

# SPEECH AND LANGUAGE MILESTONES

## BIRTH TO 3 MONTHS

- Startles to loud sounds
- Calmed by familiar voice

## 3 TO 6 MONTHS

- Turns head to search for a sound
- Uses eyes to look for sounds
- May squeal, whimper or gurgle
- Imitates own voice - "oohs" "ba-ba's"
- Enjoys rattles and other toys that make sounds

## 6 TO 10 MONTHS

- Turns head toward an interesting sound
- Babbles ("ma-ma", "ba-ba", "da-da")
- Begins to imitate speech sounds
- Understands "no," "bye-bye," and other common words

## 10 TO 15 MONTHS

- Points to or looks at familiar objects or people when asked to do so
- Imitates simple words and sounds
- Bounces or makes sounds when music is playing
- Enjoys games like "peek-a-boo" and "pat-a-cake"

## 15 TO 18 MONTHS

- Follows simple directions, such as "give me the ball"
- Answers when name is called from another room
- Responds to singing or music
- Understands simple "yes-no" questions
- Uses 10-20 words
- By 18 months, should use many more words

# WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

## ALABAMA NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING PROGRAM

Bureau of Family Health Services

P.O. Box 303017

RSA Tower

201 Monroe Street

Suite 1350

Montgomery, Alabama

36130-3017

Phone: 334-206-2944

Toll Free: 1-866-928-6755

Fax: 334-206-3791

[adph.org/newbornscreening](http://adph.org/newbornscreening)

ALABAMA  
PUBLIC  
HEALTH

## ALABAMA'S EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM

602 South Lawrence Street  
Montgomery, Alabama 36104

1-800-543-3098

Fax: 334-293-7393

[www.rehab.state.al.us](http://www.rehab.state.al.us)

Alabama's Listening!  
UNIVERSAL NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING



Universal Newborn Hearing Screening  
Parent Information

## NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING

Approximately 3 in 1,000 babies are born with permanent hearing loss, making hearing loss one of the most common birth defects in America. Left undetected, hearing impairments in infants can negatively impact speech and language acquisition, academic achievement, and social and emotional development. If detected, however, these negative impacts can be diminished and even eliminated through early intervention. Hearing Screening is a simple way to know if your baby can hear, or if more testing is needed.

***All babies born in Alabama are screened for hearing loss at birth.***

## HOW IS THE HEARING SCREENING DONE?

**Your baby may have one or both of the hearing screening tests below:**

### **Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR)**

Three patches are placed on the baby's face, shoulder and neck. Small headphones are placed over the baby's ears and the baby hears soft sounds.

### **Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE)**

Soft foam or rubber tips are placed inside the baby's ears and the baby hears soft sounds.

## HEARING SCREENING RESULTS:

### **Pass Result Means:**

→ **The baby passed the hearing screening today.**

- Always monitor speech and language milestones.

### **Pass Result with Risk Factor Means:**

→ **The baby passed the hearing screening today.**

- Your baby has one or more risk factors, please talk to your baby's doctor.
- Further testing may be needed; sometimes hearing loss can occur later in life.

### **Non-Pass Result Means:**

→ **The baby did not pass the test today. More testing is necessary for your baby.**

- Your baby's hearing needs to be checked again by an audiologist (hearing professional).
- Fluid in the ears or other reasons may also cause this result.
- This does not mean your baby has hearing loss, but a more detailed test is necessary.
- Schedule the follow-up testing within two-three weeks after you go home from the hospital.
- The hospital will make you an appointment for a hearing re-screen prior to your leaving the hospital.
- Do not be alarmed or scared by this result.

**If your baby needs Follow-up Testing:**  
(due to a non-pass result or risk factor)

## NEXT STEPS:

1. Talk to your baby's doctor about the screening results at your first checkup.
2. Schedule follow-up testing with an audiologist (hearing professional) within two to three weeks of your baby's birthdate. Use the list provided by the hospital to find an audiologist.
3. The Alabama Newborn Hearing Program can help you find an audiologist or answer questions about follow-up testing.

### **Learning Begins at Birth**

Have fun with your baby as he or she is growing. TALK, SING and PLAY with your baby.

## REMEMBER:

- Most babies who pass the hearing screening at birth can learn language and speak.
- Some babies who pass the hearing screening at the hospital have hearing loss later in life.
- It is important for you to monitor your baby's hearing, speech, and language development.
- It is important to have your baby tested by an audiologist (hearing professional) if you have concerns about your baby's hearing. Use the milestones chart on the next page to help you check your baby's hearing, speech, and language development.