

Educational Needs

Children who are deaf or have a hearing impairment have a range of educational needs and there are many options available. Some of these are (in alphabetical order):

- **Bi-lingual/bi-cultural:** using Australian Sign Language (Auslan) as the language of instruction in conjunction with the presence of Deaf adults in the classroom;
- **Oral:** using various methods which utilise residual hearing, hearing aids or a cochlear implant to teach speech and lipreading;
- **Total Communication:** using Signed English, in conjunction with speech and lipreading.

For further information about options, contact the Deafness Forum of Australia.

Contacts

There are many different services available, but they vary between states & territories. Contact the following organisations for education policies and advice on the education of deaf or hearing impaired children:

- Association of Independent Schools in your state/territory
- Catholic Education Office in your state/territory
- Department of Education in your state/territory.

Other services available where advice can be given are:

- Australian Association of the Deaf
- Australian Federation of Deaf Societies
- Deafness Forum of Australia
- Parent Support Groups.

For further information about parent Support Groups contact the Deafness Forum of Australia or see the Australian Deafness Directory at www.aceinfo.net.au/Resources/ADDINDEX.html

Deafness Forum of Australia

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Can your
child hear?



If you have any concerns about your child's hearing, no matter how young your child is, you can arrange for a hearing test.

Most babies will gradually develop listening behaviours and language if their hearing is normal.

The milestones usually follow the adjacent checklist, although there are individual variations.



Checklist

0 - 4 months

is startled by loud noises and soothed by mother's voice.

4 - 6 months

turns eyes towards sounds and responds to mother's voice.

5 - 6 months

begins to "babble".

6 - 9 months

turns head towards sounds and responds to own name.

9 - 12 months

copies simple words like "no" and "bye bye".

12 - 18 months

says some words and follows simple instructions.

Over 18 months

should be increasing vocabulary quickly.

A child with a hearing loss may:

- not hear sounds;
- not respond to own name;
- begin to "babble", then stop for no explicable reason and fail to use single words;
- use very few words for their age;
- misunderstand instructions, seem inattentive and/or restless;
- appear to be naughty;
- wait to see what others do first after instructions are given.



Where to get your child's hearing tested

- Ask the advice of your **family doctor**, who may refer you to a medical ear specialist for examination.
- **Australian Hearing** has centres throughout Australia. It is a free government-funded service for all young people up to the age of 21 years, and provides assistance for those who require hearing aids.
- Your **local hospital**, providing it has the facilities to test young babies. Your family doctor may refer you there.
- Your **state/territory health service** can provide locations of paediatric audiological facilities.

deafness forum is the **peak body for deafness** and **seeks solutions** and **advocates on issues** for all **Australians** who are **Deaf**, have a **hearing impairment** or **chronic disorder** of the **ear**