



Childhood Hearing Loss Checklist: Making Parents Your Partners to Catch and Address Hearing Loss Early

Because a baby's first months are critical for learning language and communication skills, discussing hearing loss milestones and action steps for parents will help ensure that parents get their babies screened, diagnosed and enrolled in early intervention programs as quickly as possible. With early intervention, most children with hearing loss can learn to listen and talk as well as their hearing peers.

- ☑ *Before a baby turns 1 month old:*
Ask parents if their baby was screened for hearing loss in the hospital or birthing center at birth. If not, all infants should be screened before they are 1 month old, according to national guidelines. Make sure parents understand what the screening results mean.

- ☑ *Before a baby turns 3 months old:*
Direct parents to schedule a follow-up evaluation right away with an audiologist if their baby "fails" the newborn hearing screening. Explain to parents that babies can begin developing language and communication skills with the help of a hearing aid before they are 3 months old.

- ☑ *Before a baby turns 6 months old:*
Refer parents to family-centered early intervention programs as soon as possible if their baby is diagnosed with hearing loss. Tell parents that infants with hearing loss who are enrolled in intervention programs by 6 months old can take full advantage of the critical time window for learning language. Encourage parents to consult an audiologist or other provider to learn whether their baby would benefit from other technologies, such as cochlear implant surgery.

- ☑ *Ongoing:*
Stress the importance of ongoing monitoring to parents whose child passed the newborn hearing screening or a follow-up evaluation. Inform parents that hearing loss is an invisible handicap that can develop after birth in up to 30 percent of children.



Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

3417 Volta Place, NW | Washington, DC 20007

Tel 202.337.5220 | TTY 202.337.5221

www.agbell.org