



It's JUST.....

Unilateral
Hearing Loss

“It is JUST...”



It is JUST a child.....



.....with hearing loss.



It is JUST one side - Defining Unilateral Hearing Loss

- ◆ Hearing loss is defined by a decreased perception of loudness and/or diminished speech intelligibility. As such hearing loss may affect sound perception or understanding of speech. This loss of hearing may occur from an abnormality in the pinna to the auditory cortex. Often the patient is tested to distinguish between loss of loudness acuity which makes it difficult for one to hear and loss of speech intelligibility which makes it difficult for an individual to understand. Hearing loss can be categorized as either conductive or sensorineural. In individuals with a unilateral hearing loss they present with normal hearing in one ear and impaired hearing in the other.



It is JUST impacting.....

- ◆ As demonstrated by the frequent debate on automatic qualification for Part C services under IDEA, for children who have a unilateral hearing loss the long-term impact of UHL and the benefit of early intervention is a topic being heavily weighed upon right now.

Listen and Talk, a provider of educational services for children with hearing loss in Western Washington notes that:

Historically Speaking...

Children with unilateral and minimal hearing loss were not identified early.

- Higher risk for educational, speech-language and social-emotional difficulties than their peers with normal hearing (Bess & Tharpe, 1984, 1986; English & Church, 1999; Oyler, Oyler, & Matkin, 1998)
- "...Involvement of hearing health professionals in the management of children with unilateral hearing loss has been limited. The conventional approach was to identify the cause of the hearing loss and to assure the parents that there would be no handicap."
Oyler et al. (1988) p.18

This presumption that unilateral hearing loss will not become a handicap has started to prove untrue as many studies show that....

Caution...

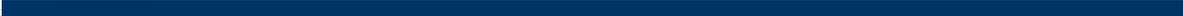
- The more severe the UHL the greater the likelihood of academic failure
- Right-ear UHL appear to be more problematic than left-ear UHL.
- UHL can be progressive, ultimately resulting in a bilateral loss.

Cole & Flexer, p. 41, 2007

An article in Pediatrics for Parents notes that for children who have a unilateral hearing loss, “problems in school included a

*22-35% rate of repeating at least one grade, and
*12-41% receiving additional educational assistance, such as tutoring and remedial classes. Behavioral issues were also reported at an increased rate such as **perceived lack of attention in class**”.

* “Potential consequences of unilateral hearing loss”; Pediatrics for Parents
written in August of 2004, by Judith E. Lieu



JUST for Parents....



Families of children with UHL often receive mixed messages as to what is the best course of treatment for their children. Some practitioners recommend regular hearing tests and others don't. Some suggest hearing aids and other never mention them. There seems to be a lack of a universal standard of care for UHL kids. As such, we challenge all parents to educate themselves and become strong advocates for their children by linking to professionals that complement their child and family. Parents should seek out organizations that will provide them with advocacy, resources, support and opportunities to connect with others. Meeting with other families who have children with UHL allows parents and children to not only receive emotional support but also provides them opportunities to make social connections and share information concerning options of professionals, hearing aides, surgeries and treatments that are available for their children.

What is JUST?

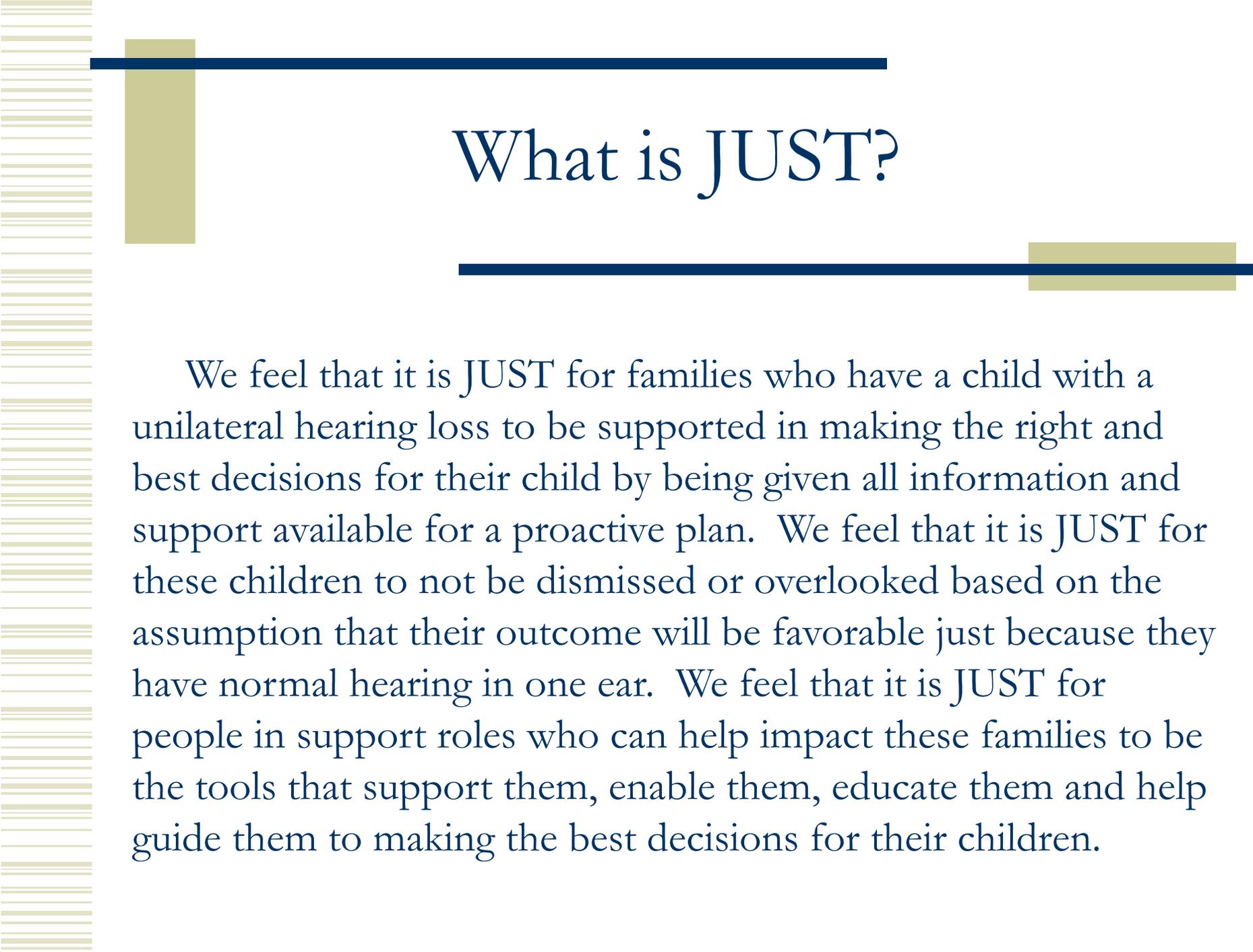




Webster's Dictionary defines JUST as:

adjective

1. right or fair; equitable; impartial a just decision
2. righteous; upright a just man
3. deserved; merited just praise
4. legally right; lawful; rightful
5. proper, fitting, etc. a just balance of colors
6. well-founded; reasonable a just suspicion
7. correct or true; a just report
8. accurate; exact a just measure



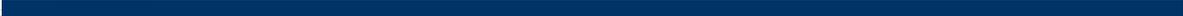
What is JUST?

We feel that it is JUST for families who have a child with a unilateral hearing loss to be supported in making the right and best decisions for their child by being given all information and support available for a proactive plan. We feel that it is JUST for these children to not be dismissed or overlooked based on the assumption that their outcome will be favorable just because they have normal hearing in one ear. We feel that it is JUST for people in support roles who can help impact these families to be the tools that support them, enable them, educate them and help guide them to making the best decisions for their children.



If we could JUST make a request of professionals:

- ◆ Be knowledgeable and deliver consistent messages
- ◆ Include UHL info in state EHDI data systems
- ◆ Create minimum therapy recommendations
- ◆ Institute a developmental screening protocol
- ◆ Institute regular developmental assessments



JUST be a tool! 😊



Be the tool that brings color to their life and their journey. These families have been given a journey to embark on with their child. You can be the critical tool to help and support families on their journey. Like a coloring sheet, you can be the tool that can help them possess the potential for clarity, strength, and confidence to feel positive in their journey. With your advocacy, support and guidance, families can grow in their ability to navigate through their journey, be creative in their journey, think inside and outside the lines in their journey. Armed with information, they can discover what they believe will work well for them, and the best part is that they have a chance to show others what they have learned in their journey and be proud of their accomplishments.



JUST advocate for the child.



The JUST part is that you can help play a role with the knowledge and information that you can impart to them by believing that it is JUST to look at every child as an individual with unique strengths and needs regardless of what a label is believed to mean for them. If you are a parent who has a child with a unilateral hearing loss we strongly encourage you to find those tools that will be the best fit for your family. Connect with programs in your community like Hands & Voices that are designed to provide support, education and advocacy for families with children who are deaf and hard-of-hearing. Parents can and need to be their child's strongest advocate. Educate yourself on the difference between IEPs and 504 plans and work closely with your school's support team to determine if such interventions are necessary for your child to best access his educational environment.

It would JUST be right to thank you so much for attending today- we hope you leave this room inspired to advocate for those who have a unilateral hearing loss, to help them in every way you know how, and to make a difference in the lives of children and families with whom you interact.

