

YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING IN ONE EAR

What Families Need to Know

Communication is Key

Your child has been diagnosed with a unilateral hearing loss (deaf or hard of hearing in one ear). For most children, this means it will be harder to hear and understand where sounds come from. Children with hearing loss in one ear can benefit from early intervention to promote speech and language development.

The Louisiana Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program will connect you to early intervention providers who will help you form your child's early intervention team. This team will create a plan to work with you and your family to support your child's communication skills, and to keep 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 family can benefit from early intervention even if your child is only a couple of months old! 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. Even a child who is deaf or hard of hearing in one ear may need extra help with this. They should be enrolled in services as soon as possible (within 1 month of identification).

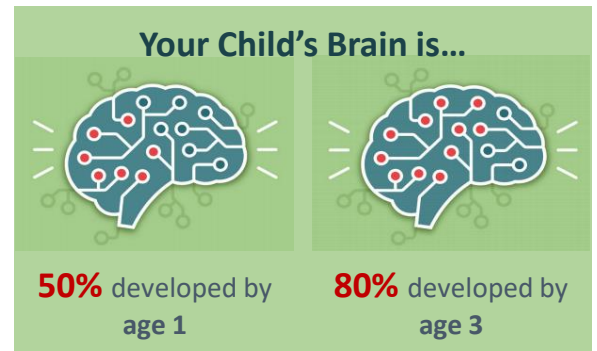


Image from Iowa Early Hearing Detection and Intervention

Addressing Unilateral Hearing Loss

Unilateral hearing loss is different for every child. Children learn to speak by saying what they hear. It can be hard to understand which direction sounds are coming from, and some sounds may be harder to hear than others. If a child does not hear speech clearly, it may be more difficult for them to develop language. Below are some ways to make it easier for your child to better understand what they hear.



How to Help Your Child:

- Get their attention before you start to speak.
- Talk directly to your child, at eye level, and within 3 feet when possible.
- Sit on the side of the better hearing ear when talking with them.
- Pause at the end of sentences to allow more time for them to understand what you are saying.
- Reduce the amount of other noises around them (background noise).
- Treat fluid or ear infections as soon as possible and talk to your child's doctor about their hearing at each visit.
- Enroll in early intervention!

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Your child was just identified with a unilateral hearing loss (deaf or hard of hearing in one ear) 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 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.



**Hands & Voices: Guide
By Your Side (GBYS)**

LAHandsandVoices.org



EarlySteps

ldh.la.gov/EarlySteps

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.

Within 1 week 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

