark blue. In the top right corner, there is a decorative pattern of overlapping triangles in various shades of blue, including a lighter blue and a very dark blue.

Imagine that one day you wake up and can no longer hear. How would you communicate? Listen to music or watch television? Talk to your family?

How Language Impairments Affect Children Socially

Erin Gelinis

Studies

Fujiki, Brinton, and Todd (1996)

Preschool setting

Children were asked to select a peer to play with and those selected were placed in groups of liked, disliked, or neutral

Normal language took over the liked group

Children in the language disorders group tended to fall into the disliked or neutral groups



Williams and Asher Loneliness Questionnaire

Children age 8-12

Tests satisfaction with peer relations

Language impaired students had less satisfying friendships than their classmates



Fujiki, Brinton, and Todd (1996)

Children with communication disorder preferred talking to adults

Subjects with SLI did not interact with as many kids as their normal speaking counterparts

Children with SLI are more likely to be rejected and have fewer positive peer interactions

This reduces social development and opportunities for other types of group interaction

Does this surprise anyone?



Davis, Efenbein, Schum, and Bentler (1986)

Tested 40 children age 5-18 with sensorineural hearing loss

12 children tried to hide their hearing aids

50% of children with hearing loss expressed concern about peer acceptance

15% of normal hearing children expressed concern about peer acceptance



Davis, Efenbein, Schum, and Bentler (1986)

Similar amount of interest in playing sports as normal hearing children

Have more difficulty in school

Some kids report spending most of their time alone



Behavioral Problems

Aggression

Impulsivity

Immaturity

Resistance to authority



Culbertson and Gilbert (1986)

25 children with unilateral hearing loss versus 25 children with no hearing loss

Did not significantly differ from the normal-hearing group in terms of self-image

Rated as being easily distractible, unable to follow directions, and daydreamers

Many kids with hearing loss need additional educational help

8 out of the 25 unilateral group repeated a grade



Conclusions

Language abilities affect behavior, social life, and social skills

Fewer, less meaningful friendships

Need more educational help

Spoken language barrier does not mean there are knowledge barriers





Solutions?

Parents and teachers should inform their children about hearing disabilities/
hearing aids

Schools implement a one day class learning about disabilities

Encourage them to include language impaired students in group activities

Take time to understand their outburst

Encourage students to learn a few ASL signs



For the future....

What are the long term social effects of language impaired children?

Do children grow out of their embarrassment of having hearing aids, shyness, or attitude problems attributed to their language impairments?

