

Your Child Has a Mild Hearing Loss



If your audiologist has described your child's hearing loss as mild you may have many questions, such as:

What is mild hearing loss?

Mild hearing loss makes it difficult to hear some sounds, including soft voices and some speech sounds. It is also very difficult to understand speech in a noisy environment, such as in a day care setting, playgrounds or at family gatherings. Children with mild hearing loss are eligible for Early Intervention services in Massachusetts.

Will my child need hearing aids?

Talk to your audiologist about hearing aids. Some children with mild hearing loss use hearing aids to hear sounds or speech better; some do not. Some children benefit from other types of equipment to help them hear in group settings.

Does my child need intervention services now?

All children with hearing loss are eligible for Early Intervention services from birth until the age of three, no matter the degree. We encourage families who have a child with hearing loss to enroll in Early Intervention as early as possible to avoid delays in speech, language and brain development. You will work with your Early Intervention provider to decide the best plan for your child and your family.

Hearing loss is now found in children at a much younger age because of newborn hearing screening. Studies have shown that the earlier children with hearing loss receive Early Intervention, the better the results. Talk to your child's audiologist and doctor or call the **Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program** at **800-882-1435** for more information. You can also e-mail newborn.hearing@state.ma.us.

You might want to consider these tips for your child with a mild hearing loss:

- Connect with other parents of children with hearing loss. Ask your audiologist or Early Intervention provider if there is a parent group in your area, and consider contacting **Mass Family TIES** to be connected to another family.
- Continue to have your child's hearing tested on a regular basis, as recommended by your audiologist. The audiologist will monitor your child's hearing to make sure that it does not change.
- Contact the **Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**. MCDHH provides many helpful resources and services, including Children's Specialists who can work with your child.
- Be sure to let people know it is important to have your child's attention when they talk with your child.
- Cut down or eliminate background noise, for example, television or radio, when speaking or reading to your child.
- Seek medical attention whenever you suspect your child has an ear infection.

Your Child Has a Moderate Hearing Loss



If your audiologist has described your child's hearing loss as moderate, you may have many questions, such as:

What is moderate hearing loss?

Moderate hearing loss is a serious degree of hearing loss. Without hearing aids, a child with a moderate hearing loss will not be able to hear many speech sounds at a normal speaking level and will find it very hard to understand speech in noisy places, such as in a day care setting, playgrounds or at family gatherings. Children with moderate hearing loss are eligible for Early Intervention services in Massachusetts.

Will my child need hearing aids?

Talk to your audiologist about hearing aids. In most cases, the use of hearing aids will help children with moderate hearing loss to hear sounds and speech better. Some children will also use other types of equipment to help them hear in group settings. Your audiologist can help you to know if hearing aids are right for your child.

Does my child need intervention services now?

All children with hearing loss are eligible for Early Intervention services from birth until the age of three, no matter the degree. We encourage families who have a child with hearing loss to enroll in Early Intervention as early as possible to avoid delays in speech, language and brain development. You will work with your Early Intervention provider to decide the best plan for your child and your family.

Hearing loss is now found in children at a much younger age because of newborn hearing screening. Studies have shown that the earlier children with hearing loss receive Early Intervention, the better the results. Talk to your child's audiologist and doctor or call the **Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program** at **800-882-1435** for more information. You can also e-mail newborn.hearing@state.ma.us.

You might want to consider these tips for your child with a moderate hearing loss:

- Connect with other parents of children with hearing loss. Ask your audiologist or Early Intervention provider if there is a parent group in your area, and consider contacting **Mass Family TIES** to be connected to another family.
- Children with moderate hearing loss will need more help understanding the meaning of things that happen around them. You can help your child by describing the things that you see, and by narrating all of your activities together, such as meals, bath time, changing diapers and bedtime.
- Continue to have your child's hearing tested on a regular basis, as recommended by your audiologist. The audiologist will keep track of your child's hearing in case there are any changes.
- Consider enrolling in the **Family Sign Language Program**. In Massachusetts, all families of children with hearing loss are eligible for American Sign Language classes that are taught in the home. Sign language can give your child earlier access to language, which benefits children's brain development and speech.
- Contact the **Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**. MCDHH provides many helpful resources and services, including Children's Specialists who can work with your child. MCDHH is also a good source of information about helpful technologies for children and adults who have a hearing loss.
- Be sure to let people know it is important to have your child's attention when they talk with your child.
- Cut down or eliminate background noise, for example, television or radio, when speaking or reading to your child. Also make sure that your face is visible when speaking or reading to your child.
- Children and adults with hearing loss can feel isolated when they do not understand what people around them are saying, especially in a group setting. As your child gets older, let them know that it is OK to ask someone to repeat themselves, or to speak more slowly and clearly.
- Seek medical attention whenever you suspect your child has an ear infection.

Your Child Has a Profound Hearing Loss



If your audiologist has described your child's hearing loss as profound, you may have many questions, such as:

What is profound hearing loss?

Profound hearing loss describes a total, or nearly total degree of hearing loss. A child with a profound hearing loss will not hear sounds, even in a quiet environment. Children with profound hearing loss are eligible for Early Intervention services in Massachusetts.

Will my child need hearing aids?

In some cases, the use of hearing aids will help children with profound hearing loss to hear some sounds and speech. Some children with profound hearing loss may benefit from a cochlear implant, a device which can offer access to a wider range of sound. Your audiologist can help you to know if hearing aids and/or cochlear implants are right for your child.

Does my child need intervention services now?

All children with hearing loss are eligible for Early Intervention services from birth until the age of three, no matter the degree. We encourage families who have a child with hearing loss to enroll in Early Intervention as early as possible to avoid delays in brain development, speech and language. You will work with your Early Intervention provider to decide the best plan for your child and your family.

Hearing loss is now found in children at a much younger age because of newborn hearing screening. Studies have shown that the earlier children with hearing loss receive Early Intervention, the better the results. Talk to your child's audiologist and doctor and call the **Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program** at **800-882-1435** for more information. You can also e-mail newborn.hearing@state.ma.us.

You might want to consider these tips for your child with a profound hearing loss:

- Connect with other parents of children with hearing loss. Ask your audiologist or Early Intervention provider if there is a parent group in your area, and consider contacting **Mass Family TIES** to be connected to another family.
- Contact the **Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**. MCDHH provides many other helpful resources and services, including Children's Specialists who can work with your family to understand the unique needs of children with hearing loss. MCDHH is also a good source of information about helpful technologies for children and adults who have a hearing loss.
- For a good start in developing language, consider enrolling in the **Family Sign Language Program**. In Massachusetts, all families of children with hearing loss are eligible for American Sign Language classes taught in the home. Sign language can give your child earlier access to language, which benefits children's brain development and speech.
- Continue to have your child's hearing tested on a regular basis, as recommended by your audiologist. The audiologist will keep track of your child's hearing in case there are any changes.
- Be sure to let people know it is important to have your child's attention when they talk with your child.
- Cut down or eliminate background noise, for example, television or radio, when speaking or reading to your child. Also make sure that your face is visible when speaking or reading to your child.
- Children with profound hearing loss will need lots of help understanding the meaning of things that happen around them. You can help your child by describing the things that you see and do, and by narrating all of your activities together, such as meals, changing diapers, bath time, and bedtime.
- Seek medical attention whenever you suspect your child has an ear infection.

Your Child Has a Severe Hearing Loss



If your audiologist has described your child's hearing loss as severe, you may have many questions, such as:

What is severe hearing loss?

Severe hearing loss is a very significant degree of hearing loss. Without hearing aids, a child with a severe hearing loss will be unable to hear most speech sounds at normal speaking level, even in a quiet environment. Children with severe hearing loss are eligible for Early Intervention services in Massachusetts.

Will my child need hearing aids?

In most cases, children with severe hearing loss will benefit from the use of hearing aids. Some children may benefit from a cochlear implant, a device which can offer access to a wider range of sound. Your audiologist can help you to know if hearing aids and/or cochlear implants are right for your child. Many children with severe hearing loss will also use other types of equipment to help them hear in group settings.

Does my child need intervention services now?

All children with hearing loss are eligible for Early Intervention services from birth until the age of three, no matter the degree. We encourage families who have a child with hearing loss to enroll in Early Intervention as early as possible to avoid delays in speech, language and brain development. You will work with your Early Intervention provider to decide the best plan for your child and your family.

Hearing loss is now found in children at a much younger age because of newborn hearing screening. Studies have shown that the earlier children with hearing loss receive Early Intervention, the better the results. Talk to your child's audiologist and doctor and call the **Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program** at **800-882-1435** for more information. You can also e-mail newborn.hearing@state.ma.us.

You might want to consider these tips for your child with a severe hearing loss:

- Connect with other parents of children with hearing loss. Ask your audiologist or Early Intervention provider if there is a parent group in your area, and consider contacting **Mass Family TIES** to be connected to another family.
- Contact the **Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**. MCDHH provides many other helpful resources and services, including Children's Specialists who can work with your family to understand the unique needs of children with hearing loss. MCDHH is also a good source of information about helpful technologies for children and adults who have a hearing loss.
- Consider enrolling in the **Family Sign Language Program**. In Massachusetts, all families of children with hearing loss are eligible for American Sign Language classes taught in the home. Sign language can give your child earlier access to language, which benefits children's brain development and speech.
- Continue to have your child's hearing tested on a regular basis, as recommended by your audiologist. The audiologist will keep track of your child's hearing in case there are any changes.
- Be sure to let people know it is important to have your child's attention when they talk with your child.
- Cut down or eliminate background noise, for example, television or radio, when speaking or reading to your child. Also make sure that your face is visible when speaking or reading to your child.
- Children with severe hearing loss will need lots of help understanding the meaning of things that happen around them. You can help your child by describing the things that you see and do, and by narrating all of your activities together, such as meals, bath time, changing diapers and bedtime.
- Children and adults with hearing loss can feel isolated when they do not understand what people around them are saying, especially in a group setting. Let your child know that it is OK to ask someone to repeat themselves, or to speak more slowly and clearly.
- Seek medical attention whenever you suspect your child has an ear infection.

Your Child Has a Unilateral Hearing Loss



If your audiologist has described your child's hearing loss as unilateral you may have many questions, such as:

What is unilateral (one-ear) hearing loss?

Your child has one ear with normal hearing and one ear with a hearing loss. The degree of hearing loss can vary from mild to profound. Your child may have difficulties locating where sounds come from and understanding speech in a noisy environment, such as in a day care setting, on a playground or at family gatherings. Children with unilateral hearing loss are eligible for Early Intervention services in Massachusetts.

Will my child need hearing aids?

Talk to your audiologist about hearing aids. Some children with unilateral hearing loss use hearing aids to hear sounds or speech better; some do not. Some children benefit from other types of equipment to help them hear in group settings.

Does my child need intervention services now?

All children with hearing loss are eligible for Early Intervention services from birth until the age of three. We encourage families who have a child with hearing loss to enroll in Early Intervention as early as possible to avoid delays in speech, language and brain development. Children with unilateral hearing loss will develop more like a child with normal hearing levels if given the proper supports early. You will work with your Early Intervention provider to decide the best plan for your child and your family.

Hearing loss is now found in children at a much younger age because of newborn hearing screening. Studies have shown that the earlier children with hearing loss receive Early Intervention, the better the results. Talk to your child's audiologist and doctor or call the **Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program** at **800-882-1435** for more information. You can also e-mail newborn.hearing@state.ma.us.

You might want to consider these tips for your child with a unilateral hearing loss:

- Connect with other parents of children with hearing loss. Ask your audiologist or Early Intervention provider if there is a parent group in your area, and consider contacting **Mass Family TIES** to be connected to another family.
- Continue to have your child's hearing tested on a regular basis, as recommended by your audiologist. The audiologist will monitor your child's hearing to make sure that it does not change.
- Seek medical attention whenever you suspect your child has an ear infection.
- Be sure to let people know it is important to have your child's attention when they talk with your child.
- Cut down or eliminate background noise, for example, television or radio, when speaking or reading to your child.
- When holding your child or walking with them, remember to have their 'better' ear facing you.
- Position your child's car seat so that their 'better' ear is facing the other people in the car.