

a sound  
beginning  
for your baby



Newborn Hearing Screening

# All Newborns should be s

If your baby was or will be born in a hospital with hearing loss, ask your doctor to arrange



## Why Is It Important?

- A baby with hearing loss misses all or part of words spoken to him/her. This delays the baby's ability to learn to talk and to understand what others are saying.
- Fact, accurate and gentle methods are available to screen newborn baby's hearing before they are discharged from the hospital.
- These screenings tell doctors and audiologists\* that a baby may have a hearing loss and needs follow-up testing.
- Babies just a few weeks old who are found to have hearing loss can be referred immediately to the people, programs and services needed by both baby and family at the earliest stage of development.
- The American Academy of Pediatrics, National Institutes of Health, American Speech Hearing Association, Federal Bureau of Maternal and Child Health and many other organizations urge that all newborn babies be screened for possible hearing loss before they go home from the hospital.



\* An Audiologist is a person who holds a degree and certification in audiology and is a specialist in testing hearing and providing rehabilitation to persons with hearing loss.

# Screened for hearing loss.

What if your baby is born to a parent that does not screen newborns for hearing loss? Here are some reasons for your baby to get this testing.

- *Babies born with normal hearing sometimes develop hearing loss later on due to illness, injury or other causes. This checklist tells you what you should expect as your baby grows.*

## 0-4 Months

Startles to loud sounds. Quiets to the sound of a familiar voice.

## 4-6 Months

Turns toward or looks for a familiar or new sound. Likes rattles and toys that make sound.

## 6-12 Months

Turns or looks up when called by name. Imitates sounds and pitches. Understands the meaning of “no” and “bye bye.” Uses voice to get attention.

## 12-18 Months

Uses 4-5 words by 18 months. Points to at least one body part when asked. Understands one-step commands such as “get me your diaper,” or “close the door.”

## 18-24 Months

Uses 10-15 words by age 2. Likes music. Points to familiar objects when you name them. Puts two words together by age 2.

## 24-36 Months

Uses 200 words by age 3. Listens to radio or television at the same loudness as other people. Hears when called from another room. Uses two to three word sentences. Strangers understand most of your child’s speech.



## Important!

*If your child cannot do these things at the age listed, check with your doctor and ask for a referral to an audiologist for a hearing evaluation.*

*If your baby does not pass the hearing screening, your healthcare provider will advise you about what to do next. It is very important that you follow their recommendations.*

*To learn about services for infants and children with hearing loss, contact*  
**WISCONSIN FIRST STEP**  
**(800) 642-STEP**  
[www.mch-hotlines.org](http://www.mch-hotlines.org)

# Here are some loving, fun and easy ways to help your baby develop communication abilities.



## Enjoy your baby!

- Gently hold, snuggle and cuddle with baby often. Give lots of tender touches and stroking.
- Baby loves to see your face. Look directly at him/her.
- Smile at and return baby's smiles.
- Softly talk and sing to baby as you diaper, bathe, feed him/her. Use short, simple sentences.
- Copy baby's babbling sounds. Wait for baby to "talk" back to you.
- Tell baby what you're doing as you go about your day. Ask what baby is doing, and what baby sees.
- Point to and name baby's body parts and the other objects baby can see around him/her.
- Read to baby every day using bright colorful picture books. Point to and talk about the pictures.
- Read or tell simple rhymes to baby.
- Play "peek-a-boo," "pattycake" and other simple games with baby.
- Let baby have fun with music and sounds and most of all... You!

Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
Division of Public Health  
Bureau of Community Health Promotion  
Program for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

