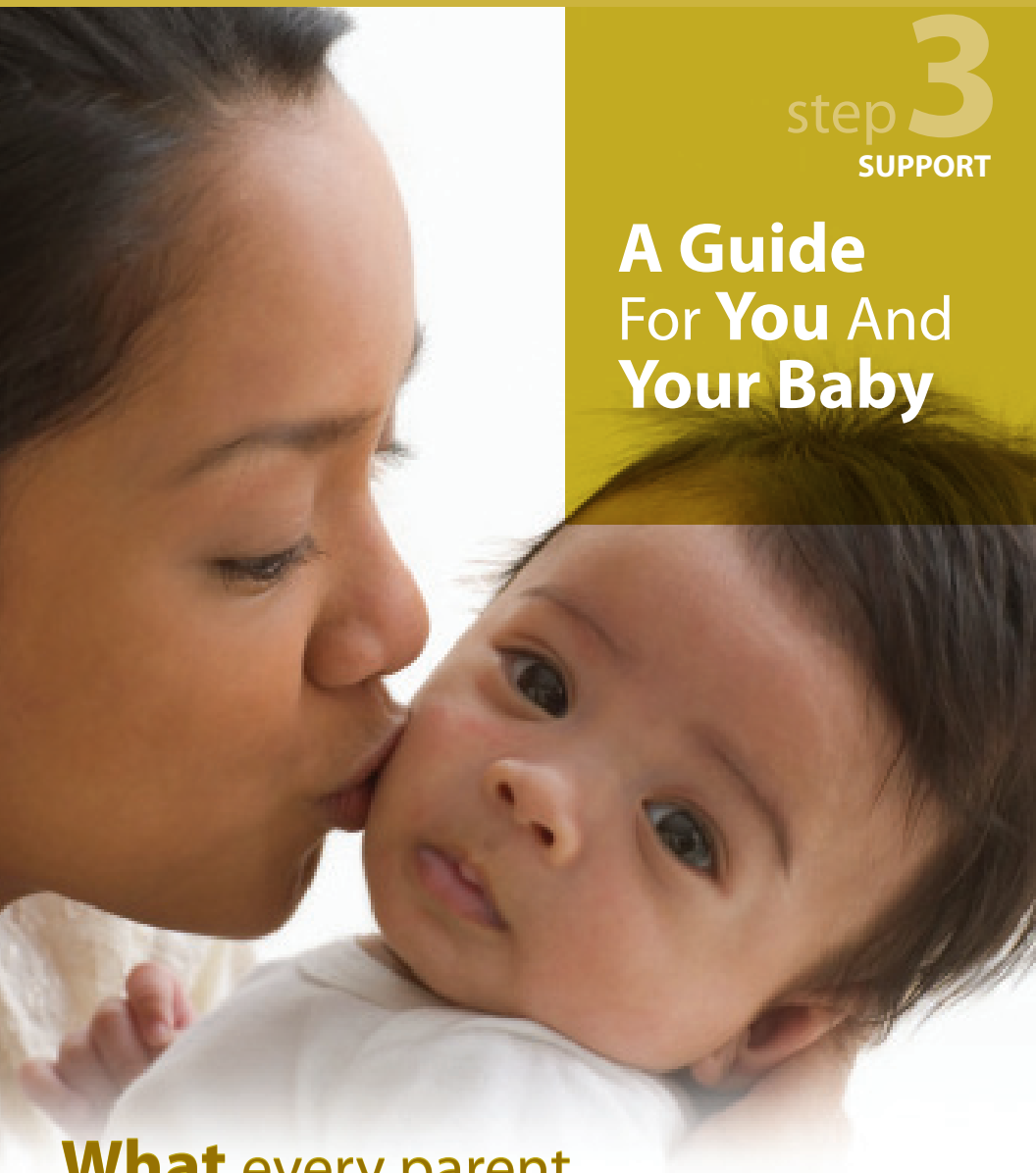
UNIVERSAL NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING



step 3
SUPPORT

A Guide For You And Your Baby

What every parent Should Know

Government of the
District of Columbia
Vincent C. Gray, Mayor

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DOH
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
PROMOTE. PREVENT. PROTECT.

step 3

You're not alone...

In the United States, about 3 out of 1,000 newborns will have some degree of permanent hearing loss. It is natural to feel overwhelmed and unprepared to deal with the situation. It is important to remember that you are not alone.

This brochure will help you explore some next steps in the journey with your baby.

Did you know?

- About 3 out of every 1,000 babies have a hearing loss at birth.
- For many babies with hearing loss there is no known cause.
- Sometimes hearing loss can develop later in childhood.

The following are questions parents may have concerning their child's hearing:

Who will help?

DC Hears is the state agency with the District of Columbia designated to promote early detection and intervention for all children from birth to five years of age who have been diagnosed with hearing loss regardless of family income. DC Hears will connect you with a specialist, who is knowledgeable about hearing loss as well as services and programs available throughout DC. For more information about how to access this assistance, contact DC Hears at **311**.

It is important to be a part of a medical home. A medical home is not a building, house or hospital but a way of providing complete primary care that is accessible, continuous, family centered, compassionate, and culturally sensitive. Your medical home will be an important part of coordinating special services for your child.

How do I communicate with my baby?

You will have many questions about how to communicate with your baby if they cannot hear you. There are a variety of avenues that are available to help assist children who are deaf and hard of hearing to communicate and learn language. As you make decisions always keep in mind the importance of communicating with your baby as early as possible.

You will be introduced to a variety of specialists to provide services and support to your child and family. These specialists include:

Audiologist—a specialist certified in evaluating hearing and fitting hearing aids and other devices to assist hearing.

Ear, Nose, and Throat (ENT) doctor—a physician who diagnoses and treats medical issues specific to hearing.

Early Intervention Specialist—a teacher of the deaf and/or speech-language pathologist who specializes in working with deaf and hard of hearing children.

Will hearing aids help my child?

Each child may benefit from hearing aids in a different way. Some children hear sounds loud and clear enough to understand spoken language while other children may not. It is important for your child to start wearing hearing aids as early as possible. Babies can be fitted for hearing aids as young as one month of age.

Image Courtesy of Natus Medical Incorporated

Where can I get more information?

There are many organizations and groups that can help you and your baby.

Learning About Hearing Loss:

My Baby's Hearing
http://babyhearing.org/

Raising Deaf Kids
http://www.raisingdeafkids.org

National Institute on Deafness and
Other Communication Disorders
http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program-Center
for Disease Control and Prevention
http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/ehdi/CDROM

Hands and Voices
http://www.handsandvoices.org

Beginnings
www.ncbegin.org

Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center
http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/

Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of
Hearing
www.agbell.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS REGARDING NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING CALL:

1-800-MOM BABY

This project is supported in part by the District of Columbia Department of Health Community Health Administration, Newborn Hearing Program and The Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, United States Department of Health and Human Services Universal Newborn Hearing Screening.

The DC Newborn Screening Act protects your right to refuse these tests on your baby if you so desire. However, you are encouraged to consider the benefits of the screening before you refuse. If you do not want your baby to be tested, simply tell the nurse or doctor.

Although your baby may not hear your voice loud and clear, they can "hear" your love.

APPOINTMENT INFORMATION

An appointment has been made for your baby.

Location:_____

Phone number:_____

Date/Time:_____

Finding a hearing loss early can make a big difference in your baby's life.