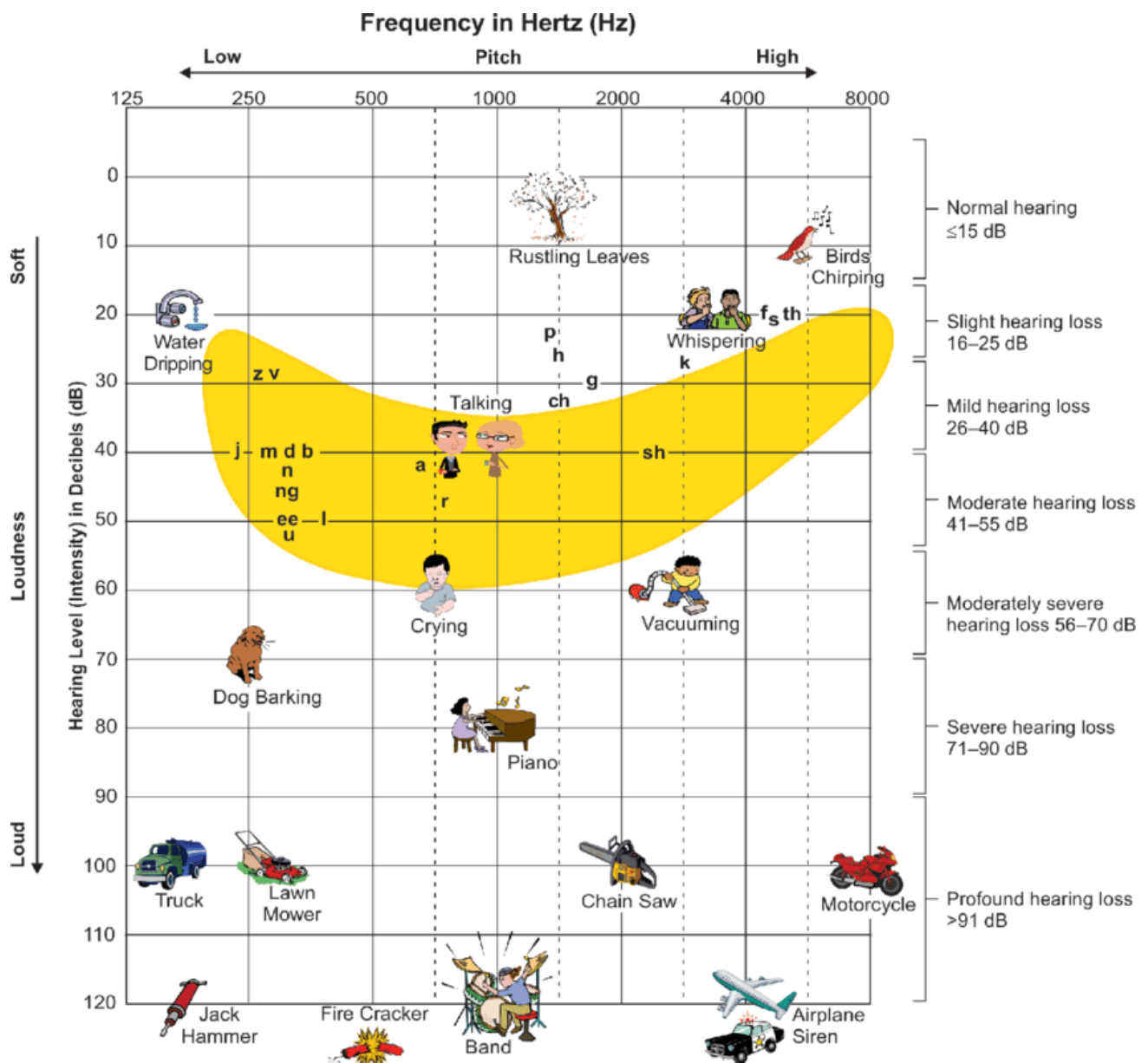


Hearing Loss in Children: Levels of Hearing Loss

Untreated hearing loss can contribute to delayed speech and language development, learning difficulties, and problems listening to and communicating with others. There are three basic types of hearing loss: conductive, sensorineural, and mixed.

An **audiogram** is a graph that shows the results of a hearing test. It shows how well a child hears sounds in terms of frequency and intensity. The audiogram shows results for each ear and tells the audiologist the softest sound one can hear at each specific frequency.

The **speech banana** shown below is a helpful tool to see where the sounds and phonemes used in everyday speech fall on an audiogram.



Children & Their Vision: What Teachers & Parents Need to Know

VISION AND LEARNING

Vision is one of the most important senses for a child's development. Much of what children learn is gained through vision, so it is key to start early to ensure that children have healthy eyes. Any condition that impacts vision or the processing of vision can interfere with a child's development and learning. The educational impact of eye or vision issues is *not* considered a learning disability/disorder

One in four school-age children has an undiagnosed vision problem that affects their learning. When conditions are diagnosed and treated early, children have a better chance of learning efficiently. Ones particularly important when it comes to learning include:

- **Visual Acuity:** A child's vision needs to be clear at different distances – close up for books and papers, at a mid-range for computer screens, and at a distance for teacher instruction at the board. Some children need glasses to help them see clearly if their focus is too close (nearsighted), too far (farsighted), or not at only one point (astigmatism).
- **Eye focusing:** Children's eyes need to be able to change focus quickly from far (the front of the classroom) to near (a paper on the desk) and back.
- **Eye alignment and tracking:** Children's eyes need to be coordinated and able to track together when moving from word to word in a book or on the board at school. A misalignment of the eyes can cause poor depth perception and blurred or double vision. Children may need to see eye specialists (ophthalmologist, orthoptist) if they have issues with alignment and tracking.

Untreated vision problems can lead to:

- Delays in meeting some early developmental milestones, such as crawling or walking
- Unusual fatigue when doing vision-related tasks, such as reading, writing, and colouring
- Frustration with learning
- Low interest in learning, especially reading and writing tasks
- Poor reading ability
- Poor handwriting and copying skills
- Short attention span for learning tasks
- Reading difficulties
- Disruptive behaviour
- Negative self-image

IMPORTANCE OF EYE EXAMS

A comprehensive eye examination is essential to provide the full assurance of vision and eye health. An eye exam helps detect vision issues at an early stage, improving treatment options. Many eye conditions do not have obvious symptoms and some diseases only show symptoms when the condition is advanced and difficult to treat. Conditions such as an eye turn (strabismus) or a "lazy eye" (amblyopia) need to be addressed when a child is young. **Children should have at least one eye exam before they start school, and then a comprehensive eye and vision examination annually.**

A comprehensive eye examination includes:

- A review of the child's health and vision history.
- Tests for nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism, color perception, lazy eye, crossed-eyes, eye coordination, depth perception and focusing ability.
- Overall assessment of ocular health.

****Children & Their Vision was referenced from the Canadian Association of Optometrists and American Optometric Association***