

Critical Review:

Do cochlear implants improve literacy outcomes in children with hearing impairments?

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This critical review examines the impact that cochlear implants have on literacy outcomes in children with hearing impairments as compared to children with normal hearing. Study designs include: non-experimental, descriptive, exploratory studies. Overall, current research provides insufficient evidence as to whether cochlear implants improve literacy outcomes in children with hearing impairments. Further research needs to be conducted to obtain more detailed and consistent results. This research will assist in providing appropriate intervention for these children to ensure their overall academic, vocational and social success.

Introduction

Children with hearing impairments are at risk for serious difficulties acquiring and developing literacy skills. Among children with severe to profound hearing impairment, low literacy rates have frequently been reported in the literature. Numerous

suggest that cochlear implants impact literacy outcomes in children with hearing impairment. Although the studies examined provided strong arguments of a link between language and literacy (especially in the cochlear implant group) and there is evidence that children are using phonological strategies to decode unfamiliar words (perhaps