

Hearing and The Early Years: An Overview of Sensory Development Script

The Early Years Project

- Hearing and the Early Years: An Overview. This video is an introduction to hearing development.
- This video contains the following sections: Anatomy and Function- this will be about how the ear works and how sound reaches the brain. Developmental Milestones- these are important points in a child's development that relate to hearing, that typically correspond with certain age ranges. Signs of Delay- these signs may be an indication of hearing loss or something else and may warrant further exploration. Fostering Development-some simple methods to help a child in their hearing development.
- Before we dive into this information, feel free to take notes, screenshots, or pause the video at anytime. The developmental milestones and fostering development sections, have corresponding handouts in the Early Years tab on the Illinois sound beginnings website. I will show you how to find those now, in case you want to print them out or look at them when we arrive at that section in this video.
- illinoissoundbeginnings.org, then go to the early years project tab underneath the providers section.
- The developmental milestones are in the learning section along with the videos. Fostering development handouts are in the activities sections.
- Anatomy and Function
- Here is a diagram of the Ear's structure. It shows the parts that make up the ear. The structure of the ear is broken up into 3 separate parts: "outer ear," the "middle ear," and the "inner ear." The Outer ear catches sound. The middle ear moves sound, and the inner ear converts sound to a signal for the brain as well as helps maintain our balance.
- Although our ears are relatively small, they have a big job of informing us of the world around us. This next video explains the journey of sound to the brain.
- This video was used with permission from National Institute of Health.
- Next, We're going into the developmental Milestones related to hearing. The video can be paused at any time to look closer at the lists. You can also find the milestones in a printer friendly format.
- There many different developmental milestones, and expectations vary across professions and assessment tools. This list was developed from multiple national organizations and is used throughout the Early Year Project. To reference our sources, visit the early years project on Illinois Sound Beginnings website, under the development section. Please continue to use the milestone expectations most relevant to you and your organization.
- Hearing Milestones refer to changes in the behavioral response to sound, and communication attempts, as the child grows and matures.

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- Milestones are indicators of individual development, providing valuable insight into the progression of skills across various domains. They help us track growth and identify potential areas that may require attention or intervention.
- Hearing Milestones: birth -9 month age range-This includes things such as reacting to loud sounds and moving eyes and head to localize (or search for) sounds. In the 9-12 month age range- a baby will likely be able Try to communicate with actions, gestures, or signs. Between 9 and 12 months ab baby will likely begin turning towards you when you call their name.
- Hearing milestones 1-3 years. From 1-2- a baby will likely enjoy being read to, be able to point to objects when you name them, such as "ball," and "cup" and follow simple directions without gestures, such as "stop!" From 2-3 a toddler will most likely be able to answer simple questions about a story, learn new words quickly, and begin to use past tense verbs such as walked, though they will often make mistakes with irregular past tense verbs, so they might say runned instead of ran. Hearing Milestones 3-4 years:
- Between 3 and 4 years old, Strangers will start to understand the majority of their speech. Toddlers will begin understanding and enjoying poems and silly jokes like the "okay, lets put the diaper on your head now"
- Hearing milestones : 4-6 years. Between 4 and 5 years old, a toddler will use somewhere between 200 and 300 words. they will also use consonants in the beginning, middle, and end of words, although they may not pronounce everything correctly. Between 5 and 6 years old a child will be able to participate in conversations and use longer sentences.
- Signs of Delay
- A delay is identified by a professional through observation, assessment, and comparison to typical developmental milestones for a child's age.
- Here is a list of potential signs of delay related to hearing loss. Remember between 1 and 2 years old, a baby will start using softer sounds such as: /p/ /b/ /m/ /h/ and /w/ sounds in words. If they aren't saying them, they might not be hearing them.
- Signs of delay are not a one size fits all, nor can a child be diagnosed using this list. But, if a parent, grandparent, or caregiver sees ongoing or concerning signs of auditory delay, a healthcare professional should be contacted for further evaluation.
- Coming up is Fostering development- some activities that you can do with children to help their development, related to hearing.
- The majority of brain development occurs in the first few years of life. Stimulating experiences, nurturing relationships, and a supportive environment are essential for the formation of neural connections that underlie all aspects of development, including cognitive, emotional, and social skills.

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- The skills developed during the early years greatly influences a child's well-being and academic success. Fostering development through interactions and play can help a great deal during this time of rapid growth.
- Here are some simple things that can be done to help foster development of hearing/listening skills at any age. Follow a daily routine for your little one, routines help all children cooperate, because knowing that their needs will be met helps feelings of comfort. Another great thing to do is read to children on a regular basis starting very early on. All exposure to language and communication helps develop needed skills.
- fostering development birth to 1 year old-responding to your baby when they make noise, teaches them that their sounds have meaning and value. Another helpful thing to do when you are with your baby is to talk. all. the. time. Narrate your day, describe what you are doing, what you see, hear, feel... everything.
- Fostering Development 2-4 years. For 2-3 year olds, we should do our best to speak clearly. They model their speech after us. Practicing counting is also really helpful for them. We can count their fingers, toes, steps, pieces of a favorite snack. From 3-4 years old, try to incorporate as many of these activities often.
- Fostering Development 5-6 Years.Talk about opposites, where things are (using words like first, last, behind, right, left and categories. Keep teaching your child new words. Don't simplify your language just because they might not know a word you use. They can figure out a lot from the context. You can always pause and explain what the word means.
- We have other modules available for viewing on the following developmental domains:
- Vision
- Communication
- and Language
- Scan the QR code to go directly to the Early Years Project on the sound beginnings website.
- The Early Years Project is a collaboration between IL Hands & Voices, Guide By Your Side and the Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (or Eddie) program.
- Please Take Our Brief Survey
- Thank you!

All About Hearing Series Video Scripts

The Early Years Project

The Role of Hearing in Development

- This is the All About Hearing Series, from The Early Years Project
- The Role of Hearing in Development
- We use QR codes to direct you to resources within our videos. How to Use a QR Code in a Video: Pause the video when the QR code appears., Open the camera on your smartphone or tablet., Point the camera at the QR code (like you're taking a picture)., A link will pop up—tap it to open the website, activity, or resource!, If it doesn't work, try holding your device steady or get closer to the screen. How to Use a QR Code from a Screenshot: Take a screenshot of the QR code when it appears in the video, Open your phone's photo gallery and find the screenshot, Tap the image to view it. On most phones, your camera or photo app will automatically detect the QR code and show a link you can tap.
- Hearing plays an important role in a child's overall development, particularly in communication & language, cognitive, and social-emotional growth.
- Communication: Early listening experiences play a big role in how communication skills develop, with kids quickly boosting their vocabulary and sentence complexity between the ages of 2 and 4. This growth really depends on what they hear, showing just how important listening is for early language development.
- Social/Emotional: Hearing plays an important role in social interaction and emotional growth. Kids with typical hearing can easily join in conversations, play, and take part in group activities, all of which are important for building social skills and emotional intelligence.
- Cognitive: Auditory input plays an important role in brain development and lays the groundwork for how it works over a lifetime. If there isn't enough auditory input, it can impact with memory, attention span, and the ability to process sounds.
- Hearing Developmental Milestones. Milestone expectations vary among medical professionals, school systems, and early education providers. The following list compiles guidelines from multiple national organizations and is used throughout The Early Years Project. Continue to utilize the milestone expectations most relevant to you and your organization.
- Hearing Developmental Milestones. Check out our introduction video to see Ear anatomy and function explained.
- This QR code, takes you to the Early Years Project where the video will be.
- Specific Milestones are reviewed in the intro video as well, and you can go to the Handout on our website by scanning the QR code for a printer friendly version.
- Lastly, these milestones serve as a guide. If you have a trusted source that you use for child development, please continue to use that, such as your child's pediatrician or therapist.

- Here are a couple of popular and reputable sources for early childhood developmental milestones that are trusted by professionals and families. The Centers for Disease Control and prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- Their website: [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org) has milestones, as well as a lot of information for parents about health issues, safety, and information on things such as formula, potty training, fitness, and more.
- It can be really hard to tell if a baby or young child has something else going on by monitoring milestones alone. It's a simple concept, but I think giving an example makes it easier to remember, so let's walk through a situation that parents and caregivers can relate to.
- Imagine you're at the park with your toddler, and they see a cat. They excitedly point at it and say /aah/
- You recognize that every time they see a cat, they make this same sound. Situations like this begin to emerge between 12 to 18 months, though it can vary from child to child.
- A few months later, as their speech develops, they start saying /at/ or /ad/ instead.
- Eventually, with more practice and exposure to the correct word, they'll add the missing /c/ sound and say "cat." This gradual progression shows how toddlers refine their speech over time. Parents and caregivers can encourage this by repeating words clearly and celebrating each new attempt. The toddler's response to seeing a cat illustrates typical language oral motor skill development. By age 2, most toddlers will be able to say a mixture of consonants and vowels in 2 word phrases. Like I said, this is a great example of typical development, here is the problem:
- If you feel your toddler should be saying the whole word "cat" and is not, is it a speech issue or is it a hearing issue? Are they not saying the word correctly because they have not mastered the oral movements needed or are they not hearing the /c/ in the word cat? It's extremely difficult to know for sure, without professional evaluation. Knowing your toddler and understanding developmental milestones can help you recognize potential areas of concern. Follow your instincts, you know your child best. Consulting a pediatrician, speech-language pathologist, or audiologist can provide guidance and support to help your child develop their communication skills.
- The C sound /c/ and the T sound /t/ are both very quiet because the sound is created by air movement, not the voice. Maybe you notice that your child has difficulty with a particular grouping of sounds, such as the ones shown in this picture.
- Knowing your child and understanding developmental milestones can help you recognize potential areas of concern. Follow your instincts, you know your child best. Consulting a pediatrician, speech-language pathologist, or audiologist can provide guidance and support to help your child develop their communication skills.
- One of the most important things for families to know after a child is diagnosed with hearing loss is that you are not alone. In Illinois, you can connect with free, caring, parent-to-parent support through our Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (GBYS) program. These are parents who have walked a similar path and are here to listen, support, and guide you.

- If you have any concerns about your child's development, consider reaching out to your pediatrician, audiologist, early intervention specialist, or a developmental pediatrician for support and guidance. Even if your child passes a hearing screening, doesn't guarantee perfect hearing for life.
- If you have a concern or sense that something might be off, with your child's hearing, trust your instincts — ask for a referral if needed, schedule an appointment, and follow through. But remember: a “pass” on a hearing screening doesn't guarantee perfect hearing for life. Even if your child passes, it's still important to keep an eye on developmental milestones and speak up if new concerns arise. Early action makes a big difference.
- Illinois Hands & Voices is funded in part by the support of Illinois EHDI.
- This project was supported by the Illinois Department of Public Health Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program made possible by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA).
- Please take a moment to take our brief survey.
- Thank you!

Fostering Development

- This is the All About Hearing Series, from The Early Years Project
- Fostering Development
- We use QR codes to direct you to resources within our videos. How to Use a QR Code in a Video: Pause the video when the QR code appears., Open the camera on your smartphone or tablet., Point the camera at the QR code (like you're taking a picture)., A link will pop up—tap it to open the website, activity, or resource!, If it doesn't work, try holding your device steady or get closer to the screen. How to Use a QR Code from a Screenshot: Take a screenshot of the QR code when it appears in the video, Open your phone's photo gallery and find the screenshot, Tap the image to view it. On most phones, your camera or photo app will automatically detect the QR code and show a link you can tap.
- Hearing plays an essential role in a child's overall development, and influences speech, language, cognitive skills, social interactions, and emotional well-being. As a parent or caregiver, supporting your child's development helps them learn to communicate, gain confidence, and grow.
- Fostering Development, these are things that we, as parents or caregivers can do to support their development. Staying up to date with well child checks and vaccines— A lot of vaccines today prevent illnesses that can cause hearing loss. Talking, singing, and reading to your baby. This enhances language and auditory processing skills. Of course, protect their hearing, avoid exposure to loud noises when you can. Or use ear muffs for your child if you are at a loud event. If your child has been prescribed hearing technology, using that will provide them with better access to sound and enhance brain development. Encourage social interaction— that helps build communication confidence and the skills needed in interactions with others.

- Like Milestones, fostering development is also addressed in the intro video. you can go to the Handout on our website by scanning the QR code for a printer friendly version. Again these activity suggestions vary from one source to another, so use what works best for your child, in your situation. This QR code, will take you to the activities section in the Early Years Project. This is where you will find the Hearing fostering development activities and the Sound Exploration activities handout for different ages from 6 months to 6 years. Scan the QR code to be taken directly to the document.
- The theme of fostering development, is really spending intentional quality time with your child. That, regardless of the the activity, will help your child learn and grow. Listening Games & Activities. Alphabet sound hunt: Say a letter sound (like "B makes /b/") and challenge your child to find an object around them that starts with that sound
- Alphabet storytelling: Take turns making up a story, with each sentence starting with the next letter of the alphabet. Directed drawing videos for your child to follow. Listening to different styles of music. Play Freeze dance.
- One of the most important things for families to know after a child is diagnosed with hearing loss is that you are not alone. In Illinois, you can connect with free, caring, parent-to-parent support through our Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (GBYS) program. These are parents who have walked a similar path and are here to listen, support, and guide you.
- If you have any concerns about your child's development, consider reaching out to your pediatrician, audiologist, early intervention specialist, or a developmental pediatrician for support and guidance. Even if your child passes a hearing screening, doesn't guarantee perfect hearing for life.
- If you have a concern or sense that something might be off, with your child's hearing, trust your instincts — ask for a referral if needed, schedule an appointment, and follow through. But remember: a “pass” on a hearing screening doesn’t guarantee perfect hearing for life. Even if your child passes, it’s still important to keep an eye on developmental milestones and speak up if new concerns arise. Early action makes a big difference.
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Hearing Loss Potential Signs

- This is the All About Hearing Series, from The Early Years Project
- Hearing Loss: Potential Signs

Hearing Loss Potential Signs

- We use QR codes to direct you to resources within our videos. How to Use a QR Code in a Video: Pause the video when the QR code appears., Open the camera on your smartphone or tablet., Point the camera at the QR code (like you're taking a picture)!. A link will pop up—tap it to open the website, activity, or resource!. If it doesn't work, try holding your device steady or get closer to the screen. How to Use a QR Code from a Screenshot: Take a screenshot of the QR code when it appears in the video, Open your phone's photo gallery and find the screenshot, Tap the image to view it. On most phones, your camera or photo app will automatically detect the QR code and show a link you can tap.
- Hearing Loss, Signs & Symptoms. As we have mentioned earlier on, delayed speech and language milestones are common indicators of hearing loss. If you're worried about your kid's hearing, there are a few other things you might notice: Like cranking up the TV or music, not answering when you call their name, struggling to hear with background noise, missing quiet sounds or seemingly not paying attention during conversations.
- Ear Problems: Signs & Symptoms Maybe you're more concerned about visible ear issues. If you're wondering whether your little one might be having ear trouble, here are a few signs to keep in mind: things like tugging or pulling at their ears, being extra fussy or crying for no clear reason, trouble sleeping, or running a fever—especially in babies and younger kids. You might also notice fluid coming from the ear or that they seem a bit clumsy or off-balance. These can all be signs something's going on with their ears.
- One of the most important things for families to know after a child is diagnosed with hearing loss is that you are not alone. In Illinois, you can connect with free, caring, parent-to-parent support through our Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (GBYS) program. These are parents who have walked a similar path and are here to listen, support, and guide you.
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- This is the All About Hearing Series, from The Early Years Project
- Hearing Loss: Prevalence & Risk Factors
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- Hearing loss is one of the most common birth defects. -More than 90 percent of deaf children are born to hearing parents Approximately 3 in 1,000 newborns have a congenital hearing loss 5 in 1,000 children ages 3-17 were found to have hearing loss, in the CDC's National Health Interview survey from 1997-2005
- By 2005 most states had established statewide EHDI programs by 2005, supported by funding and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). These programs helped hospitals and pediatricians track and follow up with infants who didn't pass their newborn hearing screenings.
- Prevalence of Hearing Loss: Hearing loss is one of the most common birth defects. Over 98% of newborns received the newborn hearing screening. * In Illinois 2.4 out of 1,000 screened have hearing loss. , national average is 1.8** *[https://www.cdc.gov/hearing-loss-children/data/index.html#:~:text=Prevalence%20rate%3A%200.6%25%20of%20children,%2D17%20years%20of%20age\).](https://www.cdc.gov/hearing-loss-children/data/index.html#:~:text=Prevalence%20rate%3A%200.6%25%20of%20children,%2D17%20years%20of%20age).) **<https://archive.cdc.gov/#/details?url=https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/2020-data/06-diagnostics.html>
- Risk Factors for Hearing Loss: Hearing loss in babies and young children can be caused by different risk factors. Some happen before or during birth (congenital), while others happen after birth (acquired). Here are some common examples:
- Genetic factors: Hearing loss can be inherited, even with no family history. Some genes affect only hearing, while others are part of syndromes (like Usher or Waardenburg syndrome). Infections during pregnancy: Infections like cytomegalovirus (CMV), rubella, toxoplasmosis, syphilis, or herpes can affect fetal hearing development. Structural Differences: Sometimes, parts of the ear don't develop as expected before birth. This can affect the outer ear, middle ear, or inner ear, and can lead to hearing loss. -A missing or underdeveloped ear canal. -Abnormal ear bones that don't move properly. -Inner ear structures that are shaped differently or incomplete. These differences can vary in severity. Exposure to ototoxic (harmful to the ears) substances: Certain medications taken by the mother during pregnancy—like some antibiotics or chemotherapy drugs—can affect fetal hearing. Perinatal (during birth). Premature birth: Babies born before 37 weeks are at higher risk, especially if they need intensive care or ventilators. Low birth weight: 3.3 lbs or less increases the risk. Birth complications: Lack of oxygen (hypoxia), severe jaundice (hyperbilirubinemia), or extended NICU can all be contributing factors. Use of ototoxic drugs: Medications used in neonatal care (e.g., aminoglycoside antibiotics or loop diuretics) may cause hearing damage.

Hearing Loss Prevalence & Risk Factors

- **Acquired Risk Factors: Postnatal (After Birth) Risk Factors:** These develop after the baby is born. Infections: Meningitis, measles, mumps, chicken pox, cCMV (congenital cytomegalovirus), Influenza B, sepsis. Head trauma: Any significant injury to the head can affect hearing. tear or puncture in the eardrum. Chronic ear conditions: Fluid buildup (otitis media with effusion) or persistent ear infections can cause conductive hearing loss. Impacted ear wax or foreign object in ear. Noise exposure: Loud or prolonged sounds, even in early childhood, can damage hearing. Delayed speech or language development: Sometimes a sign that hearing loss may be present.
- **Other Considerations:** Family history of hearing loss should always be a red flag, even if the child seems fine at birth. Newborn hearing screening is crucial — it's a good starting point, but some types of hearing loss develop later on in childhood. Syndromes with associated hearing loss sometimes present with vision problems, developmental delays, or balance issues.
- One of the most important things for families to know after a child is diagnosed with hearing loss is that you are not alone. In Illinois, you can connect with free, caring, parent-to-parent support through our Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (GBYS) program. These are parents who have walked a similar path and are here to listen, support, and guide you.
- If you have any concerns about your child's development, consider reaching out to your pediatrician, audiologist, early intervention specialist, or a developmental pediatrician for support and guidance. Even if your child passes a hearing screening, doesn't guarantee perfect hearing for life.
- If you have a concern or sense that something might be off, with your child's hearing, trust your instincts — ask for a referral if needed, schedule an appointment, and follow through. But remember: a “pass” on a hearing screening doesn't guarantee perfect hearing for life. Even if your child passes, it's still important to keep an eye on developmental milestones and speak up if new concerns arise. Early action makes a big difference.
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- Effects of Hearing Loss
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- Hearing loss in babies and children can have a big impact their development and overall well-being., effecting areas like: speech and language development, expressive and receptive language, cognitive challenges, social emotional learning, sensory processing, The effects depend on how early it starts, how severe it is, and how quickly it's identified and treated.
- Hearing Loss and Speech and Language Development: Delayed Speech and Language Acquisition: Children with hearing loss are more likely to experience delays in speech and language development, which impacts their ability to understand (receptive) and express (expressive) language.
- Hearing Loss and cognitive challenges: Cognitive and Academic Challenges: Hearing loss affects a child's learning, making it harder to develop reading and writing skills because they have less access to language in the classroom. Children with hearing loss can struggle to connect with others, which creates challenges in making or keeping friends. They are also more likely to experience emotional challenges, such as: loneliness, lower self-esteem and confidence, increased risk of anxiety and depression. which influences overall happiness and well-being.
- Hearing loss and emotional impact: Children with hearing loss can struggle to connect with others, which creates challenges in making and maintaining friendships. Being unable to fully participate in conversations or activities can make them feel disconnected, leading to feelings of loneliness, lower self-esteem and lack of confidence. These children are at an increased risk of anxiety and depression. Social emotional challenges look different for everybody, some common signs are: withdrawing from social situations, expressing frustration or sadness, showing signs of difficulty coping with stress, or frequent out of disproportionate behavioral responses.
- Hearing Loss and Sensory Processing: Children with hearing loss are more likely to experience sensory processing disorders, which can interfere with their ability to process information from multiple senses. This may affect their balance, coordination, and fine motor skills, making tasks like dressing, eating, or participating in physical activities more challenging.

Hearing Loss Prevalence & Risk Factors

- The reason I bring these up, is not to freak you out. Notice the words "your child may experience...." They are "more likely to.." The negative effects of hearing loss on all areas of life can be lessened, if caught early. IF we are committed to learning what works best for our children, they will be just fine. You will build strong intentional communication together and there are many wonderful people to help guide you in your journey.
- One of the most important things for families to know after a child is diagnosed with hearing loss is that you are not alone. In Illinois, you can connect with free, caring, parent-to-parent support through our Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (GBYS) program. These are parents who have walked a similar path and are here to listen, support, and guide you.
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Hearing Test vs. Screening

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- Hearing screening: -Quick check to see if there might be a hearing problem -Often done in hospitals (such as the NBHS), schools, or check-ups -Results are usually "pass" or "refer"
- Hearing Test: -Diagnostic Evaluation-Detailed assessment done by an audiologist - Measures the level of hearing loss and the type of loss-Guides treatment like amplification or other intervention.

- Think of a hearing screening like the “check engine” light — it tells you something might be off. A hearing test is the full work up from the mechanic that tells you exactly what’s going on and how to fix it.
- Pure tone audiometry- this is the most common test. A series of beeps at different pitches and volumes through headphones. The participant indicates when the sounds are heard. Speech Audiometry- listening to speech at different volumes. Behavioral Audiometry- hearing test that relies on reactions to sounds, rather than the patient reporting they heard a sound. There are several different styles of this, which one the audiologist uses, will depend on the child's abilities, age, and audiologist preference. Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR)- electrodes are placed on the head to measure brain activity in response to sound. Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE)- A tiny microphone is placed in the ear canal to measure sounds produced by the inner ear in response to clicks or tones. This test checks the functioning of the hair cells in the cochlea. Tympanometry- checks middle ear function, by using a small device to change air pressure in the ear and measuring how the eardrum moves. The ABR and Behavioral tests are used most frequently in infants and young children.
- There are many different types of tests that can be done to diagnosis a hearing status. Only tests completed by an audiologist can diagnose or rule out a hearing difference. Parents often rely on a child's response to sounds in everyday situations as a measure of hearing ability, without going to get a hearing test. While understanding how a child interacts with sounds in their environment can help gauge hearing ability in specific settings, they cannot be used in place of a professional hearing test. A child's response (or lack there of) to everyday sounds are better used as an informal hearing screening, if there are concerns, scheduling an audiologist appointment may be helpful.
- Here is a handout of basic terms to know for an audiology appointment. The QR code will bring you to the Early Years Resources landing page, where this handout is available.
- One of the most important things for families to know after a child is diagnosed with hearing loss is that you are not alone. In Illinois, you can connect with free, caring, parent-to-parent support through our Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (GBYS) program. These are parents who have walked a similar path and are here to listen, support, and guide you.
- If you have any concerns about your child's development, consider reaching out to your pediatrician, audiologist, early intervention specialist, or a developmental pediatrician for support and guidance. Even if your child passes a hearing screening, doesn't guarantee perfect hearing for life.
- If you have a concern or sense that something might be off, with your child's hearing, trust your instincts — ask for a referral if needed, schedule an appointment, and follow through. But remember: a “pass” on a hearing screening doesn’t guarantee perfect hearing for life. Even if your child passes, it’s still important to keep an eye on developmental milestones and speak up if new concerns arise. Early action makes a big difference.
- Illinois Hands & Voices is funded in part by the support of Illinois EHDI.
- This project was supported by the Illinois Department of Public Health Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program made possible by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA).
- Please take a moment to take our brief survey.
- Thank you!

Types of Hearing Loss

- This is the All About Hearing Series, from The Early Years Project
- Types of Hearing Loss
- We use QR codes to direct you to resources within our videos. How to Use a QR Code in a Video: Pause the video when the QR code appears., Open the camera on your smartphone or tablet., Point the camera at the QR code (like you're taking a picture)., A link will pop up—tap it to open the website, activity, or resource!, If it doesn't work, try holding your device steady or get closer to the screen. How to Use a QR Code from a Screenshot: Take a screenshot of the QR code when it appears in the video, Open your phone's photo gallery and find the screenshot, Tap the image to view it. On most phones, your camera or photo app will automatically detect the QR code and show a link you can tap.
- Conductive loss occurs in the Outer or middle ear. What that means is- Something is blocking or interfering with sound getting to the inner ear. Sensorineural hearing loss occurs in the inner ear (cochlea) or the auditory nerve. What it means: There's damage to the hair cells in the inner ear or the nerve pathways to the brain. Mixed Hearing Loss- A combination of conductive and sensorineural hearing loss.
- Here is a diagram of the ear and where the types of loss occur. In mixed hearing loss, there is something going on in the inner ear as well as the middle or outer ear.
- Types of Hearing loss: Conductive Loss- Ear infections-fluid in the middle ear0 earwax buildup- a hole in the eardrum- problems with the tiny ear bones- Sensorineural Loss: causes are things like: genetics- exposure to loud noise- illness or infections- ototoxic medications. Mixed hearing loss is a combination of conductive and sensorineural hearing loss. Example: A child with a genetic inner ear issue and frequent ear infections. Treatment depends on what's causing each part of the hearing loss.
- Here is a QR code to the Simple and informative parent to parent educational tools (SNIPPET). There is one on each of these types of HL, and many more topics . If you are interested please scan the QR codes.
- An audiogram is a chart that shows how well a person hears different sounds. Think of it like a hearing map! The Graph: Top to bottom = Volume (loudness) in decibels (dB)- The top is soft sounds- The bottom is louder sounds- Left to right = Pitch (frequency) in hertz (Hz)- The left is low-pitched sounds (like a drum)- The right is high-pitched sounds (like a bird)- The Symbols: O = right ear (usually red), X = left ear (usually blue)

Types of Hearing Loss

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