Children with Audiological Needs was developed out of sheer frustration on the authors’ part. Several “Introduction to Audiology” textbooks exist on the market; however, most of the information in those textbooks is too technical for readers outside of the professions of audiology or hearing science. For years, the authors have had difficulty getting across the necessary information about hearing loss and hearing assessment to students in deaf education and speech-language pathology programs using available textbooks. The authors commiserated with many instructors who have had to piecemeal together parts of available textbooks to meet the unique course requirements for deaf education and speech-pathology students.

But even more frustrating than having to use multiple sources that weren’t really appropriate for either the students or the course curricula, these authors found that they were not able to recommend a comprehensive reference book to parents or other professionals in which basic- and intermediate-level information regarding the audiological needs of school-age, deaf or hard of hearing children was delivered in such a way that the reader could walk away with useful and applicable information. Again, putting together parts of different references was the only suitable way for getting user-friendly, applicable information to the “non-audiology” folks who needed it.

Therefore, the information contained within this book is targeted to an audience which includes pre-service or uncertified teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing; teachers of the Deaf-Blind; speech-language pathologists; special educators; occupational and physical therapists; adaptive physical educators; early interventionists; administrators; interpreters; and parents. These individuals have the primary responsibility of raising and working with children who have hearing loss. These are the individuals who need to understand the audiologic process for children from birth through their education years.

Children with Audiological Needs was written with humor and personal examples in order to illustrate important information. The text presents both knowledge and application-based content linking lay terminology to technical information. As the reader progresses through this book, the chapters contain information about the professionals who medically and non-medically evaluate children with hearing loss. The professionals who collaborate with each other to provide appropriate service-delivery options are also described. Information about sound and how it moves from the source to, and through, the structures of the ear is useful for informing the reader about sound characteristics: intensity, frequency, and phase. These characteristics are distorted or missing for children with hearing loss. The main types of hearing loss and where those losses occur throughout the anatomical structures of the ear are described. Causes of hearing loss, those present at birth and those acquired throughout childhood, are defined. Additional chapters contain the testing techniques used by audiologists to identify hearing loss. Full audiometric evaluations are compared to the hearing screening processes used for infants and older children.
A complete chapter on contemporary hearing aid technology, including bone-anchored aids and middle ear implants, describes devices that are typically used on children. Additional information about cochlear implants and hearing assistance technologies are provided. Candidacy considerations for cochlear implants are listed, as well as thoughts and concerns from the Deaf culture perspective. The book ends with a thorough description of the aural habilitation and rehabilitation approaches typically used with children. A focus is placed upon the assessment process and goal development.

Some things you will find in this book include:

- A detailed table listing the professionals who work with children who are deaf/hard of hearing
- Detailed descriptions of the degrees, qualifications, work environments, and job descriptions of the professionals who work with these children
- Vocabulary lists at the beginning of each chapter highlighting the terminology used
- Scenarios with realistic cases highlighting the information to be presented in the chapter
- A detailed table listing the most common causes of hearing loss and the characteristics of those losses
- Sidebars containing relevant and deeper information to supplement the chapters’ concepts
- “Food for Thought” questions at the end of each chapter requiring students to revisit the opening scenario and initiate more in-depth discussion of the chapter content areas
- Up-to-date descriptions of hearing aids and hearing assistive technologies used by children in their school listening and learning environments
- Detailed and fun anatomical drawings to describe the function of the auditory system (Really! What other textbook has super heroes displaying anatomical planes?)
- Descriptions of the testing techniques and equipment used by audiologists to evaluate and diagnose pediatric hearing loss
- Descriptions of genetic and other forms of hearing loss typically seen in children
- Discussion on the strategies used for encouraging the development of listening skills and developing auditory comprehension in young children with hearing loss
- Many websites and Internet references for easy access to additional information, to encourage further exploration on specific topics

The authors (two deaf educators, one audiologist, and one speech-language pathologist) have combined their professional expertise and knowledge to present this information from a variety of viewpoints. Their knowledge and skills for working with deaf and hard of hearing people span over the past 35 years. Because Drs. Reynolds, Richburg, and Klein have taught in the classroom and supervised students in off-campus sites, they feel the information provided in this book will help readers comprehend and formulate audiological concepts.

This book is not the “traditional” academic textbook. The humorous examples and thorough descriptions using non-technical terminology provide a very manageable, very readable source for an audience with varying levels of knowledge about audiology and children needing audiological expertise.
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