

# Does Your Child Need A Hearing Test?



Only About  
Children

Many parents may recall their child having their hearing screened in the hospital shortly after their birth. However, even when a baby has passed the original screening at birth, they can still develop hearing loss months or years later.

Hearing is strongly connected to speech and language development, and by detecting hearing loss in the first days of life, intervention can start at an early age to help give the child the best chance of developing normal speech and language.

## Signs of hearing loss

If your child is showing any of the signs below, their hearing needs to be checked:

- Not hearing properly
- Has unclear speech
- Producing sentences with a few clear words surrounded by lots of babble
- Not speaking at the same level as other children of the same age
- Is showing difficulty engaging in group activities or following instructions
- Not responding to things said to them (or needing lots of repetition to get their attention)
- Asking you to repeat things often
- Having trouble saying words and sentences
- Having difficulty hearing in noisy environments
- Finding it difficult to hear soft sounds
- Not understanding simple words at 11 or 12 months
- Not babbling as much as children their age at 6 – 12 months
- Experiencing recurrent ear infections, colds or flu

## Temporary hearing loss

Some children develop temporary hearing loss (“glue ear”) due to fluid in the middle ear (behind the eardrum). This may follow a cold or sometimes happens “out of the blue”. Ear infection is a strong indicator of hearing loss however hearing loss can occur even if a child has never had an ear infection and appears to understand speech and instructions well.

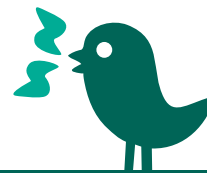
## Permanent hearing loss

Some children gradually acquire a permanent hearing loss. This may occur anytime, even in adolescence. A child may be unaware of the hearing loss.



## Types of hearing loss

- Unilateral (one ear affected)
- Bilateral (two ears affected)
- Congenital (present at or soon after birth)
- Acquired (developed months or years after birth)
- Conductive (due to fluid or obstruction in the ear)
- Sensorineural (affecting the pathway to the brain)
- A combination of the above



## What to do if your child shows signs of hearing loss

If your child appears to have hearing loss for longer than a month, a hearing test with an audiologist should be organised. Your child also needs to go to the family doctor (GP) for their ears to be checked and to potentially get a referral to a Paediatrician or Ear Nose and Throat specialist (ENT).

## Where can my child's hearing be tested?

Your child's hearing needs to be tested at an audiology clinic, as the test must be done by trained audiologists in a sound-proof room. Only some audiology clinics have the facilities to test the hearing of young children. It is important to confirm with the audiology clinic when making the appointment, that they have the resources needed to test hearing at your child's age.

Some community health centres, and some ENT specialists' offices conduct audiology tests with a trained audiologist. A few audiology clinics that test the hearing of young children are:

### NSW

#### 1 **Neurosensory (Private)**

Located in two Darlinghurst locations, Burwood & Wahroonga  
Suitable for children from 9 months – 7 years of age (St Vincents location from 3 years of age)

#### 2 **Edgecliff Hearing (Private)**

Located in Edgecliff & Bella Vista  
Suitable for children of all ages

#### 3 **Total Care Hearing (Private)**

Located in Bondi Junction, Caringbah, West Pennant Hills, Neutral Bay & Hunters Hill  
Suitable for children from 12 months of age

#### 4 **Sydney Children's Hospital (Public)**

Located in Randwick  
GP or Paediatrician's referral required

#### 5 **Royal North Shore Community Health Centre (Public)**

Located in St Leonards  
Suitable for children from 3 years 6 months of age who live in the Lower North Shore/Ryde areas

#### 6 **Western Sydney Local Health District Child and Family Health (Public)**

Located in Auburn, Parramatta and Mount Druitt  
Suitable for children aged 3 to 12 years of age

### **Sydney Local Health District Child Health and Development (Public)**

- 7 Located in Community Health Centres or Child and Family Health Centres across Sydney  
Suitable for children aged 9 months to 12 years of age

## Victoria

### **1 Neurosensory (Private)**

Located in Box Hill, East Melbourne, Geelong, Richmond, Wheelers Hill

### **2 Access Health and Community (Government Subsidised)**

Located in Richmond  
Suitable for children from 9 months of age

### **3 The Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne (Public)**

Located in Parkville  
Suitable for children of all ages  
Referral needed (letter of referral from almost any relevant health professional accepted)

### **4 IPC Health (Government Subsidised)**

Located in Deer Park  
Suitable for children from 12 months of age

## Queensland

### **1 Neurosensory (Private)**

Located in Benowa, Brisbane, Buderim, Chermside, Cleveland, Greenslopes, Southport, Sunnybank, two locations in Toowoomba & Tugun

### **2 Attune Hearing (Private)**

Located in 25 locations across Queensland

### **3 Queensland Children's Hospital (Public)**

Located in South Brisbane  
Suitable for children of all ages  
GP referral required

Appointments at private audiology clinics often do not require a GP referral however if one is present then a small Medicare rebate can often be claimed.

If a child has significant hearing loss and gets help quickly (such as through insertion of grommets, hearing aids, cochlear implants and early intervention) many problems such as poor speech and school difficulties can be avoided.

*Compiled from the The Children's Hospital at Westmead, Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick and Kaleidoscope Children, Young People and Families, "Can Your Child Hear" Factsheet, QLD Health "My Child Has Hearing Impairment" booklet, and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Victoria "Hearing Loss Facts" handout.*