

Online Learning Delivery Tips for Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing ¹

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Whether it be for inclement weather, water main breaks or to prevent the spread of infectious disease, more and more schools are turning to online learning days so that education can continue uninterrupted. Although this is not an exhaustive list and additional accessibility considerations may need to be made based on individual needs, here are some general considerations to keep in mind while planning for your child's online learning.

1. Ensure Adequate Auditory Access

When listening to e-lectures, students who are deaf/hard of hearing will need to have **good quality auditory access**.

PLEASE be sure that your child has access to their personal DM/FM systems. They will need them to plug into their computers to adequately access online lecture delivery.

- Click [here](#) to view a document about how to connect the different makes and models of DM/FM transmitters to electronic devices as well as information about adjusting the volume and if you have multiple listeners (e.g. parents listening along with their child).

If your child is having difficulty understanding their teacher, please let their teacher know so they can adjust and modify how they are recording their sessions (i.e. use of better microphone, include closed captions, etc)

2. Enable Closed Captions During Online Teaching



Your child will benefit from being able to read the words while his/her teacher is speaking or while watching videos (both curricular and non-curricular). While some people with normal hearing may consider closed captions (CC) distracting, this feature is of undeniable support to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. To enable closed captions on your computer/tablet:

Look for the closed captioning logo on videos and "select"

- It is often found on the toolbar at the bottom of the page
- In some cases you may need to hover your mouse over the bottom of the page to pull up toolbar that will have the captioning icon
- If there is no captioning available for the online teaching resources, it is recommended that you contact your child's teacher to ask for captioning.

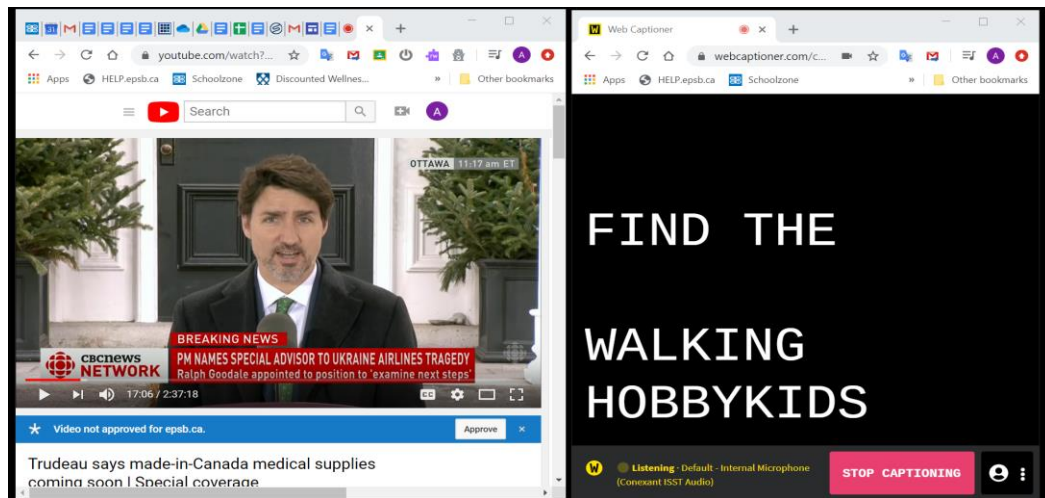
If there is no closed captioning option available on online resources or videos:

1. Open the video in one window and in a separate window open www.webcaptioner.com ²
2. Both the video and the captioning will then be visible at the same time
 - You will need to 'minimize' and resize both windows to fit on the screen
 - See image below

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² Note: Webcaptioner does not require any membership or login and can be used by anyone however, its captioning accuracy is limited

3. Press “Start Captioning” (twice) and the program will attempt to caption the sounds it hears
 - This includes both sounds from the computer and in the room so a quiet environment is necessary



3. Maintaining ALL DAY Use of Hearing Devices

Continue consistent use of your child’s hearing devices as if they were at school. It is important to keep the routine of wearing their hearing devices ALL day, including weekends and evenings, and not just during online schooling.

Your child’s listening bubble is smaller than other children’s. Hearing isn’t restored to normal with hearing devices, but by wearing their hearing devices for the **entire day**, your child will be better able to **overhear** or ‘catch’ more of the language and conversations in your household. This overhearing is how 80-90% of our vocabulary is learned and is necessary for growth in understanding and use of spoken language. Please take a moment to watch this [video](#) of Educational Audiologist, Carol Flexer, describing how hearing aids are ‘doorways to the brain’.

Additionally, consistent hearing builds a sense of trust and bonding. Being able to predict events in their world and the behavior of those in your child’s life depends on consistent hearing. Click this link for more information about [building trust and confidence](#).

4. Self Advocacy

Take this opportunity to help build your child’s self-advocacy skills by teaching them to become more independent with their hearing equipment and an advocate for their hearing needs.

- Encourage them to put in and take out their hearing aids
- Teach them when and how to change hearing aid batteries
- Encourage them to continue to charge their FM/ DM systems and to be involved in connecting it to the computer
- If they are struggling to hear or follow along, help them to figure out why
 - For example, is it because they cannot see the speaker’s face, because the speech is too fast, or is there too much background noise occurring?
- If you want more ideas to help build self-advocacy skills, please email your educational audiologist or teacher of the deaf/hard of hearing.