

Screening Programmes

Newborn Hearing

Reaction to sounds checklist

This list and the Making Sounds Checklist give pointers about what to look for as your baby grows to check if he/she can hear. Babies differ widely in what they can do at any given age. The ages presented here are an approximate guide only.

Shortly after birth - a baby:

Is startled by a sudden loud noise such as a hand clap or a door slamming. Blinks or opens eyes widely to such sounds or stops sucking or starts to cry.

1 month - a baby:

Starts to notice sudden prolonged sounds like the noise of a vacuum cleaner and may turn towards the noise. Pauses and listens to the noises when they begin.

4 months - a baby:

Quietens or smiles to the sounds of familiar voice even when unable to see speaker and turns eyes or head towards voice. Shows excitement at sounds (e.g. voices, footsteps etc).

7 months - a baby:

Turns immediately to familiar voice across the room or to very quiet noises made on each side (if not too occupied with other things).

9 months - a baby:

Listens attentively to familiar everyday sounds and searches for very quiet sounds made out of sight.

12 months - a baby:

Shows some response to own name. May also respond to expressions like 'no' and 'bye bye' even when any accompanying gesture cannot be seen.

If at any stage in the baby or child's development you think he/she may have difficulties hearing, contact your health visitor or family doctor.

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Adapted from: The 'Can Your Baby Hear You' form, B. McCormick, 1982,
Children's Hearing Assessment Centre, Nottingham, UK.