

The Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program

Promoting Communication from Birth

Every year 1 to 3 in every 1,000 children are born with hearing loss. When a child's hearing loss is identified soon after birth, families and professionals can make sure the child gets intervention services at an early age. This will help the child to have communication and language skills that will last a lifetime.

EHDI programs at the state level get support from federal and state agencies and private groups. These programs promote that all infants be screened for hearing loss and get timely follow-up testing and early intervention services. The key parts of EHDI programs are hearing screening, audiologic (hearing) and medical evaluation, and early intervention.



Screening: All infants should be screened *before 1 month of age*, ideally before they leave the birth hospital. Without universal newborn hearing screening, hearing loss is usually found when a child is 2 to 3 years of age.

Evaluation: All infants who do not pass the hearing screening should have an audiological evaluation *before 3 months of age*, or as soon as they can. Infants who have hearing loss should have a complete medical evaluation.

Intervention: All infants with hearing loss should receive early intervention services *before 6 months of age* (medical, audiologic, educational and support services). Health care professionals will give families information about the full range of intervention options so they can make the best choices.

CDC – EHDI Program activities include:

- ◆ Providing funds to 30 states and two U.S. territories to develop surveillance systems and to assist with other EHDI activities
- ◆ Supporting research on the:
 - causes of hearing loss
 - effectiveness and cost of EHDI programs
 - long-term results of finding hearing loss early and other related family issues
- ◆ Using information from EHDI surveillance systems to find causes (environmental and/or genetic) of hearing loss that can be prevented
- ◆ Integrating EHDI data with other data from computerized child-health information systems

For more information, please visit our website, which has answers to commonly asked questions, research findings and data, and information for parents and professionals <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/ehdi>

CDC supports the National Institutes of Health, the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing and the American Academy of Pediatrics in endorsing universal newborn hearing screening before hospital discharge, diagnostic evaluation before 3 months of age, and initiation of appropriate intervention services before 6 months of age.