

# Where Can I Find Help?

## For Hearing Aids

A **hearing aid** is an electronic device that is worn in or behind the ear. When worn, it amplifies sound for those with a hearing loss. There are a variety of styles and models available today. The FDA created this **CHECKLIST** to assist you in purchasing the best hearing aid(s) for your child:

- 1. Get a check-up.** Take your child to a doctor, preferably an ear, nose, and throat physician (ENT) to get a medical exam. The medical exam will rule out any medical reason for the hearing loss which would require medical or surgical treatment. You will receive documentation of your child's medical exam and a statement that says your child is a candidate for hearing aids. The doctor can also give you a referral to an audiologist or a hearing aid dispenser if your health plan requires a doctor's referral for services.
- 2. Consider going to an audiologist.** An audiologist will perform an audiological exam to determine the type and amount of your child's hearing loss, and will counsel you as to the non-medical options to improve your child's hearing loss.
- 3. Buy hearing aids from a licensed hearing healthcare professional.** \*\* This will typically be an audiologist, a hearing aid dispenser, or an ear, nose, and throat physician. Provide the documentation that you received from your child's doctor that states he/she is a hearing aid candidate. Ask your hearing healthcare professional to help you determine what features your child will need.
- 4. Be careful when selecting the hearing aids.** Select aids that are convenient and easy to use. Buy hearing aids with features that meet your child's needs in daily listening activities.
- 5. Be sure you know how to care for your child's hearing aid.** Ask your hearing healthcare professional to show you how to clean it and replace the batteries. Ask if you can have a copy of the written instructions.
- 6. Ask about a trial/adjustment period.** Most manufacturers provide a trial/adjustment period during which your child's hearing aids can be returned for a refund. A trial/adjustment period will allow you and your child to test out the hearing aids to see if they work well for him/her.
- 7. Check out the warranty.** Like any other product you purchase, be aware of what parts or services are covered by the warranty.

\*\*To find out if a healthcare professional is licensed, check with your local Better Business Bureau, consumer protection agency, State Attorney General's office, or the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA).

## Where to find Financial Assistance

Hearing aids can be expensive, ranging in price from \$500 - \$3500 per aid. Medicaid and some private insurance companies will pay for a portion of the cost of hearing aids. However, the majority of the cost will probably still come from you. Below is a list of organizations and programs that may assist with this financial burden.

"In Texas, there is a law that all group coverage plans must offer an optional 'Speech and Hearing Rider', but it is up to the plan administrator to choose to add the rider. In my experience, the cost of this rider is very minimal compared to the services covered. Sometimes all it takes is an informed employee asking about the coverage for the company to be willing to add the rider to their group insurance policy. Also, many times the insurance companies do not even explain the optional riders to the person making the insurance decisions, so company personnel may not even realize it is available."  
– Tamara Joyce-Wylie, parent

### AID THE SILENT [aidthesilent.com](http://aidthesilent.com)

(From its web page): Aid the Silent was created to help thousands around the world find information about living in today's society as a deaf or hard-of-hearing individual, to learn about Jesus' word and to inspire people to embrace their differences.

**Deaf Resources:** We believe that no child or teen should be denied the necessary equipment and access to professions that can ensure them to have success in life. Children and/or teens, ages 2 to 18 can apply for economic assistance for hearing aids, FM systems and speech therapy. Providing necessary equipment and services through scholarships to deaf or hard of hearing children/teens who economically cannot afford these services otherwise.

**Contact Information:** <http://aidthesilent.com/Contact/>

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Last revised: 6/12/2017

**AUDIENT Program****1-866-956-5400****[www.audientalliance.org](http://www.audientalliance.org)****Email: [info@audientalliance.org](mailto:info@audientalliance.org)**

AUDIENT helps people with low-income nationwide access quality hearing aids and related care at a significantly lower cost. AUDIENT income qualifies families to be eligible for a discount on brand name hearing aids available through the AUDIENT Alliance's national network of dedicated hearing care providers. Brand selection includes Oticon, Phonak, Siemens, Widex, & Unitron hearing aids. AUDIENT provides a downloadable application for assistance under the "Patient" section of their website.

**BeAnAngel.org****2003 Aldine Bender****Houston, TX 77032****281-219-3313****FAX: 281-219-7746****Email to: [russ@beanangel.org](mailto:russ@beanangel.org)**

Be An Angel has provided funding to meet the needs of special angels since 1986. It is our MISSION to improve the quality of life for children with multiple disabilities or profound hearing deafness by providing adaptive equipment and select services to individuals and institutions that require a supplement to alternative means of funding.

**Benevolent Protective Order of Elks of the USA****2750 N. Lakeview Avenue****Chicago, IL 60614-1889****773-755-4700****[www.elks.org](http://www.elks.org)**

The Elks are a "fraternal order with nearly a million members and a 141-year history, a network of more than 2000 lodges in communities all over the country, a generous charitable foundation that each year gives millions in scholarships, an inspiration to youth, a friend to veterans and more." While the national website does not say that they help with hearing aids specifically, they may have local chapters that will provide some assistance. Use the website's "Lodge Locator" or look in the phone book to find a lodge in your area.

**CareCredit****GE Money****PO Box 960061****Orlando, FL 32896-0061****[www.carecredit.com](http://www.carecredit.com)**

CareCredit is a credit card exclusive for healthcare services. CareCredit provides a "No Interest payment plan" if paid in full within 6, 12, 18 or 24 months on purchases with a CareCredit card. Minimum monthly payments are required.

**Children's Hearing Aid Texas (CHAT)**  
**Serving Central Texas only - 512-828-0510**  
**Any Baby Can**  
**1121 E. 7<sup>th</sup>**  
**Austin, TX 78702**  
**(512) 454-3743 or (800) 672-0238**  
**Fax: (512) 454-0205 HIPPA Fax: (512) 334-4465**  
**[www.abcaus.org/CHAT.asp](http://www.abcaus.org/CHAT.asp)**

CHAT provides auditory services and hearing aids for children in Central Texas who have no financial alternatives to meet these needs. CHAT was founded on the belief that hearing aids are essential for the development of cognitive and social skills in infants and children with hearing loss.

Financial assistance goes toward the following services:

- Audiological diagnostics (including any special testing required);
- Ear molds;
- Hearing aids;
- Hearing aid repairs;
- Services required for having the hearing aids fit on the child and maintained

Families must reside in the CHAT service area (Counties include: Bandera, Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Comal, Fayette, Gillespie, Gonzales, Guadalupe, Hays, Kendall, Kerr, Kimble, Lee, Llano, Medina, Milam, Travis and Williamson). **\*Residents of Bexar County are NOT ELIGIBLE.**

### **Children with Special Health Care Needs Services Program (CSHCN)** **(Formerly Hearing Services for Children/HSC) (Formerly PACT)**

**General Inquiries Line: 1-800-568-2413**

**<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/cshcn/default.shtm>**

CSHCN is made up of several programs that provide services to children with extraordinary medical needs, disabilities, and chronic health conditions. Children eligible for CSHCN receive hearing services and personal hearing aids.

As of September 1, 2009, the Program for Amplification for Children of Texas (PACT) was transitioned into Hearing Services for Children. It is no longer administered by the Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Instead, it is under the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and DSHS-Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) Services Program.

All hearing services available to children are given through the Texas Medicaid & Healthcare Partnership (TMHP). Children who receive Medicaid will continue to have access to the same services, including hearing aids that were available under PACT. However, those services will be provided by Medicaid and certain Medicaid providers. It is important that you check with the facility or doctor you choose to use to see if they went through the transition process to switch from PACT to Medicaid since not all facilities and doctors have completed this process. For more information contact your doctor or audiologist. For answers to frequently asked questions, refer to the website above.

## **Communication Access Ability Group**

**Austin, TX**

**713-807-1176**

**Email: [scheduling@caag4.com](mailto:scheduling@caag4.com)**

**Austin email: [austin.scheduling@caag4.com](mailto:austin.scheduling@caag4.com)**

Communication Access Ability Group, better known in Southeast Texas as CAAG, is the realization of the vision of the 4 entrepreneurs Dave Hancock, Rita Wedgeworth, Everett Puckett and Jerry Jahn who set out with the goal of providing a high-end Sign language interpreting service to Texas and the nation that represented *reliability*, *quality* and *care* to the Deaf Community, Sign language interpreters, its customers, and its employees. This vision can be summed up in CAAG's motto, "Communication Matters!" Resource specialists assist individuals of all ages who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing with identifying the technology most suited to their current needs (ex. hearing aids, assistive listening devices, captioning devices, etc.).

## **Disabled Children's Relief Fund**

**P.O. Box 89**

**Freeport, New York 11520**

**TEL: 516-377-1605**

**[www.dcrf.com](http://www.dcrf.com)**

Disabled Children's Relief Fund (DCRF) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that provides children with disabilities grant assistance to obtain wheelchairs, orthopedic braces, walkers, lifts, hearing aids, eyeglasses, medical equipment, physical therapy, and surgery. DCRF focuses special attention on helping children throughout the U.S. that do not have adequate health insurance. To apply for a grant, go to the website and click on "Services". You will need to print and fill out an application to submit between April and September.

## **Easter Seals – Central Texas**

**8505 Cross Park Drive, Suite 120**

**Austin, TX 78754**

**512-615-6843 (for rehabilitation services)**

**512-476-1638 (Fax – for physician referrals only)**

**[eastersealstx.org](http://eastersealstx.org)**

Easter Seals provides exceptional services, education, outreach, and advocacy so that people living with autism and other disabilities can live, learn, work and play in our communities. Easter Seals provides different services in each area. For example, Easter Seals Central Texas provides audiology services. They do not help pay for hearing aids but they provide "low-cost" aids and services connected to fitting and purchasing aids. Check with your local Easter Seals office to see what services are available in your area.

## **First Hand Foundation**

**2800 Rockcreek Parkway**

**Kansas City, MO 64117**

**816-201-1569 816-571-1569 (Fax)**

**[www.cerner.com/firsthand/](http://www.cerner.com/firsthand/)**

**Email: [firsthandfoundation@cerner.com](mailto:firsthandfoundation@cerner.com)**

First Hand Foundation is a nonprofit organization that helps children with health-related needs when insurance and other financial resources have been exhausted. The Foundation helps with clinical necessities (such as medication and surgeries), medical equipment and travel related to a child's care. Additionally, the Foundation implores doctors, hospitals and equipment providers to discount their services below listed prices. Funding is distributed directly to the child's immediate healthcare provider. Applications for funding can be found on the website's homepage.

**Fraternal Order of the Eagle  
Fraternal Order of Eagles Grand Aerie  
1623 Gateway Circle S.  
Grove City, OH 43123  
Phone: 614-883-2200 Fax: 614-883-2201  
www.foe.com**

The Fraternal Order of Eagles is an international non-profit organization that unites fraternally in the spirit of liberty, truth, justice, and equality, to make human life more desirable by lessening its ills, and by promoting peace, prosperity, gladness and hope. While the national website does not say that they help with hearing aids specifically, they may have local chapters that will provide some assistance. Use the website's "Aerie Locator" or look in the phone book to find an aerie in your area.

**Hear Now  
Starkey Hearing Foundation  
6700 Washington Avenue  
Eden Prairie, MN 55344  
800.328.8602 FAX: 952-828-6946  
www.sotheworldmayhear.org or www.starkeyhearingfoundation.org  
Email: nonprofit@starkey.com**

Hear Now is a national non-profit program committed to assisting those permanently residing in the U.S. who are deaf or hard of hearing and have no other resources to acquire hearing aids. To learn more or to download an application, go to "Programs" and click on "Hear Now."

**Hearing Aid Labs  
1931 N.W. Military Hwy #100  
San Antonio, TX 78213  
210-342-3924**

No charge for cleaning and repairing. Give away used hearing aids.

**HELPCard  
ESCO  
3215 Fernbrook Lane North  
Plymouth, MN 55447-5325  
800-992-3726  
www.earserv.com/financing.htm  
Email: info@earserv.com**

ESCO provides Protection plans offered for coverage of damage or loss of hearing aids. They also have the "HELPCard" that is similar to a credit card to help you purchase a hearing aid. HELPCard gives you the buying power to purchase the highest quality hearing aid to correct your hearing loss with affordable monthly payment options.

**Hike Fund, Inc.  
10115 Cherryhill Place  
Spring Hill, FL 34608-7116  
352-688-2579 (also FAX)  
www.thehikefund.org  
Email: ceterrill1@aol.com**

The purpose of the HIKE Fund, Inc. (Hearing Impaired Kids Endowment Fund) is to provide hearing devices for children with hearing losses between the ages of newborn and twenty years. The Fund collects money to award to children who are in need of hearing aids or other assistive listening devices whose parents or guardians are unable to meet this specific need. It is estimated that 100 children are provided with hearing devices each year. To apply for funds, go to the website and click on "Application".

**Kiwanis Clubs**  
**3636 Woodview Trace**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46268-3196**  
**800-549-2647 (dial 411) or 317-875-8755 (dial 411)**  
**FAX 317-879-0204**  
**[www.kiwanis.org](http://www.kiwanis.org)**

Kiwanis International is a global organization of members of every age who are dedicated to changing the world, one child and one community at a time. While the national website does not say that they help with hearing aids specifically, they may have local chapters that will provide some assistance. To locate a club in your area, use the website's "Find a Club" or look in your local phone book.

**Knights of Columbus**  
**Knights of Columbus Headquarters**  
**1 Columbus Plaza**  
**New Haven, CT 06510**  
**203-752-4000**  
**[www.kofc.org](http://www.kofc.org)**  
**Email: [info@kofc.org](mailto:info@kofc.org)**

The Knights of Columbus was formed to render financial aid to members and their families. Mutual aid and assistance are offered to sick, disabled and needy members and their families. Social and intellectual fellowship is promoted among members and their families through educational, charitable, religious, social welfare, war relief and public relief works. While the national website does not say that they will help with hearing aids specifically, they may have local councils that will provide some assistance, especially if you are a member or know a member. Use the website's "find a council" or your local phone book to find a council in your area.

**Lions Club International**  
**300 W. 22nd Street**  
**Oak Brook, IL 60523-8842**  
**630-571-5466**  
**[www.lionsclubs.org](http://www.lionsclubs.org)**

Founded in 1917, Lions Club International is best known for fighting blindness – it is part of their history as well as their work today. But they also volunteer for many different kinds of community projects – including caring for the environment, feeding the hungry and aiding seniors and those with disabilities. For many years, Lions Clubs have assisted families in purchasing hearing aids for their children. Use the website's "Find a club" or your local phonebook to find assistance in your area.

**March of Dimes**  
**1275 Mamaroneck Avenue**  
**White Plains, NY 10605**  
**National Office Phone: (914) 997-4488**  
**Texas: (972) 669-3463**  
**[www.marchofdimes.com](http://www.marchofdimes.com)**

March of Dimes' mission is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth, and infant mortality. We carry out this mission through research, community services, education and advocacy to save babies' lives. March of Dimes researchers, volunteers, educators, outreach workers and advocates work together to give all babies a fighting chance against the threats to their health such as prematurity, birth defects and low birth weight. While the national website does not say that they will help with hearing aids specifically, they may have local chapters that will provide some assistance. To find a local chapter, go to the website or use a local phone book.

**Miracle Ear Children's Foundation**  
**P.O. Box 59261**  
**Minneapolis, MN**  
**55429-0261**  
**1-800-234-5422**  
**Fax: 763-268-4295**  
**www.miracle-ear.com**

The Miracle-Ear® Children's Foundation serves and supports children who have a hearing loss. Their purpose is to provide no-cost hearing aids and hearing support services to children whose families have incomes that are significantly limited and who are unable to afford the high costs of quality hearing instruments. As each child's hearing challenges are unique, every application for service and support are considered on an individual basis. The recommended hearing aid style will depend on each child's specific hearing condition and circumstances. For more information or to download or fill out an application online go to <http://www.miracleear.com/childrenrequest.aspx>

**Optimists Clubs**  
**Help Them Hear Program**  
**4494 Lindell Blvd.**  
**St. Louis, MO 63108**  
**314-371-6000**  
**800-500-8130**

**www.optimist.org**  
**Email: [programs@optimist.org](mailto:programs@optimist.org)**

Optimist Clubs are dedicated to "Bringing Out the Best in Kids" and do their part through community service programs. Since each Club is autonomous and run by members in their community, Optimists have the unique flexibility to serve the youth of their area in any way they see fit. Optimist Clubs see a need in their community and react to it. Optimist Clubs have helped Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students obtain scholarships and grants. To contact your local club, email [programs@optimist.org](mailto:programs@optimist.org) or check the club directory online.

**Quota International**  
**We Share Foundation**  
**1420 21st Street NW**  
**Washington, DC 20036**  
**202-331-9694**

**www.quota.org or www.wesharefoundation.org**

Founded in 1919 as the first international women's service organization, Quota's membership today includes men as well as women in clubs in North America, South America, the South Pacific, Europe, Southeast Asia, and the Caribbean. With a motto of "we share," Quotarians are known especially for their service to disadvantaged women and children and deaf, hard-of-hearing, and speech-impaired people. Serving and encouraging others, developing friendships, and promoting international understanding are values shared by all Quota members.

The **Sound Beginnings Children's Hearing Aid Program**, renewed through September 30, 2010, offers Quota International service clubs in the United States the opportunity to distribute up to 100 vouchers for free hearing aids supplied by Siemens Hearing Instruments, Inc., to qualified applicants. To request assistance, click on the "Children's Hearing Aid Program" link.

**Rotary International**  
**One Rotary Center**  
**1560 Sherman Ave.**  
**Evanston, IL 60201, USA**  
**Phone: 847-866-3000**  
**Fax: 847-328-8554 or 847-328-8281**  
**[www.rotary.org/](http://www.rotary.org/)**

Rotary International is the world's first service club organization, with more than 1.2 million members in 33,000 clubs worldwide. Rotary club members are volunteers who work locally, regionally, and internationally to combat hunger, improve health and sanitation, provide education and job training, promote peace, and eradicate polio under the motto "Service Above Self". Local clubs may support your community's needs. Use the "club locator" at the top of the webpage to contact your local club for assistance.

**San Antonio Independent Living Services (SAILS)**

**1028 S. Alamo St**  
**San Antonio, TX 78210**  
**210-281-1885 ext. 124**  
**Able Zamaro or Amir Shipp**  
**Email: [Program.director@sailstx.org](mailto:Program.director@sailstx.org)**  
**Web: <http://www.sailstx.org/>**

**Sertoma International**  
**1912 E. Meyer Blvd.**  
**Kansas City, MO 64132**  
**Voice: 816-333-8300 Fax: 816-333-4320**  
**[www.sertoma.org](http://www.sertoma.org)**  
**Email: [infosertoma@sertomahq.org](mailto:infosertoma@sertomahq.org)**

Sertoma's primary focus is on assisting the more than 50 million people with hearing health issues and educating the public on the issues surrounding hearing health. The Sertoma Hearing Aid Recycling Program (SHARP) helps needy people obtain hearing aids. Please contact Sertoma Headquarters at (800) 593-5646 or email them for more information.



**Texas Workforce Commission**  
**Formerly: The Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)**  
**4800 N. Lamar Blvd.**  
**Austin, Texas 78756**  
**1-800-628-5115 or TTY 1-866-581-9328**  
**[www.dars.state.tx.us](http://www.dars.state.tx.us)**

The Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) serves people with a wide variety of hearing disabilities. DARS employs specially trained rehabilitation counselors throughout Texas who use a person's preferred communication method and have a good understanding of the difficulties faced by deaf or hard of hearing people in a variety of training and work settings. Deaf and hard of hearing persons can take advantage of services designed specifically for their benefit. These services include:

- Counseling and guidance;
- Hearing evaluation;
- Purchase of hearing aids and communication equipment;
- Aural rehabilitation;
- Communication assistance services;
- Academic and vocational training;
- Communications assessment and training.

(For an informational brochure - <http://www.dars.state.tx.us/publications/pdf/01811.pdf>) Under DARS there are two resources for hearing aids - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Independent Living Services (ILS).

Vocational Rehabilitation Services are directed to assist individuals with disabilities who are 14 yrs. and older to obtain and maintain employment. The ILS program is for those who do not or cannot work, and need services to live independently, such as hearing aids. Someone who receives VR services does not qualify for IL services. There is no guarantee that an applicant will be eligible for hearing aids. This is determined through assessments, evaluations and other measures. For more information click on the website above or call your DARS office.

**Travelers Protective Association of America**  
**3755 Lindell Boulevard**  
**St. Louis, MO 63108**  
**314-371-0533 Fax: 314-371-0537**  
**[www.tpahq.org](http://www.tpahq.org)**  
**Email: [support@tpahq.org](mailto:support@tpahq.org)**

The Travelers Protective Association of America established the TPA Scholarship Trust for the Hearing Impaired in 1975 to provide financial aid to children and adults who suffer deafness or hearing impairment and who need assistance in obtaining mechanical devices, medical or specialized treatment or specialized education as well as speech classes, note takers, interpreters, etc. and in other areas of need that are directly related to hearing impairment. To apply for aid, submit an application by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Applications can be found online under the "Community" tab on the home page. Click on "Scholarship Trust". Scroll down to download an application.