

SPARK: Simple Play Adaptations to Reference for Kids

Quiet Ears Ear Muffs

Materials: The Quiet Ears Ear Muffs are designed to provide noise protection for young children, so that loud noises in the environment are reduced to a more comfortable level. They are sized to fit snugly on a young child's head, providing a comfortable experience with soft ear padding and low profile.

Instructions:

Simply pull down on the ear cups to adjust the size!

Clean with warm soapy water.

May be disinfected with alcohol.

Image:



[Purchasing Information](#)

[Demo Video](#)

Who Might Benefit?

Those who...

- Are sensitive to loud unexpected noises (e.g. fireworks, fire drills, etc.).
- Are sensitive to loud environments (e.g. cafeteria, inside playground, music activities, etc.).
- Prefer a quiet environment to focus and concentrate.

Why Use?

Provides an opportunity to...

- Reduce noise in loud environments.
- Provide children with a comfortable learning environment.

Instructions for Use:	Adaptation Ideas:
Environmental Considerations • The ear muffs can be used in any environment where the child is bothered by continuous environmental noises or sudden unexpected noises. • It is not recommended that the ear muffs be used continuously. • The ear muffs should not be used during times when the child needs to	Add Sensory Cues • If the child is unwilling to wear the ear muffs, it may be helpful to try headphones attached to some type of music player or ambient noise player. Try using headphones with music or ambient noise to mask disruptive environmental sounds. Ensure the volume is limited to prevent hearing damage.

take in environmental sounds and language for learning activities or safety needs.

Positioning

- Use of a sock hat over the ear muffs may help to position the earmuffs on the child's ears.

Basic Play/Use

- Observe the child for signs of sound sensitivities (e.g. covering ears, agitation, anger, anxiety, etc.).
- Ask the child to self-identify if the noise is too loud, when possible.
- Offer ear muffs as a solution to the sound sensitivity.
- Ask the child for feedback on the effectiveness of the ear muffs!
- If useful to the child, make the ear muffs readily available in the child's environments so the child can self-select when they wish to use.

Communication Supports

- Visual supports, like a volume meter scale, may be used for children to indicate when an environment is getting too loud. Alternatively, the visual support could be used to help children modulate the volume of their own speaking voice. Noise level visual supports can be provided in group or individual activities. See OCALI [Autism Center Grab and Go Resource Gallery of Interventions Voice Volume Meter Scales for more details.](#)



- Social narratives can be created with pictures to prepare children for unexpected loud noises such as fire drills, and special large group events when a child may request the use of the ear muffs. Additionally social narratives can be used to help a child understand when to request the ear muffs and support how to put them

on properly. See [Autism Center Grab and Go Resource Gallery of Interventions Social Narratives](#).

Alternatives

- Typical cold weather ear muffs or headbands that cover the ears, while not as sound reducing as the Quiet Ears Ear Muffs, may provide enough sound relief for some children who have mild noise sensitivities.

Additional Considerations:

- Some children with touch sensitivities may find the pressure and texture of the ear muffs on their ears too much to tolerate. Sometimes trying different textures of cloth on the padded part of the ear muff may help the child tolerate the texture. Repositioning the ear muffs on the ears to find the most comfortable position may also be helpful.
- Children who may be reluctant or self-conscious about wearing the ear muffs may enjoy decorating them!

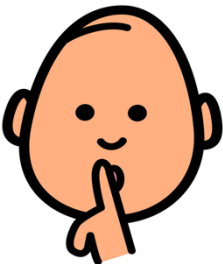
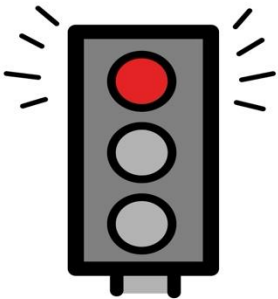
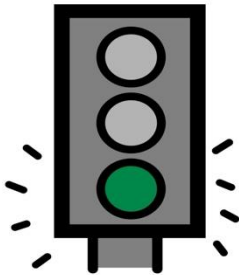
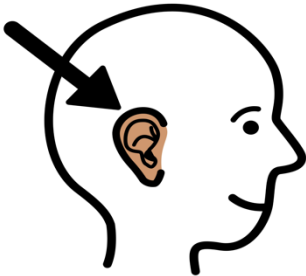
Resources:

- Explore how breathing exercises can help an individual stay calm and self-regulated during times of stress or anxiety. Breathing exercises send a message to the brain that sends a message to the individual's body to calm down, relax, and get their body and mind under control. Breathing techniques can help a person learn how to focus and participate in controlled breathing. See [Autism Center Grab and Go Resource Gallery of Interventions Breathing Cards](#).
- Utilize 'what to do' word cards to assist child in learning to self-monitor and take action when noise becomes stressful. These cards can help all learners understand verbal language in a clear and concise manner. Create a What to Do When it is Too Noisy card. See [Autism Center Grab and Go Resource Gallery of Interventions What to Do Cards](#).

Ohio Early Learning Standards:

- SE: Self Regulation: Begins to manage emotions and reactions (2.a.)
- AL: Engagement and Persistence: Persists in completing a task with increasing concentration. (1.c.)

Words to Encourage Play/Use

Loud 	Quiet 	Wait 
Stop 	Go 	Help 
On 	Off 	Ears 

*"Adaptations" adapted from: Haugen's Modes for Adapting Toys based on materials from the "Let's Play" Project at the University of Buffalo

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