

# Your Child's Hearing

## HOW CAN YOU TELL IF YOUR CHILD CAN HEAR?

Most children have normal hearing, but some are born with a hearing loss. Newborn infants born in hospitals have a hearing screening before they go home. Sometimes children have temporary or permanent hearing loss after they are born. A child is never too young for a hearing test.

If a hearing loss is detected early, healthcare professionals can help your child develop speech and language skills. Hearing tests do not hurt. If your child does not meet the guidelines below, have his hearing tested.

## WHAT SHOULD YOUR CHILD BE ABLE TO DO?

### 3 months:

- Look at you when you talk
- Be startled by loud sounds
- Coo with vowel sounds
- Have different cries for different needs

### 6 months:

- Look to the source of a sound
- Respond to his name
- Repeat syllables (mamama, bababa)

### 9 months:

- Follow simple commands like “Give me the ball.”
- Understand the names of some objects
- Understand “no”
- Imitate sounds
- Put together different syllables (babamama)
- Shake his head no

### 12 months:

- Follow one-part instructions like “Put the ball in the cup.”
- Say his first word
- Make animal and truck sounds

### 18 months:

- Recognize the names of many objects
- Follow two-part instructions
- Identify one to four body parts
- Say between 10 and 50 words
- Put two words together

### 2 years:

- Identify simple pictures and objects
  - Identify five body parts
  - Recognize the names of very common pictures and objects
  - Put two and three words together
  - Put ending sounds on words
  - Use sounds like p, b, m, n, w and h
- Strangers may not be able to understand some of what is said.

### 2½ years:

- Identify pictures of actions
- Recognize three colors
- Identify objects by function like “What do we use to brush our teeth?”
- Use three-word phrases
- Use some grammatical endings like –s and –ing
- Use sounds like t, d, g, f and y

Repeating words or syllables is common.

### **3 years:**

- Follow three-part instructions
- Understand some adjectives like big and little
- Use three- to four-word sentences
- Use pronouns, wh- questions and past-tense verbs
- Use sounds like s, k, g and sh

### **4 years:**

- Follow four-part instructions
- Know adjectives of size and color
- Understand physical needs like “What do you do when you are hungry?”
- Use at least four- to five-word sentences
- Express feelings
- Answer many types of questions
- Use sounds like j, ch, z, l and v

Repeating words or syllables is not common.

## **CAN LOUD NOISE HURT A CHILD’S HEARING?**

Yes. Everyone can lose hearing from loud sounds. If your child listens to loud sounds often, he will lose hearing over time. This hearing loss will be permanent, and he will have a hard time understanding people when they talk. A hearing aid may help, but nothing can return hearing loss from loud sound.

If sounds are so loud that you have to yell, it is probably loud enough to hurt your child’s hearing. You and your child should wear earplugs when you are near loud sounds. If you or your child is listening to music with headphones and someone sitting nearby can hear the music, it is probably too loud. Protect your child’s hearing.

## **WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?**

The Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta Audiology staff work with patients from birth to age 21 to identify hearing loss and deliver a wide range of effective rehabilitation services. The Audiology department has several assessment methods available to evaluate, as well as to identify, specific types of hearing problems.

**For more information, visit [www.choa.org/audiology](http://www.choa.org/audiology) or call 404-785-7100.**