

Can Your Child Hear You?



Children born in North Carolina are screened for hearing loss before they go home from the hospital. This is an important step in identifying children with hearing loss, but it is only the first step. About 3 children out of every 1,000 newborns have hearing loss. An equal number will acquire hearing loss prior to starting school. Every parent needs to be aware of their child's development and the signs that hearing loss may have become an issue for their child. Whenever there are concerns about a child's speech, hearing needs to be checked. Your child's doctor can refer you to a pediatric audiologist or speech therapist to help.

Each child develops at an individual rate, but there are certain skills that most children will have mastered by the time they reach a certain age. These are sometimes referred to as "milestones." Being aware of the hearing and speech milestones helps a parent recognize that their child may need some help in this area of development.

Birth – 3 months

- Startles to loud sounds
- Seems to recognize your voice
- Quiets or smiles when spoken to

4 – 6 months

- Babbles with many different sounds
- Moves eyes in direction of sounds
- Notices toys that make sounds
- Vocalizes excitement and displeasure

7 months – 1 year

- Listens when spoken to
- Imitates different speech sounds
- Enjoys games like peek-a-boo

1 – 2 years

- Points to some body parts when asked
- Says more words every month
- Listens to simple stories, songs and rhymes
- Puts two words together ("more juice")

2 – 3 years

- Understands differences in meaning ("on-in")
- Has a word for almost everything
- Often asks for objects by naming them

3 – 4 years

- Hears when you call from another room
- Talks about activities at school or a friend's home
- People outside family usually understand child's speech

5 – 6 years

- Pays attention and can answer questions about a short story
- Uses the same grammar as the rest of the family
- Communicates easily with other children and adults

No one knows your child better than you. If you ever have any concerns about your child's hearing, speech or language development, talk to your medical provider.

Please visit <http://www.ncnewbornhearing.org/Parents.htm> for more information.