

What Are the Signs and Symptoms of Auditory Processing Disorders?

Symptoms of CAPD can range from mild to severe and can take many different forms. If you think there may be a problem with how your child processes what he or she hears, ask yourself these questions:

- Is your child easily distracted or unusually bothered by loud or sudden noises?
- Are noisy environments upsetting to your child?
- Does your child's behavior and performance improve in quieter settings?
- Does your child have difficulty following directions, whether simple or complicated ones?
- Does your child have reading, spelling, writing, or other speech-language difficulties?
- Is abstract information difficult for your child to comprehend?
- Are verbal (word) math problems difficult for your child?
- Is your child disorganized and forgetful?
- Are conversations hard for your child to follow?

These, as well as other behaviors, may be signs of a central auditory processing disorder (CAPD). It's an often-misunderstood problem because many of the behaviors noted above may also appear in other conditions such as learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and even depression. But kids with CAPD *can* have a coexisting disorder - the most commonly seen is ADHD. Although CAPD is often confused with ADHD, it *is* possible to have both.

Adapted from:

http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/ears/central_auditory.html

April 2006

How Can I Help My Child?

Difficulty with following directions is possibly the single most common complaint about children with CAPD. Some of things you can do that may help:

- Reduce background noise.
- Have your child look at you when you're speaking.
- Use simple, expressive sentences.
- Speak at a slightly slower rate and at a mildly increased volume.
- Ask your child to repeat the directions back to you aloud and to keep repeating them aloud (or to himself or herself) until the directions are completed. Make certain your child understands the directions and isn't just copying your words. You can be more certain of this if your child is able to rephrase the directions.

For directions that are to be completed at a later time, writing notes, wearing a watch, and maintaining a household routine also help. General organization and scheduling also seem to be beneficial for many children with CAPD.

It's especially important to teach your child to be responsible and actively involved in his or her own success. Your child can be encouraged to notice noisy environments, for example, and move to quieter places when listening is necessary.

These other home strategies may also be helpful:

- Provide your child with a quiet study place (not the kitchen table).
- Maintain a peaceful, organized lifestyle.
- Encourage good eating and sleeping habits.
- Assign regular and realistic chores, including keeping a neat room and desk.
- Build your child's self-esteem.

These are all very important goals. Your modeling of these behaviors goes far toward encouraging them in your child.

Adapted from:

http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/ears/central_auditory.html

April 2006