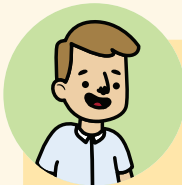


## How can I support my child?



*Make sure that, when speaking to the child, you*

- face him/her
- are in a well-lit place so the child can see your lips and expression
- keep the background noise low or move to a quiet place
- speak clearly and slowly
- don't shout!

*Take care of the child's hearing aid or cochlear implant including*

- changing the battery regularly
- keeping the device in a dry box at night



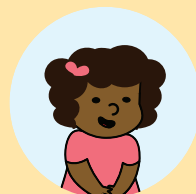
*Follow the instructions given by the doctor or audiologist*

Go for regular therapy or check-ups, as instructed.



*Don't hide the child's hearing loss*

- Inform the child's teachers of the hearing loss and ask them to seat the child in the front of the class. Ask the teachers to face the child while speaking.
- Make friends and family members aware of the child's needs and guide them to communicate effectively.
- Include your child in all family and social activities.



*Teach your child to communicate about his/her needs without hesitation*

For example, the child should tell someone if the hearing aid stops working, or to ask people to repeat if he/she can't hear properly.

- Learn sign language to communicate better with your child, if required.
- Advocate for hearing services with the local authorities, if these are lacking in your area.
- Get in touch with an organization of hard of hearing/deaf people or their parents in your area and ask them for guidance.

### REMEMBER

One out of every 20 people has hearing loss. It is nothing to be ashamed of. Don't hide your child's hearing loss!

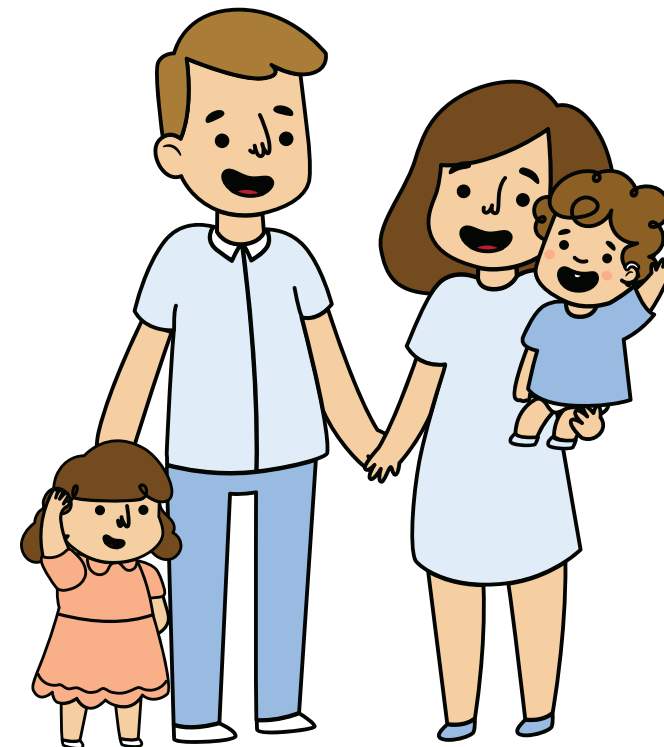
WHO/UCN/NCD/SDR 23.6

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World Health Organization [whf@who.int](mailto:whf@who.int)

For more details refer to: <https://www.who.int/health-topics/hearing-loss>

## Hearing loss in children



*When to suspect and what to do*



World Health Organization



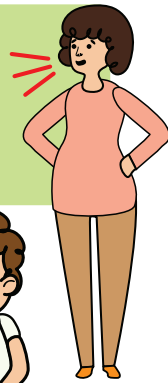
## Could my child have hearing loss?

Your child could have a hearing loss if she/he

- Does not respond to sounds or speech.
- Has delayed or improper speech and language development for his/her age.
- Cannot understand what you say or often asks people to repeat themselves.
- Incorrectly responds to questions or instructions.
- Turns up the volume of the radio/television or has trouble hearing what is being said over the phone.
- Is performing poorly at school or has behavioural issues.
- Often has discharge from the ear or impacted wax.
- Has repeated episodes of pain or blockage in the ear.
- Has recently suffered from a serious illness like meningitis.

### REMEMBER

In the case of babies, you should suspect hearing loss if the baby does not respond to sounds, especially the mother's voice or is not startled by loud sounds e.g, a loud bang.



*I think my child may have hearing loss*  
**what should I do?**



Have your child's ears and hearing checked at the nearest health care centre or clinic. Usually ENT doctors and audiologists can check ears and hearing. If you are not sure where to go, ask a local health worker or doctor for guidance.

## How can hearing be checked in a child and is it safe?

Hearing can be tested at all ages. Newborn babies can be tested within a few days of birth. Children up to the age of five years can have their hearing checked using:



- otoacoustic emission (OAE)
- auditory brainstem response testing (ABR)
- behavioural observation audiometry (BOA)

In children older than five years; hearing can be tested using a pure tone audiometry test.

### REMEMBER

Hearing testing is safe, painless and easy!

## When should I get my child tested?

As soon as possible!

For infants, whose hearing loss is diagnosed by three months after birth and rehabilitation started by six months of age, it is possible to develop speech and language similar to those with normal hearing.

Any delay will affect the speech and hearing rehabilitation of your child.

### REMEMBER

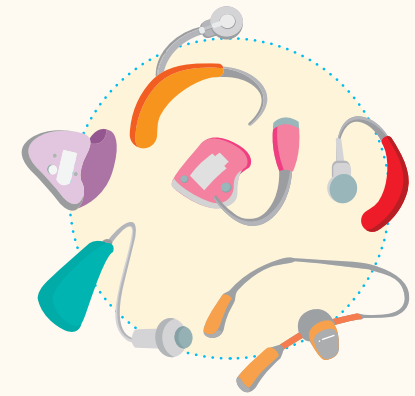
EARLY diagnosis and intervention is the key to success in children with hearing loss.



## What if my child has hearing loss? How will she/he communicate, study or make friends?

There are solutions so that hearing loss does not limit your child's life. These include:

- Medicines or surgery, when hearing loss is caused by an ear infection or glue ear.
- Hearing aids and cochlear implants can help the child hear, develop speech and language and progress in education.
- Rehabilitation and therapy are very important, even when hearing devices have been fitted.
- Sign language learning, so that the child can communicate and learn.



Once hearing loss is identified, the best course of action must be decided by the family in consultation with the ENT specialist and audiologist. Interventions should be started **WITHOUT DELAY**. You can find further information on these interventions in the WHO Basic Ear and Hearing Care Resource.

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/basic-ear-and-hearing-care-resource>

### REMEMBER

With proper and timely intervention, there is no limit to what your child can achieve.