



Tennessee Newborn Hearing Screening

A project of the Tennessee Department of Health

C/O Family Voices of Tennessee
PO Box 120773
Nashville, TN 37212

Dear Parent,

You have just discovered that your baby has a hearing loss, or may have a hearing loss. I write to you as a parent of a child with a profound hearing loss to assure you of two important things:

FIRST: Your baby is wonderful. Hearing loss takes away none of your baby's personality, lovable-ness or love-ability. You can raise your baby to do anything: make friends, get good grades, choose and do well at a career, be a neighbor, be an honorable person and, and more. Your baby needs your hugs, your discipline, your teaching and your modeling, just like any baby. And don't stop talking to your baby. All these are expressions of love and your baby is depending on your love and guidance.

SECOND: There is always a way around the hearing obstacle. Your baby can receive information through hearing aids, through lip-reading, through cochlear implant, thought cued speech, and/or through sign language. Your baby can give you information through talking, through sign language, or through a combination of both. You can find out about these so you can try the ones that best teach your baby to communicate. Many people are standing by to help you teach your baby.

Enclosed you'll find a treasure-trove of resources, reading material, websites and phone numbers. You'll notice 8 topics of why you need to know and do, organized for easy reference in stair step format beginning with a "First 30 Days" calendar in the back. In these pages and the rest of the materials you'll find websites, tips, and much more. You'll also find:

Make a Joyful Noise is fun book that offers beginning steps. Order more free materials with the toll free number to see other children with hearing losses with very successful lives.

So Your Child Has a Hearing Loss overviews tools to us and actions to take.

John Tracy Clinic brochures offers a free correspondence course customized for your child.

The Audiogram shows you what sounds your child can hear with and without hearing aids or a cochlear implant. An audiologist-tester of hearing-can explain your child's audiogram.

A collection of brochures directs you to resources in your area as well as to websites.

Yes, you'll cry sometimes, but you'll laugh more times

Yes, you'll get frustrated but you'll show your baby how to calmly manage those frustrations.

Yes, some people will be cruel. But more people will be kind.

Yes, you'll feel scared, but then you will find answers and strategies and happiness.

Questions?

Call the person who gave you this packet or TEIS (Tennessee Early Intervention Services) at 800-852-7157

Call the Tennessee Newborn Hearing at 615-741-8530 or 615-262-6160

Call Tennessee Infant Parent Services (TIPS) 865-579-3099

Call Family 2 Family Information Center of TN 800-643-7811, Ext 40

Call a parent who has been there at 615-383-9442 (Family Voices)

1. SOMEONE TO TALK WITH

Tennessee Early Intervention Service (TEIS)— 1-800-852-7157 Provides information, makes referrals, and offers support to Tennessee families of children with special needs from birth to three years of age.

Tennessee Infant Parent Services (TIPS)— 865-579-3099 (Knoxville), 615-741-5002(Nashville); 931-372-6247 (Cookeville); 423-634-3010 (Chattanooga); 731-423-6592 (Jackson); 901-678-3501 (Memphis); 423-926-4388 (Johnson City) OR through 1-800-852-7157. A home visit program for Preschoolers with Hearing impairment and more.

Tennessee Newborn Hearing—615-741-8530, 615-262-6160. Tennessee Department of Health program to promote and coordinate statewide newborn hearing screening, assessment and follow-up
www2.state.tn.us/health/MCH/NBS/index.htm

Children's Special Services—615-741-8530 If you qualify, Tennessee Department of Health program that provides medical services, care coordination and the Parent's Encouraging Parent (PEP) support services to children under 21 yrs. with a chronic illness or medical condition. Ask your audiologist or any of the above to refer you to a family in your community.

2. NATIONAL RESOURCES (WEBSITES & PHONE NUMBERS)

Infanthearing.org

Babyhearing.org

hearingexchange.com

Listen-up.org (remember the hyphen)

agbell.org (202) 337-5220

ohntracyclinic.org; (800) 522-4582

boystownhospital.org

ncbegin.org or beginningssvcs.com (800-541-HEAR)

cuedspeech.org

deafchildren.org

exactenglish.com

www.seecenter.org

www.cici.org

clercenter.gallaudet.edu

shhh.org

oraldeafed.org

deafchildren.org (1-800-942-ASDC)

auditoryverbaltraining.com or auditory-verbal.org (703-739-1049)

3. GET HELP FROM PEOPLE WHO KNOW

Tennessee Resources

- TEIS (See Section 1)
- TIPS (See Section 1)
- Family Voices (1-888-643-7811)
- Library Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (1-800-342-3262)
- Tennessee Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (1-800-628-7818 + TTY; 615-313-4917 = voice)
- TRENDS (Technical Assistance & Resources for Enhancing Deaf/Blind Support (800-288-2266)

Tennessee Resources

- Baptist Memorial Healthcare Pediatric Audiology Center, Memphis (901-226-5682)
- Blount Hearing and Speech Services, Maryville (865-982-8557)
- ENT Associates of Middle TN, Shelbyville (931-684-3504)
- ETSU Audiology Clinic, Johnson City (423-439-5252)
- Hearing Services of TN, Franklin (615-591-6410)
- Memphis Oral School for the Deaf (901-448-8490) www.oraldeafed.org/schools/memphis/
- Mid-East TN Speech and Hearing Center, Dayton TN (423-775-0303)
- Mountain Region Speech and Hearing Center (Kingsport) (423-246-4600)
- Speech and Hearing Center, Chattanooga (423-622-6900)
- Tennessee School for the Deaf, Knoxville (865-594-6022) www.tsdeaf.org
- University of Memphis Speech and Hearing Center (901-678-5800)
- UT Child Hearing Services, Knoxville (865-974-5453) www.hearingandspeech.org
- Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center, Nashville (615-936-5000)
www.mc.vanderbilt.edu/VanderbiltBillWilkersonCenter/dhss.html

- West TN School for the Deaf, Jackson (731-423-5705) www.wtsd.tn.org

Tennessee Directories

- Tennessee Directory of Services for People who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (1-800-342-3262)
- Pediatric Hearing Providers List (615-741-8530 or 615-262-6160)
- TEIS District Directories of Services for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities (1-800-852-7157)

4. GET HELP FROM PEOPLE WHO KNOW

Visit programs: As you choose a communication method aim toward the results you want for your child. Since you can't look ten years into your own child's future, visit other children who have already traveled the variety of paths. Though every child is different, visiting programs can help you see the results of different communication approaches. Visit speech and hearing centers, oral programs, cuing camps, members of the Deaf community, public school programs, residential schools, ASL programs, total communication programs, Option Schools and much more. You can choose one of these or a combination. An early interventionist can help you find all of these. Then in your home community you can work together with your school and TEIS to create the combination of approaches and services that meets your child's unique needs through an IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) or an IEP (Individualized Education Program). Remember throughout the processes to trust your hunches as a parent.

Pick a Program that Matches Your Values and Goals: Values and goals include being able to talk, being part of a small and similar community, being part of the world as a whole, speaking, signing, and more. Different programs are better at some of these goals. So pick the ones that match your goals for your child. Though you will be your child's primary teacher as you go about daily routines, people in the program you pick will teach you how to do that.

Work with TEIS and TIPS: You may be visited by an "early interventionist". These folks will be part of a group called TEIS or TIPS. These caring folks come to you because they care about you and your child. They know you haven't had the time to research everything there is to know about hearing loss so they bring what they have learned. Things they may discuss with you:

- How early intervention—doing specific helping actions—can help your baby overcome hearing loss.
- The impact of hearing loss on speech and language development.
- How amplification—hearing aids or cochlear implants—can give your baby more hearing.
- Overview of communication options (oral, auditory/verbal, American Sign Language, Signed Exact English, cued speech, or Total Communication which uses a combination)
- Overview of programs and persons who can help you.

5. STUFF TO KNOW AND STUFF TO GET

STUFF TO KNOW

- The earlier you identify and amplify your child's hearing loss the better your child will do with communication, with learning, and with friends.
- Hearing loss is the most common challenge babies are born with, and it affects about one to four newborns per 1000 born.
- Let your goal be to screen by one month, to test hearing by three months and to put hearing aids on your baby by SIX MONTHS of age.
- Hearing loss is invisible. Only reliable audiological tests can identify hearing loss.

FREE STUFF TO GET

- John Tracy Clinic correspondence course (johntracyclinic.org or 800-522-4582)
- The 60 minute version of the video *Dreams Spoken Here* (Call 877-672-5332)
- AGBell free one year subscription (202-337-5220 or agbell.org)
- American Society for Deaf Children First year Free (PO Box 3355, Gettysburg PA 17325)

OTHER STUFF TO GET

- The BEGINNINGS parent notebook and videos (order at www.ncbegin.org or 919850-2746).
- Pilot cap to keep your baby from pulling off hearing aids (available from Hanna Andersson at 800-222-0544 or hannaandersson.com, item # XD22733)
- Critter clip or fishing line to keep your baby's hearing aids attached to the Tshirt rather than flying out the car window or other never-to-be-found-again places
- FM system: students with hearing loss have greater difficulty discriminating between the teacher's or parent's voice and competing background noise. An FM system overcomes this. Phonak and PhonicEar are two companies that make FM systems.

- Dry n Store to care for hearing aids

STUFF TO CHECK OUT

- Borrow from Tennessee Newborn Hearing Screening the video *Sound and Silence* to learn about communication options.
- Read the book *CHOICES IN DEAFNESS* to read true stories about real kids.

6. HOW TO BUILD LANGUAGE –IF YOU SPEAK, SIGN, CUE

- **Your goal is language development—spoken, signed, cued, or a combination—at the same rate as the child's hearing peers:** Language is more than words; it includes concepts, understanding and back-and-forth communication. Freely received and freely given. To do all of these:
 - **Take Turns:** Take turns laughing. Take turns making funny faces. Take turns cooing. Take turns telling about things. Take turns leading. Take turns noticing. Take turns picking. Language and communication are learned through interaction.
 - **Keep Communicating:** While you are deciding what method(s) to use, DON'T STOPTALKING with your child. Even if your baby does not hear all of what you say or understand all of the signs or cues you are using, your facial expressions and turn-taking will teach much about what's being said and meant.
 - **Follow your child's lead:** If your child sees a dog, communicate that the dog is ON the STREET, has BROWN color, has SOFT fur, WIGGLES and RUNS. Find as many concepts and language forms as possible. You don't have to sit and have lessons as much as you need to intentionally communicate about life as it happens. Talk or sign while you cook, while you garden, while you drive places.
 - **Get toys that encourage language development:** Anything that you or your child can talk about or communicate through will do. Examples:
 - *Little people or dolls—children talk for the characters as they ride the plane or go upstairs in the house and more.
 - *Alphabet letters—you can show your child how to spell *sun* and *moon* and more as they stick them to the refrigerator. Then go outside and look at the sun/moon.
 - *Paper dolls—communicate about shirts, pants, socks, hairbows, hands & more.
 - *Blocks—communicate about how tall, wide or wobbly your child makes things.
 - **READ to your child every day:** Use enthusiastic expressions and vary the way you present each character. If your family signs or cues, sign or cue the book as you read it. Put your signs on the book, in the usual place, or on the child. If your child reads lips, let her sit where she can see both your face and the pages of the book. If your child is building auditory skills, sit your child in your lap and read directly into his hearing aid or cochlear implant. If you are using a combination, read each way until you find the approach your child likes best. Remember: reading is a path to language acquisition but children can't read well without language acquisition. Each feeds the other.
 - **Include abstract concepts as you communicate with your child:** Use soft, sticky, scary, funny, happy, sad and more. Do this by holding something soft, giving it to your child and then using the word "soft". "This blanket is soft. I like soft. Do you like soft? What else is soft?" OR by saying "Daddy feels sad. Look at his sad face. Look at his body sitting sadly in the chair. He looks like he might cry."
 - **Keep a diary of your child's progress:** Include your child's words or signs, both receptive (what she understands) and expressive (what she signs or says).

7. COMMUNICATION DECISIONS

Your baby is beautiful. Deafness changes only one thing about your child's life: communication. Communication is the giving and receiving of information, whether in casual settings like family dinners, in formal settings like school, or in the stuff of life like going to the doctor or grocery. As a parent, you'll choose the basic way your child communicates and then equip your child to do so. There are many ways to communicate:

- Through spoken language aided by hearing aids or cochlear implants
- Through manual language expressed as signs or cues or a combination
- Through lipreading
- Through a combination of these

No baby has a preset language any more than a French baby born in the United States is born to speak French or English. Babies learn what is used around them, be it French or English or ASL or cuing or a combination. Hearing babies pick up language through hearing. Your baby will pick up language with specific teaching. This teaching may

include: how to listen, how to figure out cues of speech, how to sign, how to read lips and much more.

No matter what you choose, that language can become free and free flowing, no matter what your child's level of hearing loss. As you decide what ways to teach your baby to communicate, consider your values:

- Do you want you baby to communicate with everyone?
- Do you want a specific community where everyone is alike?
- Do you want your child to attend school in your neighborhood?
- Would you want your child go to school away from home to get a specific training?

As with every aspect of parenting, everyone you talk to will have a different opinion and will be certain their way is the right way. So visit programs that use the different methods, read about all methods, ask questions, take in all the advice sift through what you want for your child and then choose as best you can. Keep asking and evaluating all the way through. Any choice will require work, and any choice has people for and against it. **IMPORTANT:** Language and speech are different. They relate, but are distinct. Speech is what you say with your mouth. Language is the way you connect to people and to information. Language can be spoken English, written English, signed exact English (SEE), or a language with syntax different from English such as American Sign Language (ASL) or Spanish. Language can be a combination of these.

Language can be supplemented with lip-reading, cues, motions, signs, and expressions. **Comfortable and free flowing communication is the goal of language.**

So whether you teach you child to sign or speak or cue or read lips or all of these, remember that your goal is clearly understood and freely expressed language. The tricky part is that you can't always tell what that is. The happy part is that you can switch from to another if you find your baby likes one better than another. This chart will help you pick

http://www.beginningssvcs.com/communication_options/comm_options_chart.htm

Remember the BIG THREE actions

- * **AMPLIFY**—Get appropriately fitted hearing aids for your child by age 6 months of age or close.
- * **NORMALIZE**—The only thing your child cannot do is hear. So raise your baby just like any other child: with plenty of attention, communication, discipline, and guidance.
- * **ENJOY**—Your child is a child first. So enjoy your child and enjoy sharing life with your child.



YOUR FIRST 31 DAYS



8. YOUR FIRST 31 DAYS

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1 Coo and Gurgle with your baby.	2 When your baby makes a noise, answer back. This shows words have power.	3 Explore one of the websites in #2 of this folder such as babyhearing.org.	4 Let someone hold your baby. Enjoy watching them, enjoy your baby.
5 Call for free book MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE and the 60 min Video @ 1-877-672-5332	6 Read a baby book to your baby, pointing to pictures as you read.	7 Call 1-202-337-5220 or visit agell.org to get free subscription for parents.	8 Talk to your baby. Let your baby read your facial expression, your smile and	9 Visit amazon.com to order the book CHOICES IN DEAFNESS by Sue Schwartz	10 Giving your baby a cloth book to encourage love for words.	11 Go to listen-up.org to join listen-up, to talk with other parents.
12 Enjoy giving your baby a bath and snuggling your baby in a soft towel.	13 Keep a list of question to share with your pediatrician, audiologist, and	14 Make silly faces to get your baby laughing; notice the ones your baby imitates.	15 Call 800-942-2732 or visit deafchildren.org to order 1 yr parent membership.	16 Tickle your baby's tummy.	17 Call 800-522-5482 or visit johntracyclinic.org to get free correspondence.	18 Let your baby hold your finger.
19 Notice all the fun things your baby does and record in their baby book.	20 Call 800-459-3529 to get a basic packet and a year free membership on cued speech.	21 Take photographs of your baby and put in their baby book.	22 Send your baby's photograph to a friend or a love one.	23 Visit beginningssvcs.com/ communication option to learn about the options your baby	24 Talk w/ parents who use the communication options you are	25 Let your baby sleep on your chest; take a nap yourself at the same time.
26 Brag to a parent or friend about how smart your baby is.	27 Kiss your baby's feet, knees & elbows or give your baby a soothing massage with lotion.	28 Give your baby a foot rattle or wrists rattle to wave and enjoy.	29 Watch your baby sleep and ponder how much you love them.	30 Take your baby for the scheduled hearing test whenever it occurs this month.	31 Thank yourself for doing a great job and being a wonderful parent.	

When you find that your baby has/ or might have a hearing loss you feel frozen in time. There are so many decisions and appointments that you don't know where to start. So as you read, research, think and decide, don't forget to enjoy your baby. Nothing changes the wonder of your baby. Parent the same way and promote communication skills by doing these for the next 31 days.