YOUR TODDLER'S GROWTH, LEARNING AND HEALTH

Looking After Your Toddler's Hearing

Hearing plays a key role in your toddler's speech and language development and social and emotional growth.

How Hearing Typically Develops

Remember – all children develop at their own pace.

Months 9 12 18 24

- Copies sounds and changes in voice pitch
- Babbles (repeats "mama" and "dada," for example)
- Shouts out to get attention
- Recognizes their own name
- Says 2 or 3 words besides "mama" or "dada"
- Understands simple instructions
- Recognizes words as symbols for objects
- Understands 50 or more words and many phrases
- Uses 30 or more words, and may put some together
- Asks for some foods by name
- · Enjoys being read to

- Uses 100 or more words, and understands even more
- Understands 2-part directions, like "find teddy and put him on your bed"
- Joins 2 to 4 words into phrases, like "daddy go bye-bye"

Keeping Hearing Healthy

Check hearing early

Your baby's hearing will be checked at birth, following hospital discharge or at a public health hearing clinic through the BC Early Hearing Program.

Most children with permanent hearing loss are born healthy and have no family history of the problem. But hearing can change at any age, and children who develop hearing loss are at risk of speech and language delays. Have your child re-checked anytime you have concerns.

Protect your toddler's ears

- Clean only the outer ear with a clean cloth.
 Don't use cotton swabs like Q-Tips or put anything inside the ear.
- Avoid long exposure to loud noises, like fireworks and loud music.

Have your child immunized. (See Preventing Sickness)

Reduce ear infections

- Breastfeed or chestfeed. (See Breastfeeding or Chestfeeding Your Toddler)
- · Don't put your child to bed with a bottle.
- Keep your child away from second-hand smoke.

MONEY SENSE

Through the BC Early Hearing Program, all children under 5 with permanent hearing loss are eligible for free hearing aids. See Hearing in the Resources section for more information.

WARNING SIGNS See your health care provider if

your toddler has:

- fluid or a bad smell coming from their ear
- pain in the ear
- · redness around the ear

Contact your local public health hearing clinic if your toddler:

- is responding to sound differently
- often says "what?"
- misunderstands simple directions
- isn't meeting the typical milestones shown above