

What Families Need to Know

Communication is Key

Your child has been identified as deaf or hard of hearing. You may feel overwhelmed or unsure right now, but you're not alone. The Louisiana Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program is here to help guide you through this process and connect you with resources.

EHDI staff will link you to providers that will help create a plan for your family. This group of providers will be your early intervention and support team. The partnership between you and your team will focus on meeting everyone in your family's needs (siblings, grandparents, etc.) so that your baby can communicate and bond with as many people as possible. The plan will include services and resources that will help your baby learn language and communication skills to keep their development on track.

It's Important to Act Fast!

The first 3 years of life are the most important for learning how to communicate. Your child's brain is 50% developed by age 1, and 80% developed by age 3. Children use sights and sounds to learn language and communication skills, so it's important to give deaf and hard of hearing babies extra help with this as early as possible.

Developing language during this important period is key to your child's success in learning as they grow. The sooner a deaf or hard of hearing child starts early intervention services, the better their language and communication can be. They should be enrolled in services as soon as possible (within 1 month of identification). The decisions you make may change as your child grows, so don't be afraid to try multiple tools and language opportunities.

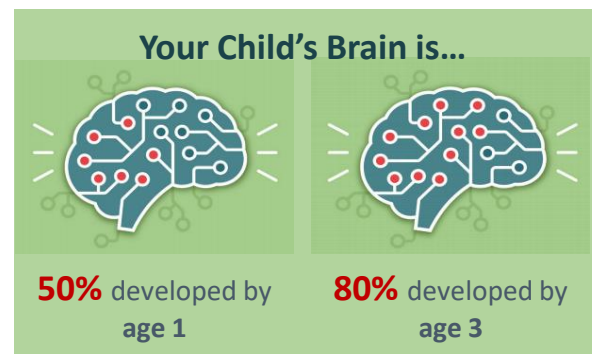


Image from Iowa Early Hearing Detection and Intervention

Learn More!

Continue to learn and seek out resources so you can make the best decisions for your family. Your decisions may change as you learn new information, and your child may need new tools and services as they progress.

- Baby Hearing | BabyHearing.org
- Supporting Success for Children with Hearing Loss | SuccessForKidsWithHearingLoss.com
- American Society for Deaf Children | DeafChildren.org

View the other side to see what you can expect next.

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Your child was just identified as deaf or hard of hearing and you may be wondering what's next. First, know that you are not alone. Your child's audiologist will notify the Louisiana Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program (EHDI). The EHDI program will call you to connect you with a few organizations that offer support. Below you can learn more about each and the timelines involved.

Within 1 week of learning your child's diagnosis...

The EHDI Intervention Coordinator will call you (from the number 504-343-1901) to discuss the programs below. With your permission, they will make referrals so the programs can contact you.



Parent Pupil Education Program (PPEP)

lalsd.org/outreach

Within 1 week of referral...

A PPEP teacher, who specializes in working with children who are deaf and hard of hearing, will call you to explain the program.



Then...

The PPEP teacher will schedule a visit to discuss the needs of your child and family. They will provide education and support for your child's communication skills. They'll also share information about hearing devices, communication opportunities, and resources.



Hands & Voices: Guide By Your Side (GBYS)

LAHandsandVoices.org

Within 1 week of referral...

A parent of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing (a Parent Guide) from the GBYS program will call you.



Then...

Your Parent Guide can offer support as someone who has walked in your shoes. There will be opportunities to get to know other families with children that are deaf or hard of hearing through Louisiana Hands & Voices.



Next...

Your Parent Guide can connect you with a Deaf/Hard of Hearing Guide. This guide is a deaf or hard of hearing adult who can share their personal lived experiences.



EarlySteps

ldh.la.gov/EarlySteps

Within 2 weeks of referral...

EarlySteps staff will call you to talk about the program and get additional information about your child.



Soon after...

An evaluator will call you to set up an evaluation for your child.



Within 45 days of the referral...

EarlySteps staff will schedule an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meeting to talk about your family's concerns and goals.



Then...

Your child will start to get services from an early intervention provider.

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HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Contact the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program at 504-343-1901 or email us at laehdi@la.gov. For more information, visit us online at ldh.la.gov/ehdi