

Sample Letter Introducing OAE Screening to HCPs/Audiologists

Dear _____

I am writing to inform you of the hearing screening we provide for all children, birth to three-years-of-age, served by our program that may lead to an occasional referral to you. We are conducting periodic hearing screenings using Otoacoustic Emissions (or OAE) technology. The OAE screening is a physiological measure of cochlear function and is designed to identify children who may have sensorineural hearing loss; however, some outer or middle ear disorders may cause conductive hearing loss and also contribute to a failed OAE. The highly reliable measurement of OAEs is one of the technological developments that has led to successful universal newborn hearing screening. Not all hearing loss can be detected at birth, however, so this technology represents an opportunity to screen young children in our program who may have either been missed at birth or who may have experienced late-onset or progressive hearing loss.

It is important to us that you are aware of our screening activities as we will be referring children who do not pass our screening to you for a more thorough examination, usually starting with a middle ear evaluation.

By implementing OAE hearing screening, we hope to:

1. Help to identify middle ear conditions, such as the presence of chronic fluid or undetected ear infections, which can potentially affect a child's hearing and language acquisition. If a child does not pass the screening, we will be able to refer him or her to you promptly for appropriate medical evaluation.
2. Help to identify any cases of permanent, sensorineural hearing loss, which is important to find as early as possible so that the child does not miss out on language-learning opportunities during the most critical period of life.

As early childhood educators, we are very aware of the significance of conditions that can impair a child's ability to hear. Our goal is to work collaboratively with you so that children who do not pass our hearing screening receive subsequent medical and, if needed, audiological evaluations in the most timely manner possible.

We are following a screening protocol endorsed by the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management and expect that this will result in a reliable screening process that will not place an undue burden on families, medical providers or audiologists

As always, we appreciate our working relationship with you. Please let us know if you have any preferences in how referrals are made, and how we can best work together to serve children identified with hearing loss.

Sincerely,