

February 12, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

My daughter Olivia is 14 months old. She was diagnosed with unilateral mild to moderate sensorineural hearing loss at 3 months. Which is basically a fancy way to say she is hearing impaired and requires a hearing aid to hear as well as every other baby. A lot of things went through my mind upon finding out about her hearing deficit: Would she be delayed in her speech? How would she do in school when she is older? Will she need to go a specific school? Will other kids make fun of her? How will this impact her self-esteem? As a parent it is terrifying to have so many questions and fears about the future for my child. However, I was fortunate enough to never have to worry if I would be able to afford a hearing aid or replacement ear mold for my daughter. After insurance I paid \$2000 for Olivia's hearing aid. That is ridiculous.

Parents and families of hearing impaired or deaf children already have so much to worry about for their children and do not need the extra stress worrying: How much will insurance pay? Can I afford this? What will happen if we delay getting our hearing device for a couple more months? How will we afford the frequent ear molds as our child's ear grows?

Having a baby with a hearing aid has been an adventure to say the least. You would be surprised how many times she has decided to take out her hearing aid and play with it or chew on it (all the pilot hats in the world can't stop her). We go through frequent ear molds due to how fast her ear grows and how easily they can break. If that ear mold doesn't fit just right and if it gets too small, it makes it that more enticing to remove. We have been happy with the overall quality of our hearing aid, but I know families through support groups who constantly struggle with the quality of the device they have for their children. It is super important to have quality devices to assist the children to hear to the best of their ability.

Please help support the children, parents, and families with hearing loss. The future for these children is endless if we only provide them the appropriate tools for success. Thank you for your time and kind consideration.

Sincerely,

Sarah