



Oregon Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Oregon EHDI Program?

The EHDI (Early Hearing Detection and Intervention) Program is a comprehensive, coordinated system of early identification and provision of appropriate intervention and support services for infants with a hearing loss and their families. The goal of the program is to identify infants with a hearing loss prior to three months of age and link infants with early intervention services by six months of age.

Why are infants being screened for hearing loss?

Infants begin developing speech and language from the moment they are born. Studies show that hearing loss occurs in approximately 3 out of 1,000 babies. Unfortunately, hearing loss is often not identified until 18 months to 3 years of age. If an infant has a hearing loss in one or both ears, early identification is crucial to preventing delayed speech and language development. Therefore, it is important that hearing loss be identified as early as possible so that intervention services can be provided.

How are infants screened? What is AABR? What is OAE?

There are two methods that may be used to screen a newborn's hearing: Automated Auditory Brainstem Response (AABR) and/or Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE). These tests can be performed while the baby is asleep or quiet and does not require the infant's participation. Sounds (tones or clicks) are played through small earphones and responses to the sounds are automatically measured. Both tests are quick, painless, and non-invasive.

What happens if my baby doesn't pass a hearing screening?

Infants who do not pass the initial hearing screening in the hospital are referred for a rescreening which should be performed before one month of age. Infants can receive a second hearing screen at facilities on this list.

What if my baby doesn't pass the rescreening?

Infants who do not pass the rescreening are referred to an audiologist for a diagnostic hearing evaluation. Infants can receive a diagnostic evaluation at facilities on this list.

What if my baby is identified as having a hearing loss?

Upon identification of a hearing loss, infants and their families are referred to a local Early Intervention (EI) program. This Family Resource Guide offers information on the important steps parents should take once an infant has been diagnosed with a hearing loss.

Can a screening be performed at a later time?

Yes. If the baby is missed or if screening is declined in the hospital, the parent or guardian can request a screening through an outpatient screening provider. This should be done in the first months of life, since some of the screening equipment is calibrated specifically for infants less than six months of age. Infants can receive an outpatient hearing screen at facilities on this list.

How can I learn more about the Oregon EHDI Program?

Call us at 971-673-0264 for more information.