

Hearing aid and cochlear implant technologies do wonders, but there are still some accommodations needed to help students with hearing loss achieve their full athletic potential.

Understand/Get to Know Your Athlete

Recognize His/Her Unique Needs

Each student-athlete will have personal preferences when it comes to maximizing hearing and ensuring optimal communication. We suggest a meeting with the parents and the student (approx. ages 12 and up) to find some common ground where you can help be an advocate for him/her during practices and games. It is also important to understand that equipment may often get in the way of the athlete's ability to play. By letting them take the time to fix something that arises, they will be able to perform more proficiently.

Communication in Athletics

- **Keep Background Noise to a Minimum**
When you are addressing the group please choose a quiet spot to do so.
- **Use Non-Verbal Communication**
Create sport-specific signals with your student-athlete that will clearly display an important point you need to get across.
- **Enunciate Your Words and Speak Loudly**
Speak naturally without exaggerated lip movements; be clear and easy to understand. Speak loudly, but yelling/screaming will not help as it drains the clarity from your voice.
- **When You Address the Group**
Make sure your student-athlete with hearing loss is close enough in order to understand the instructions. Be sure that he/she understood the directions. It is also important that you do not single out student-athletes with a hearing loss. Instead, ask other student-athletes if they understood the instructions (or use the Check-In method below).
- **Address the Child by Name**
This will help your student-athlete with a hearing loss know you are speaking to him/her.

Other Things You Can Do

- **Figure out Required Equipment**
Lots of required equipment will hinder the student-athlete's ability to hear. It is very important to speak with parents about this and figure out how the child can best manage this. There are helmets for children with cochlear implants. Balls may also pose serious danger to the student athlete and to hearing equipment. Have a discussion with the parents about how best to manage these risks.
- **Inform Others**
Inform the people that matter: the umpire/referee, the assistant coach, some parents, and possibly some core squad members. Whoever you think could help make accommodations for the athlete who is hard of hearing.
- **Check In**
Create a signal with your athlete who is hard of hearing to use to be sure he/she understands the instructions.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are many professional athletes with hearing loss.

Some even went on to compete at multiple Olympic Games.

CONTACT US

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Please do not:

<p>Face away as you speak</p> 	<p>Chew gum as you talk to student-athletes</p> 	<p>Single out student- athletes with hearing loss</p> 
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