



# Speaking from Experience

## Young people & Hearing Impairment

### Transcript for chapter 3 of 7: School life

**Georgia 10, diagnosed age 4:** There are five kids at my school with hearing loss and I kind of hang out with them. One's in grade three, one's in grade two and then there are two in prep.

**Tamara 10, diagnosed age 1:** I have some people who don't have a hearing loss who are still my friends. Most of my class know that I am deaf.

**Tyson 13, diagnosed age 3:** Most of them do know that I have hearing aids. Some don't, because of my hair, it covers it.

**Cynthia 18, diagnosed as an infant:** I don't tell my friends because I think they don't want to be my friends, just because I'm deaf.

**Khaled 12, diagnosed as an infant:** When I come to school I can just go up and say that I'm deaf. That person might say, "Alright, you're deaf. Do you want to play with me?"

**Georgia:** At school I use a micro-link. That sits on my hearing aid and my teacher has a microphone.

**Cynthia:** If the teacher has got that thing on, then you can sit anywhere and you can still hear the teacher.

**Georgia:** I give it to him in the class room. So, I get upstairs and I take it off the charger. Then I unroll it, so that I've got some length. Then I give it to my teacher and he wears it for the day.

**Tamara:** This is my RF. This is the wire. This is like a computer or something like that. This is the microphone. My teacher wears it, not me.

**Georgia:** When the teacher has the microphone on I tell him to turn it off sometimes. But when he doesn't, after he's finished speaking, I hear every noise that he does. When the microphone falls, when the thing that attracts all the noise falls, it makes a really big bang. I get a fright, the rest of the class just goes, "What?" because they don't get the loud noise, like I do.

**Tamara:** Whenever I have a partner, like, you know how it gets noisy? They can wear it but only for speaking. Sometimes they'll sing like, la la la, which is so annoying for me.

**Georgia:** One of my classmates had finished a project that he was sharing with the class. He put the microphone this close to his mouth and said, "Hello". It went straight through my hearing aids and it hurt. I got a fright and people started laughing at me. It was pretty embarrassing.

**Tamara:** They love to have a go, but it's only for the teacher or if you're with me as a partner.



**Cynthia:** I was supposed to have one when I was in primary school. I did, but the kids brought it to the school and stole it.

**Tyson:** My teachers don't wear other equipment because I am capable of hearing. I haven't lost all of it and I can still hear most of what they say, just not if they whisper.

**Khaled:** The teacher speaks to me, but when the teacher speaks to me I can't understand. So, the teacher will speak to the interpreter and they will start interpreting for me.

**Tyson:** If they need to sit at the front, allow them to sit at the front of the class room.

**Tamara:** I normally sit at the front, but not always. Because it's not really fair to the kids because they can't see. They need to see the teacher and everyone needs to be fair, to see the teacher.

**Cynthia:** I used to sit at the back all the time. The teachers used to put me at the back. And with the teachers, I'm too ashamed to ask them questions, because I used to sit up the back. I was supposed to be sitting up the front.

**Tyson:** Sometimes you feel a bit left out, sitting at the front of the class room. Because most of your friends might sit at the back. Then again, you might have a good friend who wants to sit at the front with you, and stuff like that.

**Khaled:** When the teacher speaks and she speaks and we're at the back, we can't understand. We put our hands up and tell the teacher that we need to sit at the front. and she'll say that we have to decide how we can change [seats].

**Georgia:** Well, if the class room is noisy, I try to stay away from the noisy bit . But, if I can't do that, then I have to tell my teacher that it's hurting. Or otherwise, I'll have to do other things, try out other things and see if they work.

**Tyson:** At one stage, I did lip read. So, I'm alright at lip reading. But, some words you can't really tell, because they look like they come out of your mouth the same.

**Cynthia:** I can lip read real good, yeah. I even sit at home and watch TV with the volume down and I can read their lips real good, yeah.

**Georgia:** I normally keep my eyes on his lips, so I can lip read. But if I can't do that because he's talking too fast or he's telling someone off, I have to listen. If that doesn't work, I go and get the microphone.

**Khaled:** I've started Auslan at St Albans East Primary School.

**Tamara:** I'm going to do some sign language, which I am going to do in year five, for next year. I'm in year four, so I only know a few [signs]. In year five I'll do a little bit more.