

HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

MOST COMMON CATEGORIES

CONDUCTIVE HEARING LOSS

- Caused by problems in the outer or middle ear (e.g., fluid, infection, blockage).
- Often temporary or treatable.

SENSORINEURAL HEARING LOSS

- Damage to the inner ear (cochlea) or auditory nerve.
- Usually permanent.

MIXED HEARING LOSS

- Combination of conductive and sensorineural hearing loss.

UNILATERAL HEARING LOSS

- Hearing loss in one ear only.

BILATERAL HEARING LOSS

- Hearing loss in both ears.

MILD, MODERATE, SEVERE, OR PROFOUND HEARING LOSS

- Refers to the degree of loss and how much it affects communication.

AUDITORY PROCESSING DISORDER (APD)

- Ears may function normally, but the brain struggles to process sound.

DEAFNESS

- Profound or total loss of hearing; children may use sign language or other forms of communication.

HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

GAELIC GAMES COACHING TIPS

COMMUNICATION

- Use clear visual cues (hand signals, flags, cones, thumbs up).
- Maintain eye contact before giving instructions.
- Speak clearly and at a natural pace; avoid shouting.
- Use simple, short instructions.
- Where possible, learn some basic signs or gestures (e.g., “stop,” “start,” “ball,” “goal”).

POSITIONING

- Stand in front of the player when speaking.
- Avoid standing with your back to the sun or bright light (harder for lip-reading).
- Reduce background noise when possible.

DEMONSTRATION & VISUAL AIDS

- Show rather than tell – demonstrate skills and drills.
- Use pictures, diagrams, or video clips if available.
- Colourful cones, bibs, and markers can help players follow drills more easily.

ENVIRONMENT

- Keep groups small for better focus.
- Ensure the player can see you at all times.
- Avoid giving instructions while running or with your back turned.

TEAM INCLUSION

- Teach teammates to use basic hand signals for encouragement and guidance.
- Encourage peer support – pairing the child with a buddy can help.
- Foster a positive, patient environment where players feel comfortable asking for clarification.

SAFETY

- Make sure players understand safety rules before starting games/activities
- Use a visual signal (e.g., whistle + raised arm) to stop play.

FEEDBACK

- Give visual feedback (thumbs up, smile, nod).
- If correcting, demonstrate the right technique instead of only explaining.

HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

SENSORINEURAL HEARING LOSS

DESCRIPTION:

- Permanent damage to the inner ear or auditory nerve; affecting speech clarity.

GAELIC GAMES COACHING TIPS:

- ✓ **Speak clearly and face the players** – They may lip-read if needed
- ✓ **Use visual cues** – Hand signals, gestures, whiteboards
- ✓ **Reduce background noise** - Especially when giving instructions
- ✓ **Check for understanding** - Ask them to repeat or demonstrate back
- ✓ **Brief teammates on supportive communication methods**

CONDUCTIVE HEARING LOSS

DESCRIPTION:

- Difficulty conducting sound through the outer or middle ear; mainly reduces sound volume.

GAELIC GAMES COACHING TIPS:

- ✓ **Instructions** - Ensure instructions are loud, clear, and visible.
- ✓ **Positioning** - Stand close and within their line of sight when speaking.
- ✓ **Visual aids** - Back up verbal info with written or visual aids
- ✓ **Demonstrations** - Use demonstrations instead of only verbal explanations.
- ✓ **Focus** - Signal before speaking so they know to focus on you.

MIXED HEARING LOSS

DESCRIPTION:

- Combination of sensorineural and conductive hearing loss, affecting both sound clarity and volume.

GAELIC GAMES COACHING TIPS:

- ✓ **Combine strategies** - Clear speech, visual supports, and demonstrations.
- ✓ **Avoid shouting** - Focus on clarity and positioning instead.
- ✓ **Time** - Allow extra processing time for instructions.
- ✓ **Hand signals** - Use consistent hand signals for key commands in training/matches.
- ✓ **Preference** - Encourage the player to share their preferred communication method.