

Do you know the newborn hearing screening results for each infant and toddler in your care?

Accurate information about hearing is essential. About 3 out of every 1000 babies are born deaf or hard of hearing and the incidence of young children with hearing loss doubles by school age. Every baby's hearing should have been screened at birth and the results are an important part of a child's health profile because:

- ◆ It is easy to overlook hearing problems. Infants/toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing may respond to some sounds while not hearing spoken language clearly.
- ◆ Any unidentified hearing loss is likely to delay language learning and overall development.
- ◆ Early identification can open the door to communication and learning!



What you can do to support hearing screening and follow-up.



Some babies did not have their hearing screened at birth or never received the needed follow-up testing. Other infants/toddlers may experience a gradual or sudden loss of hearing during early childhood. Here are simple steps you can take to serve children 0 – 3 years of age and their families:

Check each child's health record for newborn hearing screening results.

Next If the baby **passed the screening (or a follow-up test) on both ears**, and there are no noted risk factors of concern, encourage parents to pay attention to hearing and ongoing language development. If you can provide Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) hearing screening, conduct an annual screening and complete follow-up according to your practice protocol. (KidsHearing.org has tools to help.)

If the baby **was not screened, did not pass, or has a risk factor** for hearing loss contact the birth facility and your state's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program (www.infantheading.org/states) to find out what follow-up is required. Health care providers and early care and education professionals can support parents in accessing needed testing and services. If you can conduct an OAE screening, update the health record with these results to facilitate timely and appropriate care.



Coordinated screening and follow-up are key to early identification and effective intervention!