



**Canossian School  
(Hearing Loss)**

**Note: This is the online version of Canossian School's  
Guide for Parents of Children with Hearing Loss.  
Some content will be unavailable.  
For more information and the full Guide,  
please contact Canossian School  
(contact details are on page 35).**

# **Guide for Parents of Children with Hearing Loss**

# PREFACE

*This guide is a publication of Canossian School in collaboration with the school's Parent Support Network. Canossian School is a Catholic Special Education school founded in 1956 by the Canossian Daughters of Charity. It is a government-funded primary school that serves children, 7 - 14 years of age, with hearing loss as their primary disability. The school has teachers and audiological staff who have steadily been building competence in working with children with hearing loss. The close partnership with its co-located satellite partner school, Canossa Catholic Primary School, has allowed the school to offer a mainstream schooling experience for all its students regardless of their abilities and needs.*

*The school has worked closely with parents of its students over the years. It recognises that there is a dearth of local resources for parents of children with hearing loss that offer professional advice on the educational concerns that they may have. Our deep conviction in providing sound, evidence-based advice to these families, together with years of experience of working with families, has resulted in the publication of this guide. This guide is the first of its kind to be produced in Singapore and we are grateful to all parents, staff and community partners who have been consulted in the production of this guide.*

*In particular, the school would like to register its appreciation to the local experts, including audiological and educational experts, who have reviewed and critiqued this guide.*

**Guide Production Team  
Canossian School**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the following individuals and groups for reviewing this guide before publication, as well as for their insightful comments.

**DR. JENNY LOO**

SENIOR PRINCIPAL AUDIOLOGIST  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

**MS. LEE ZHENG ZHENG**

SENIOR AUDIOLOGIST  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

**DR. THONG JIUN FONG**

ENT SENIOR CONSULTANT  
SINGAPORE GENERAL HOSPITAL

**DR. BARRIE TAN**

SENIOR CONSULTANT  
BARRIE TAN ENT HEAD & NECK SURGERY

**DR. CALISTA CHAN**

LEAD EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST  
SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS DIVISION, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

**CANOSSIAN SCHOOL PARENTS SUPPORT NETWORK**

# CONTENTS

<b>1.</b>	<b>AIM OF THIS GUIDE</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>BASICS OF HEARING LOSS</b>	
	A. TYPES OF HEARING LOSS	7
	B. DEGREES OF HEARING LOSS	8
	C. TYPES OF AUDIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS AND APPOINTMENTS	9
	D. HEARING DEVICES ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH	10
	E. TYPES OF THERAPIES	12
<b>3.</b>	<b>IMPACT OF HEARING LOSS ON SPEECH AND LANGUAGE</b>	
	A. SPEECH AND LANGUAGE MILESTONES	13
	B. COMMUNICATION CONTINUUM	15
<b>4.</b>	<b>EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS</b>	
	A. SCHOOLING OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS	18
	B. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR CHILD AT CANOSSIAN VILLAGE	20

<b>5.</b>	<b>ANNEX - USEFUL INFORMATION</b>	
	A. AUDIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS	26
	B. ENT SERVICES AVAILABLE IN SINGAPORE	28
	C. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SCHEMES	29
<b>6.</b>	<b>REFERENCES</b>	31

# 1. AIM OF THIS GUIDE

If your child has recently been diagnosed with hearing loss, this guide is designed especially for you.

You may have a lot of questions and concerns. It is normal to feel upset, anxious, angry, lost, or even overwhelmed, but there are many treatment and adaptation options available for your child. With an appropriate and timely combination of treatment and therapy, there may be reduced impact of hearing loss on your child's speech and language abilities. It is possible for your child to develop speech and language patterns comparable to those of hearing children and for them to become successful academically.

We hope you find the information in this guide useful and that it will help you through the decisions regarding treatment, management, therapy and schooling you will have to make in the weeks, months and years to come.



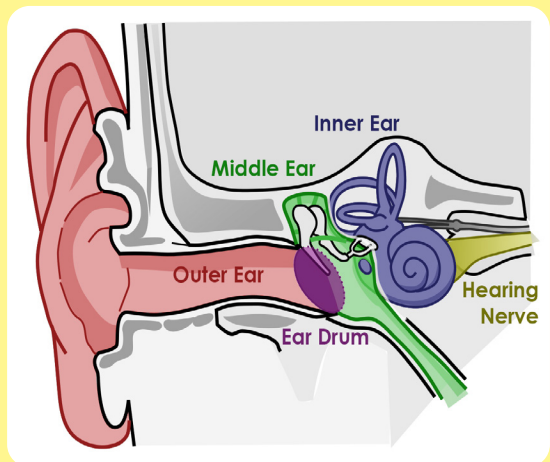
## 2. BASICS OF HEARING LOSS

As you work with your child's audiologist, you might come across terms describing the type and degree of hearing loss as well as the different audiological tests and actions to be taken. This section explains key terms you might encounter.

### 2A. WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT “TYPES” OF HEARING LOSS?

There are 3 types of hearing loss:

- **Sensorineural hearing loss** is caused by a problem in the inner ear or the hearing nerve. In children, this is usually due to genetics, disease, or medication. This type of hearing loss is often permanent.
- **Conductive hearing loss** is when sound conducts poorly to the inner ear, usually due to problems in the outer or middle ear. In children, malformation of the ear or infection of the middle ear are common causes. Some causes can be treated medically or surgically, and the hearing can improve. For other causes, the loss is permanent.
- **Mixed hearing loss** is a combination of sensorineural and conductive loss.



Cross-section of the human ear

## **2B. WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT “DEGREES” OF HEARING LOSS?**

Contrary to popular belief, very few individuals are truly “deaf” (i.e. cannot hear anything at all). A common classification of hearing loss in Singapore, adapted from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), groups it into five levels.

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**



## 2c. TYPES OF AUDIOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS AND APPOINTMENTS

There are many different types of hearing tests and your child's audiologist will select the most appropriate tests based on your child's age, understanding, and cooperation level.

Hearing tests can be divided into screening and diagnostic tests.

### Screening tests

- are quick and easy to conduct
- are designed to detect hearing loss in babies before they show symptoms
- are used in the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS) Programme conducted in Singapore

### Diagnostic tests

- will confirm or rule out hearing loss
- can accurately detect and rule out hearing loss better than screening tests
- can accurately identify hearing loss even in very young children
- are used on children who are referred by screening tests

For a comprehensive list of tests which can be used to screen and diagnose hearing loss, please refer to **Section 5A** on pages 26-27.

### Did you know?

After your child has been fitted with hearing aids or cochlear implants, they will also need to regularly see an audiologist for hearing aid follow up or cochlear implant mapping sessions, where the audiologist programs the devices to maximise your child's hearing.

## 2D. HEARING DEVICES ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH

If your child has just been diagnosed with hearing loss, they can still have as much time “hearing” and developing speech as children without hearing loss **if** they are **diagnosed** and **fitted** with a suitable hearing device(s) before 6 months of age<sup>1</sup>. They will have a better chance of developing normal hearing, speech and language patterns when supplemented with one or more of the following types of support:

- 1. Therapy to address speech or language delay*
- 2. Technological support for devices and social support for using them*
- 3. Language-rich home environment created by parents and guided by trained personnel*
- 4. Appropriate educational approaches in school by specialist teachers and allied health professionals*

Children who are not fitted with devices or appropriately supported will struggle to follow oral interactions, tend to lack clarity in their speech, falter in their confidence and are likely to fall behind in academic performance.

<sup>1</sup> Joint Committee on Infant Hearing, 2007.

# TYPES OF HEARING DEVICES

*There are many devices available to address hearing loss.  
An audiologist can help each child find the most  
appropriate device for their condition.*



**Cochlear  
Implants (CI)**



**Bone Anchored  
Hearing Aid (BAHA)**



**Hearing Aids (HA)**

## 2E. TYPES OF THERAPIES

Amplification and devices are only the first step to helping your child. Hearing devices will not fully “cure” a child’s hearing loss, they will still have some trouble hearing all the available sounds in their surroundings.

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**

### **3. IMPACT OF HEARING LOSS ON SPEECH AND LANGUAGE**

#### **3A. SPEECH AND LANGUAGE MILESTONES**

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**

If your child is showing signs of speech and/or language delay, such as not meeting the milestones, it is a cause of concern. Children with a speech delay who do not get appropriate intervention commonly have:

- ***decreased receptive language, reading, and learning skills***
- ***behavioural and social emotional problems***
- ***a difficult time communicating and bonding with peers***
- ***negatively affected psychosocial health***

We strongly recommend speaking to your child's paediatrician or ENT doctor if they are showing signs of speech or language delay. The doctor, along with other professionals such as audiologists and speech therapists, will be able to advise you on the most appropriate course of action.



### 3B. THE COMMUNICATION CONTINUUM

Most children with hearing loss are born to hearing parents and are encouraged to acquire a spoken language. However, the ability of children to learn communication by **listening** and **speaking** is based on multiple factors<sup>2</sup>. You can ask yourself a few questions to help decide which is the best communication option for your child.

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**

<sup>2</sup> (Rinella, 2014)

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**



**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**

## 4. EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS

Studies<sup>4</sup> suggest that children with hearing loss will enter secondary school with an average language delay of about 4 to 5 years unless they receive **concentrated** and **effective** language training, even when wearing appropriate hearing devices. Students need appropriate teaching and learning approaches provided by trained teachers. Only certain schools in Singapore have teachers trained specifically to work with students with hearing loss.

### 4A. SCHOOLING OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS

#### *Preschools and Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (EIPIC)*

To maximise your child's growth potential and minimise the development of secondary disabilities such as speech and language delay, you could consider an inclusive preschool. Some cater to children with all special needs, while others specifically to children with a particular disability. Some have teachers and other specialists trained in specific disabilities.

Participating in an EIPIC centre is also strongly recommended. As with preschools, some EIPIC centres cater to children with all special needs, while others are disability specific. SG Enable<sup>5</sup> maintains a directory of EIPIC centres.

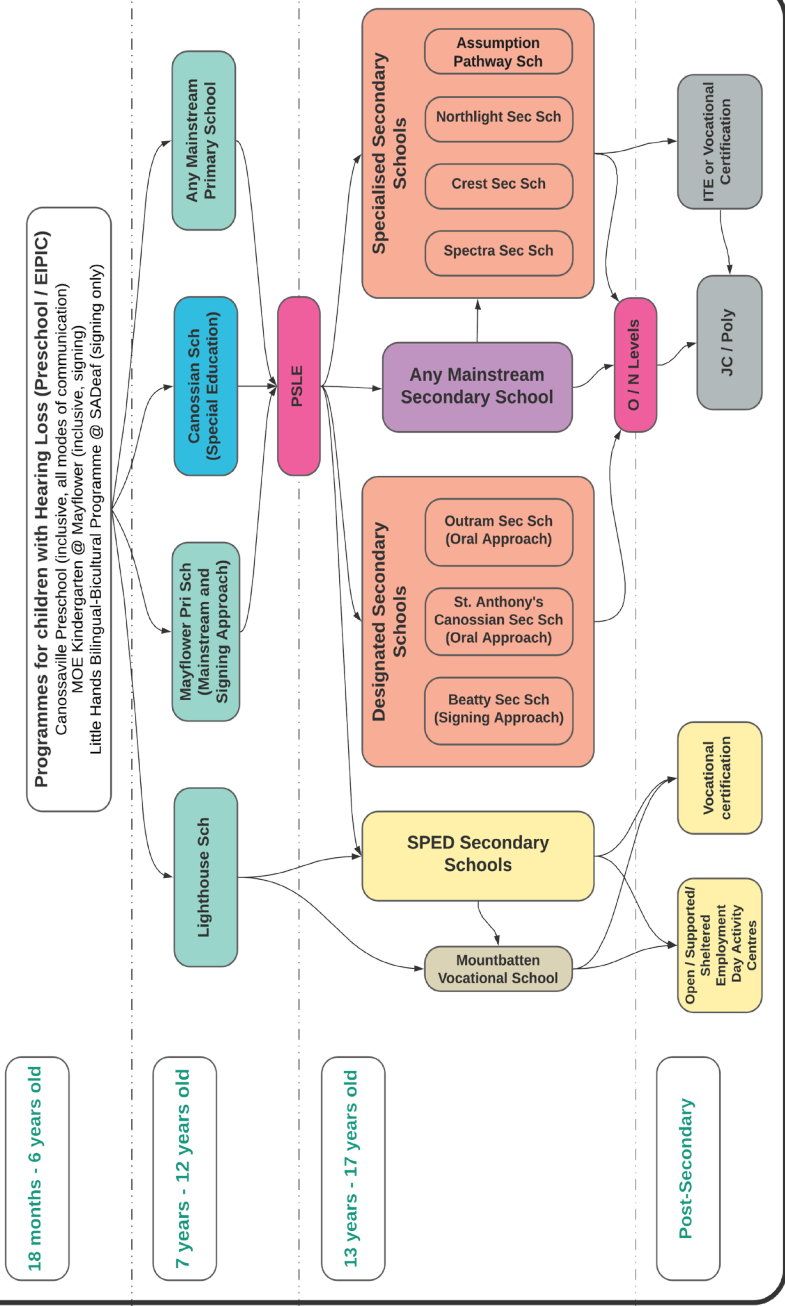
#### *Primary and Secondary Schools*

There are multiple educational pathways available to students with hearing loss in primary and secondary schools, some of which are shown on the following page:

<sup>4</sup> (Blamey, 2001)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.sgenable.sg/>

# Educational Pathways for Students with Hearing Loss in Singapore



## 4B. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR CHILD AT CANOSSIAN VILLAGE

### CANOSSIAN EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMME FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN (CANOSSIAN EIPIC)

Canossian Early Intervention Programme for Infants and Children (Canossian EIPIC) is the only early intervention programme that specialises in supporting children with hearing loss from birth to 6 years old. It supports children to reach their full potential through Formation of the Heart, where the focus is placed on character education.



A professional team of early interventionists, audiologists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, psychologists and social workers work closely with each other and each child's family. The programme is built around family-centred practices such as regular parent training workshops, fortnightly parent communication updates, yearly home visits and family interventions by the psycho-social team.

Early intervention is offered either as part of the Canossaville Preschool Curriculum or as a standalone EIPIC programme. Canossaville Preschool is a mainstream preschool specializing in hearing loss. It provides rich, play-based learning activities for children between 18 months to 6 years old. This unique set-up offers parents a holistic one-stop support for their children. Parents gain peace of mind knowing that their children are able to receiving a nurturing Canossian Preschool education together with early intervention and therapeutic support for their hearing loss.

## CANOSSIAN SCHOOL (HEARING LOSS)

Sited on the same campus is Canossian School (CS) which is a Special Education primary school for children with hearing loss. Together with its satellite partner school, Canossa Catholic Primary School, CS offers full inclusion of all its students in a mainstream school setting. Students from the school are taught in mainstream classes and receive additional learning support from specialist teachers at our school to ensure that they are able to keep pace with their hearing classmates from the mainstream school. Students at the school also have access to audiologists and speech therapists on site too.



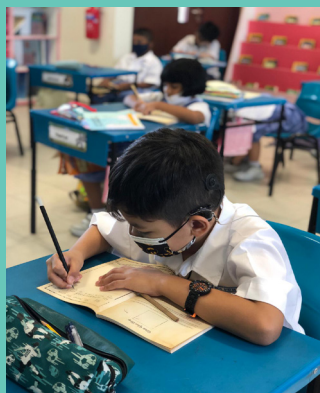
All our classrooms are acoustically treated



Reduced student-to-teacher ratio allowing for closer monitoring of each child's progress



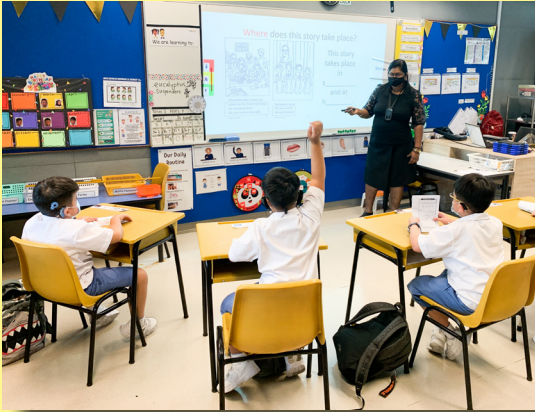
The on-site Child Development Unit (CDU) provides access to speech therapists and other professionals



Students learn in a language-rich environment through inclusion at our mainstream sister-school (Canossa Catholic Primary School)

## SPECIALIST TEACHERS

Canossian School has teachers who have training both in subjects taught in the national curriculum as well as in special needs with a focus on hearing loss.



Teachers are trained in teaching approaches that help students develop language and communication fluencies.



Regular workshops for teachers (and parents) help teachers keep abreast of developments in strategies to support the learning of all students.

# AUDIOLOGICAL UNIT

The school has an on-site audiological unit that provides audiological support for our students which includes daily checks of devices, troubleshooting, fitting of new devices, audiological assessments and ear mould making.



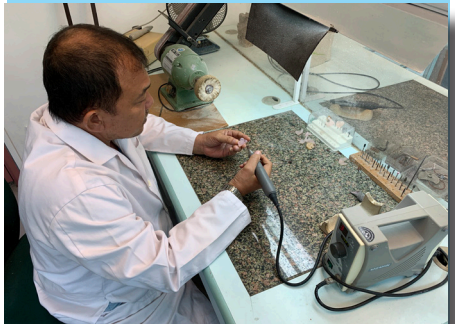
Daily device checks ensure that devices worn by students are working correctly.



Hearing device issues are resolved on site or sent directly for repairs. Loaner devices and new accessories may be provided and are also available for purchase.

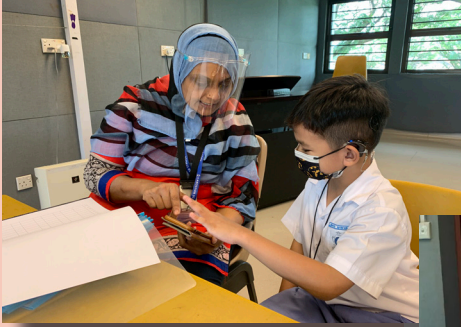


Annual audio assessments help teachers understand the hearing, speech, and language development of students.



Our ear mould lab produces ear moulds on-site for students without needing a hospital visit.

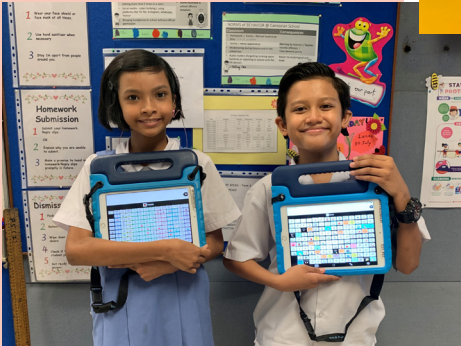
# PROGRAMMES DESIGNED FOR CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS



Individual Conversation (IC) sessions are regular one-on-one, interactive language sessions with a teacher which help children develop spoken and conversational skills.



Our Parent Guidance Programme equips parents with knowledge and skills to support their child through a rich language-learning environment at home.



Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) allows students with severe speech delay to create sentences from pictures and words. This boosts confidence and can enhance speech production.



Students learn Adaptive Living Skills from audiologists. They learn the need for devices, how to maintain them, and develop independence and self-advocacy.



## CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (CCAs)



Students in our Percussion Band and Choir hone their listening, linguistic memory, and communication through music. They perform at school and public performances to raising awareness that children with hearing loss can also enjoy music.



Students in our Gardening Club take care of Mother Nature through hands on activities and learn the value of hard work.



Students in our Art Club express themselves in the visual medium and develop self-confidence and creativity.

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**

**This content is unavailable in the online version. For more information and the full Guide for Parents, please contact Canossian School (contact details are on page 35).**

# Notes

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page below the 'Notes' header. It is intended for the user to write their notes.



# Notes

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page below the 'Notes' header. It is intended for the user to write their notes.



***“The school is a harvest that costs  
but it yields the most fruits.”***

***St. Magdalene of Canossa  
Foundress of Canossian Schools***



Published by Canossian School  
(August 2021)  
*All rights reserved*

Canossian School  
1 Sallim Road, Singapore 387621  
Tel: 6749 8971  
Email: [admin@canossian.edu.sg](mailto:admin@canossian.edu.sg)  
Website: <http://www.canossian.edu.sg>



**If you've read up to this point,  
we'd like to get in touch with you!**

**Please scan below  
for a feedback form.**



[Or click me!](#)