

How Do I Know If My Child Can Hear Me?

By watching your child's responses to your voice and the sounds in his environment, and monitoring speech-language development you can get a good idea of how well your child can hear you. Here are some hearing milestones to consider:

0 - 3 Months

Your newborn should

- ~ recognize your voice and quiet down when spoken to
- ~ stir or awaken when sleeping quietly and someone talks or there is a sudden noise
- ~ respond to sound by starting, blinking, crying, quieting, or with a change in breathing

4 - 6 Months

Your baby should

- ~ recognize familiar voices and quiet when spoken to
- ~ babble for attention and use vocal play
- ~ moves eyes toward voices and interesting sounds
- ~ notices musical toys or toys that make noise
- ~ stir or awaken when sleeping quietly and someone talks or there is a sudden noise

7 - 12 Months

Your baby should

- ~ enjoy musical or noise-making toys
- ~ understand "no" and "bye-bye"
- ~ imitate speech sounds
- ~ directly turns to a sound nearby
- ~ babbles using long and short groups of sounds ("baba")
- ~ add gesture to her communication

Fact Sheet

12 - 18 Months

Your baby should

- ~ enjoys simple songs and rhymes
- ~ points to pictures when named in books
- ~ follow simple directions (e.g., "go get your coat")
- ~ puts two words together

18 - 24 Months

Your toddler should

- ~ use 2-3 word sentences
- ~ follow simple instructions (e.g., "go get your book")
- ~ use her own name
- ~ use 150-300 words
- ~ point to body parts when asked

By 24 Months

Your child should

- ~ have a vocabulary of 200-300 words, used in simple sentences
- ~ have speech that is understandable to adults not in daily contact with your child
- ~ be able to sit and listen to story books

Over 24 Months

Your child should

- ~ have speech that is understandable to adults not in daily contact with your child
- ~ be alert to environmental sounds
- ~ respond to someone talking out-of-view (particularly when there are no distractions)
- ~ respond to voices on the telephone
- ~ show consistent growth in vocabulary and use words to communicate



Fact Sheet

There are many things you can do to monitor and encourage your child's speech-language development:

- ~ Talk to your baby. It is important to talk to your baby through all your daily activities such as dressing, bathing, feeding, and playing.
- ~ Use your baby's name and be consistent with the name you use.
- ~ Respond to the sounds your child makes.
- ~ Sing to your baby as you play or snuggle for quiet time.
- ~ Talk to your baby during daily activities and name the objects she contacts.
- ~ Read colourful books together and talk about the pictures.
- ~ Sing songs and nursery rhymes.
- ~ Make fun sounds to see if she will imitate you.
- ~ Listen to your baby. Make eye contact and respond to the sounds she makes.
- ~ Play games with your baby such as "pat-a-cake" and "peek-a-boo".

As your child gets older speak simply and clearly during daily activities about what you are doing. Listen and respond to your child's speech. Read to your child daily.

If your older child shows any of the following signs, he may be experiencing a hearing loss:

Your child

- ~ intently watches the face of the person speaking
- ~ uses "what?" or "huh?" frequently
- ~ has difficulty understanding speech in group activities
- ~ has difficulty hearing the television, radio, or music when others find it a comfortable loudness

A very important indication of hearing loss is the lack of or a delayed development of speech-language. If you have any concerns about your child's responses to sound or speech-language development you should discuss your concerns with your family doctor and request an assessment with an audiologist and/or a speech-language pathologist.