

HEARING HEALTH FOR CHILDREN

Children learn speech and language from listening to others. The first few years are particularly critical for development. When a hearing loss exists a child does not get the full benefit of language learning experiences. If a hearing loss goes unnoticed, delays in speech and language learning can occur. If you think that your child (at any age) may have a hearing problem, you should see your family physician or an audiologist as soon as possible.

Milestones for Development:

• *Up to 6 Months*

- Startles, cries, or awakens to loud sounds
- Responds to music, noise or voices by movements or smiling

• *7-12 Months*

- Turns or looks up when his/her name is called, even when you can't be seen
- Responds to requests such as "want more" or "come here"
- Looks at or points to everyday objects on request such as "bottle"

• *1-2 Years*

- Turns towards you when you call his/her name from behind
- Tries to "talk" by repeating some of the sounds you make
- Points to a part of his/her body when asked without seeing your lips

• *2-3 Years*

- Listens to a simple story
- Follows two sequential requests, such as "get the ball and put it here"
- Follows simple commands without being able to see your lips

• *3-4 Years*

- Hears you calling from another room or hears and repeats a whisper
- Uses sentences with four or more words and answers simple questions

• *4-5 Years*

- Talks easily to children and adults
- Pays attention to a simple story
- Can tell a story about him or herself

Warning Signs for Hearing Loss:

- Stops early babbling
- Experiences fluid drain from ears
- Frequently pulls at his/her ears (with fever or crankiness)
- Frequently gets colds and ear infections
- Does not understand someone unless he/she is facing them
- Speaks loudly or turns up the volume of the television or radio, disturbing other listeners.
- Does not say single words by 12 months
- Does not respond when called
- Needs things to be repeated

Early detection is vital!

This factsheet was previously found at www.caslpa.ca. This fact sheet was developed using materials from the American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA), British Columbia Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (BCASLPA), Simcoe County District Health Unit and the Audiology Section of the Communication Disorders Department, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO)