



Childhood Hearing Loss Checklist: What Parents Need to Know to Catch and Address Hearing Loss Early

Most babies learn language by hearing it long before they can talk, so a baby's first months are critical for learning language and communication skills. That's why it's important to know the signs of hearing loss to help you identify a problem as early as possible. With early intervention, most children who are deaf or hard of hearing can learn to listen and talk as well as other children.

- ☑ *Before your baby turns 1 month old:*
Make sure your baby is screened for hearing loss in the hospital or birthing center at birth. In many states, newborn hearing screening is automatic. But if your baby was not screened at birth, call the hospital or a hearing-health professional to request a screening before your baby is 1 month old.

- ☑ *Before your baby turns 3 months old:*
Schedule a follow-up evaluation with an audiologist if your baby "fails" the newborn hearing screening. Intervention is possible even this early. For example, babies can begin to develop language and communication skills with the help of a hearing aid before they are 3 months old.

- ☑ *Before your baby turns 6 months old:*
Enroll in a family-centered early intervention program as soon as possible if your baby is diagnosed with hearing loss. Babies with hearing loss who are enrolled in early intervention programs by the time they are 6 months old can take full advantage of the critical time window for learning language. Find out whether your baby would benefit from other technologies, such as cochlear implant surgery.

- ☑ *Ongoing:*
Ongoing monitoring is important even if your child passes the newborn hearing screening or a follow-up test. Hearing loss can develop after birth in up to 30 percent of children – and it is an invisible handicap.



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