



PEDIATRICS

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More ways to more words for your child

– A LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT GUIDE



More access to sound

Your child's first three years are crucial to their language learning. Children need access to sound, especially speech, so they can learn to recognise individual sounds – and eventually words. Most children say their first words when they are about one year old. But the language learning process begins much earlier. In fact, babies can recognise the sound of their mother's voice before they are born.

Children learn to speak by hearing spoken language and quickly go on to develop the communication skills they need for learning in general.

ReSound's sophisticated hearing aid technology gives children with hearing loss access to the sounds and speech they need at a volume that is safe and comfortable, helping them develop essential language and learning skills.

This booklet explains:

- Some ideas to help you create good learning conditions for your child
- How hearing is tested
- Language learning milestones for children from birth to 5 years old





Communication with your child

Your child began to communicate with you the moment he or she was born. Despite their hearing loss, you quickly found your own special ways to communicate. Not only is this interaction vital to nurturing the unique bond between you and your child, it is also key to the development of their language and learning skills.

HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU AND YOUR CHILD COMMUNICATE WELL WITH EACH OTHER.

Talk a lot

Talk to your child often. Speak clearly at a normal conversational level and at close range.

Face to face

Your child doesn't only learn language by listening, but also by watching your mouth and facial expressions.

Close contact

Lots of eye contact, touching, hugs and kisses help your child learn how to interact.

Everyday interaction

Playing, reading stories aloud and listening to music together all help your child's speech and language development.



Help your child get the most out of wearing hearing aids

Adequate access to sound is fundamental to your child's speech and language development. Every waking hour brings a potential listening and learning opportunity. Hearing aids and/or assistive listening devices help maximise your child's access to sounds – and their opportunities to learn.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS YOU CAN OPTIMISE YOUR CHILD'S ACCESS TO SOUNDS. WE SUGGEST A FEW BELOW.

Reduce background noise

Your child may find it harder to hear you speak over background noise such as a TV, traffic or people talking.

Get close up

Try and speak clearly no more than 2 metres from your child. And avoid raising your voice as it reduces speech clarity.

Face to face

If your child is facing away from you, move in front of them and bend down to their level so you are face to face.

Keep it clear and simple

If your child doesn't follow what you are trying to say, rephrase it in a simpler way and support it with gestures and signs.

Make speech easier to hear

Consider using assistive listening devices such as the ReSound Micro Mic, Multi Mic, or an FM system* to improve speech recognition in noisy situations or at a distance.

Hearing aids

Encourage your child to wear their hearing aids – all day if possible.

ABC

* FM receiver required





Understanding your child's hearing loss

HEARING SCREENING

Quick and easy to carry out, hearing screening detects the risk of hearing loss – even in newborn babies.

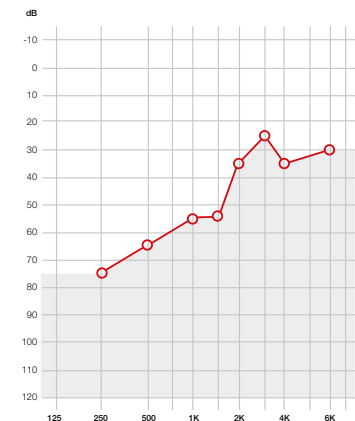
HEARING TESTS

The level of hearing loss is determined by a hearing test. While your child is growing, regular testing helps your hearing care professional choose, fit and adjust their hearing aids.

AUDIOGRAM

Each audiogram shows the results of a hearing test for a single ear. Along the bottom of the audiogram, frequencies (itches) run from low to high, similar to a piano keyboard. The numbers on the left of the audiogram show loudness levels. Quiet levels are at the top (-10 dB HL) and loud levels at the bottom (120 dB HL).

HL stands for hearing level and dB for decibels. The audiogram often includes an X for the left ear or an O for the right to mark the quietest sound that your child can hear at each frequency for left and right ear respectively. Hearing thresholds between -10 and 20 dB HL are considered 'normal'. Most clinics and hearing care professionals agree that a threshold greater than 25 dB HL indicates hearing loss.



Degree of hearing loss	
20-40 dB HL	Mild hearing loss
40-60 dB HL	Moderate hearing loss
60-70 dB HL	Moderately-severe hearing loss
70-90 dB HL	Severe hearing loss
90+ dB HL	Profound hearing loss

The audiogram might include other symbols to help your hearing care professional describe the details of your child's hearing loss. If you have any questions about your child's hearing test results, the best people to ask are your hearing care professional or family physician.



Milestones for listening, speech and language

When it comes to language development, every child follows their own unique timeline. Experts, however, have defined milestones for listening, speech, and language development which can be reached by most children with good access to sound, particularly speech. It's a good idea to discuss the level of your child's hearing loss with your hearing care professional so you can feel confident your child's hearing aids are delivering the appropriate audibility at each stage of their language development.

The following tables show what your child might be doing at the ages of 0-6 months, 6-12 months, 1-2 years, 2-3 years, 3-4 years, and 4-5 years. We use 'she' throughout these examples for simplicity, but the behaviours apply equally to boys and girls. Finally, please bear in mind that these are only guidelines – every child is unique.





LANGUAGE 0-6 MONTHS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- She startles to loud sounds
- Produces a different cry for different reasons such as hunger, pain or need for contact
- Makes noises to voice displeasure
- Babbles

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- When she babbles, respond with the same sounds
- Talk to her while you feed, dress, hold, cuddle or play with her
- Sing songs
- Play music



LANGUAGE 6-12 MONTHS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Understands the names of some familiar objects
- Shows interest in picture books
- Pays attention to conversation
- Babbles expressively as if talking
- Babbles in syllable structure ('Dada' and 'Mama')
- Understands 'No' and 'Bye-bye'
- May say her first word

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Teach your baby her name and the names of familiar objects
- Describe what you are doing ('Now I'm putting the doll away')
- Play peek-a-boo with her
- Hold her in your lap and show her pictures in books and magazines
- Sing simple songs to her



LISTENING 0-6 MONTHS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Recognises and looks for familiar voices and sounds
- Falls quiet or becomes calm when she hears a familiar voice or sound
- Can distinguish the sound of speech from non-speech
- Turns her head toward sounds
- Watches toys which play music or make a noise

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Use special intonation when you speak to her
- Pay attention to the sounds around you and point out the source of any interesting sounds



LISTENING 6-12 MONTHS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Responds to her own name
- Turns her head in response to sounds
- Begins to respond to simple requests

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Point out different sounds ('Can you hear the dog barking?')
- Give her very simple instructions ('Where's Mommy?' or 'Look at this')





LANGUAGE 1-2 YEARS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Imitates many new words
- Imitates the sounds of familiar objects such as cars, birds or aeroplanes
- Gives one-word answers to questions
- Can tell you what she wants by pointing or saying one word
- Uses her own first name
- Says the names of toys and familiar objects
- Uses two to three-word sentences like 'Go bye-bye', 'My shoe' or 'More juice'
- Hums or tries to sing simple songs

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Teach her the names of people, body parts, animals and objects
- Read to her every day from books with bright pictures of familiar objects such as people, flowers, houses and animals
- Speak clearly and simply



LANGUAGE 2-3 YEARS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Uses simple phrases and sentences
- Starts to use plural and past tense forms of words
- Uses two- to three-word sentences
- Enjoys looking at books
- Vocabulary grows to 500 words

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Play word games such as 'This little piggy went to market'
- Play games such as 'Memory'
- Talk and read with her every day
- Answer her questions with a full sentence, not just 'yes' or 'no'



LISTENING 1-2 YEARS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Follows simple, one-step instructions
- Turns her head in the direction of a sound
- Looks at people when they are talking
- Can point to a few body parts when asked
- Listens to simple stories, songs and rhymes
- Understands more words:
 - 75-100 words at 12-18 months
 - 100-200 words at 18-24 months

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Give her simple instructions ('Give the bunny to Daddy')
- Encourage her to repeat short sentences
- Read rhymes with interesting sounds, especially if they are accompanied by actions or pictures
- Teach her the sounds that different things make



LISTENING 2-3 YEARS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Responds to simple directions
- Responds when called by name
- Enjoys simple stories, rhymes and songs
- Repeats words spoken by someone else
- Points to eyes, ears or nose when she's asked

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Teach your child some simple rhymes and songs
- Find apps that encourage your child to listen and repeat words





LANGUAGE 3-4 YEARS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Says her own first and last name
- Understands location words such as 'over', 'under', 'on' and 'in'
- Asks who, what, where and why questions
- Talks in sentences of 3 to 5 words such as 'Mommy is eating an apple'
- Enjoys repeating words and sounds
- Enjoys telling simple stories from pictures or books
- Likes to sing and can carry a simple tune
- Identifies common colours such as red, blue, yellow and green

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Include her in everyday conversation, such as talking about what you're going to do
- Ask questions and listen to her answers
- Play simple games that teach concepts such as location ('in', 'on') or time ('now', 'later')
- Read books with poems, songs, and rhymes



LANGUAGE 4-5 YEARS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Names, letters and numbers
- Tells short stories
- Can participate in the give-and-take of a conversation
- Changes how she talks depending on the situation, for example, speaking louder outdoors than indoors

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Explain how things are related to one another such as 'up and down', 'first and last'
- Expand her vocabulary by talking about groups or categories such as, 'An apple is a fruit'
- Encourage her to explain how she has done something
- Discuss daily activities, and help her plan for them by making a to-do list



LISTENING 3-4 YEARS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Likes familiar stories told without any changes to the words
- Enjoys listening to stories and repeating simple rhymes
- Recognises common, everyday sounds

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Encourage your child to repeat her favourite stories
- Encourage your child to repeat some simple rhymes
- Talk about sounds in the environment



LISTENING 4-5 YEARS

POSSIBLE SKILLS

- Understands words for describing order such as 'first', 'next' or 'last'
- Understands words for time such as 'yesterday', 'today' or 'tomorrow'
- Follows classroom directions such as 'Draw a circle on your paper around something you eat'
- Hears and understands most of what is said at home and school

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Give two-step instructions such as, 'Find your red book on the shelf and bring it over here'
- Listen to her when she is speaking and respond with encouragement
- Make sure you get her attention before you try and give her instructions



5 YEARS OLD AND BEYOND

After the age of five, speech and language development includes reading and writing skills to a greater degree. Children follow their own unique timelines in the development of these skills, too. You can help your child by making sure their teachers know about their hearing loss and hearing aids.

Together, you can find out what works best for your child in the classroom and on the playground. Maintaining an open, ongoing discussion with the people in your child's life is a wonderful and rewarding way to support them throughout their childhood.



References

American Speech-Language Hearing Association Website. How does your child hear and talk? Accessed December 2015 from <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/>

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ReSound offers a new kind of Smart Hearing aid that adapts to the way children want to live today, combining the best available sound quality and access to speech with new possibilities to connect with their world.

resound.com/pediatrics

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