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A Booklet about Your Baby's Hearing

1. BY 3 MONTHS OF AGE, YOUR BABY SHOULD SOMETIMES:

- Startle or jump to sudden loud sounds.
- Stir or awaken from sleep when there is a loud sound.
- Be soothed and comforted by mother's voice.
- Stop sucking momentarily for a new sound or when mom starts to talk.
- Respond to speech by gurgling or cooing.

HEARING AND SPEECH HELPERS:

- Talk to your baby pleasantly and naturally as you work around the house.
- Try to imitate the sounds your child makes.
- Hold your baby close to you often, rocking them and talking or singing quietly.

2. BY 6 MONTHS OF AGE, YOUR BABY SHOULD SOMETIMES:

- Turn his eyes in the direction of a new or interesting sound.
- Smile or turn eyes to you when name is called.
- Cry when exposed to sudden, loud unexpected noise.
- Make sounds with voice like "baba," "ooh," "moo," "ma," "da," or "di."
- Enjoy rattles or a soft musical toy.

HEARING AND SPEECH HELPERS:

- Talk to your child about toys he/she is playing with. Use short, simple words and a pleasant voice.
- Try to imitate the sounds he/she makes.
- Call their attention to noises around them or noises made by their toys.
- Play baby games with them ("Pat-a-cake," "Peek-a-boo").

3. BY 10 MONTHS OF AGE, YOUR BABY SHOULD:

- Turn their whole head toward an interesting sound, or toward you when you call their name from behind.
- Understand "no," "bye-bye," and other common words.
- Play with their voice and make speech sounds as they play with their toys.
- Imitate some sounds you make ("buh-huh," "uh-oh," "mama," "dada").

HEARING AND SPEECH HELPERS:

- Talk to your child about the things they play with, and about things happening in the house. Use simple words and a pleasant voice.
- Make simple speech sounds and animal sounds, and encourage them to imitate you (“whee!” “ba-ba-ba,” “meow,” “moo.”).
- Show pleasure for their speech efforts.

4. BY 18 MONTHS OF AGE, YOUR BABY SHOULD:

- Use a few single words meaningfully.
- Babble in sentence-like patterns.
- Respond to noises by seeking them out directly.
- Understand many single words, such as names of foods, toys, and parts of the face.
- Enjoy listening to short songs or rhymes.

HEARING AND SPEECH HELPERS:

- Introduce new toys, foods, or body parts one at a time, describing them with short phrases.
- Encourage them to imitate speech sounds, and to imitate the musical up-and-down pattern of your voice as you express feelings such as happiness, sadness, and surprise.
- Ask simple questions and give the child the answer (“Where’s the doggy? The doggy is under the table,” or “What’s this? This is a shoe”).
- Talk about pictures in simple picture books.

5. BY 24 MONTHS OF AGE, YOUR BABY SHOULD:

- Start to use two-word phrases, such as “more juice,” “bye-bye Daddy.”
- Refer to themselves by their name.
- Follow simple directions without seeing you as you talk (“Give me the ball,” “Put the block on the table”).
- Use different types of single words, such as nouns (ball, milk), verbs or action words (go, want), and one or two prepositions (in, on).

HEARING AND SPEECH HELPERS:

- Insist that your child uses some vocalization when he wants something.
- Talk to them often about things they are playing with or things happening around them. Talk in simple sentences, emphasizing the key words.
- Ask them to put things in certain places (“Put the block in the box,” “Put the dolly on the chair”).
- Read simple books to them. Ask them to point out the pictures (“Where’s the house?”).

Dear Parents,

Your new baby will grow and change in many exciting ways as he/she learns about the world around them. One of the most exciting things your baby will learn to do is speak. Before your baby starts to talk, it learns to understand simple things you say.

Babies play with the sound and the feel of their own voice as they learn to make the sounds they will use in talking.

Your child must have good hearing in order to learn to speak well, to understand speech, and to learn in school. In fact, **YOUR CHILD'S HEARING IS SO IMPORTANT THAT YOU SHOULD LEARN TO RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS OF HEARING LOSS.** If a hearing loss is found early, many tactics can be used to improve their ability to use their hearing and help them learn to speak.

This booklet tells you how babies use their hearing as they grow. It also tells you what you can do to help your baby learn to listen and speak. Learning to talk is fun for your baby, so don't put unpleasant pressure on them to speak early!

If you suspect that your baby's hearing is not normal, talk with your baby's doctor and have a hearing test done by an audiologist. No baby is too young to have a hearing test. **REMEMBER—**

**EARLY DETECTION OF HEARING LOSS MEANS AN EARLY START
TOWARD HELPING YOUR BABY LEARN TO TALK!**