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# Give Your Child a Positive Feeling About Being a Child with Hearing Loss

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## Quick Guide

1. Foster a household that celebrates and accepts differences and recognizes that all children are capable



2. Develop positive social skills to help your child navigate challenging peer encounters with finesse and resilience



3. Help your child develop “tease tolerance” by fostering a thick skin and positive self-talk



4. Connect with other children with hearing loss



## The Details

### 1. *Foster a household that celebrates and accepts differences and recognizes that all children are capable*

- Everyone has unique differences that shape their lives in positive ways
  - Talk about how your child's hearing loss contributes to his/her identity
- Even very young children sense how their family feels about hearing loss
  - Celebrate rather than hide your child's hearing loss by making decisions that show you are not ashamed
  - Consider talking openly about people of different ages who have hearing loss
- Encourage your child to take ownership of his/her hearing loss at a young age
  - Have your child participate in selecting device colors and caring for their devices with age-appropriate tasks
- Help your child understand that he/she has the ability to succeed no matter what; there are no "failures" only temporary setbacks.
- Talk positively about your child's qualities and potential to help your child understand that hearing loss does not make your child less capable or likable

### 2. *Develop positive social skills to help your child navigate challenging peer encounters with finesse and resilience*

- Build awareness of what your child may miss in social settings and practice techniques to manage the situation
  - Ask your child how social encounters are going at school, then discuss ways to address challenges
- Plan a quick blurb to share with others about your child's hearing loss. This will help you feel prepared to address questions and will model for your child how to do so in the future
- Empower your child to educate others about hearing loss
  - Discuss the questions your child may expect to receive and how to address them

### 3. *Help your child develop "tease tolerance" by fostering a thick skin and positive self-talk*

- Explain to your child that he/she does not have to let teasing bother them – the best way to minimize teasing is to avoid over-reacting
- Teach your child that people who have differences may need a tough skin
- Combat teasing by teaching your child positive self-talk (e.g. "Teases have no power over me" or "By resisting this teasing, I am being the stronger, better person.")
- Teach your child to put on his/her "raincoat" and let mean words glide off
  - Remember that kids who tease are looking to get a reaction and by not reacting your child is teaching them that their words don't hurt (even if they do)

### 4. *Connect with other children with hearing loss*

- Find ways to interact with other hard of hearing kids through social groups, parent networks or summer camps
- Resources:
  - Hands & Voices Guide by Your Side program: <http://www.handsandvoices.org/gbys/index.htm>
  - List of camps for hearing impaired children: [http://www.kidscamps.com/special\\_needs/hearing\\_impaired.html](http://www.kidscamps.com/special_needs/hearing_impaired.html)
  - Ask your audiologist for local opportunities

#### Useful References:

Fostering a positive self-concept in your child:  
<http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/self-concept>

Dealing with teasing:  
<http://www.listeningandspokenlanguage.org/Document.aspx?id=1191>

