

BC Early Hearing Program

PARENT RESOURCE GUIDE



For Families with Babies Identified as Deaf or Hard of Hearing*

**birth - age 2*

LEARNING STARTS NOW

Babies who are deaf or hard of hearing are at risk for language delays.

BC Early Hearing Program (BCEHP) provides families with free, early services that will help your baby now.



Hearing and language are connected

Babies learn language starting at birth. Typically they learn by watching and listening to the people around them. Over time they learn to make sounds and that sounds have meaning. Babies start using their first words once they have been exposed to enough language.

Babies who are deaf or hard of hearing miss many of the sounds around them. These babies need support as early as possible.



BC EARLY HEARING PROGRAM PROVIDES

- a Service Coordinator (an early language development professional) who will give you information about the services available
- funding for early language services
 - one-to-one sessions with an early speech and language specialist
 - sign language instruction
- hearing aids (if appropriate), batteries and earmolds
- parent support from the Guide By Your Side program

BCEHP services are free for eligible families. More information on page 11.



WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?



Be Informed

Gather information from a variety of specialists. (p.4)



Start Services Early

Start early language services as soon as possible – ideally before your baby is six months old. (p.5)



Access Support

Join a community of parents and role models. (p.6)



These specialists will provide you with information to help your baby.



Audiologist

- checks your baby's hearing
- answers questions about hearing aids



Doctors

- provide medical care and referrals to specialists like Ear, Nose and Throat doctors



Service Coordinator

- assists you with starting services for your baby



Guides

- share their experiences and answer your questions
- may include trained parents and role models



Service Providers

- provide tailored language services

Start Services Early



BC Early Hearing Program recommends families start early language services as soon as possible. Research shows that early is better when it comes to learning language.



A BCEHP Service Coordinator will contact you soon. The Service Coordinator assists parents with learning about the early language services available.

These services are available at no cost to you.

“Looking back, we’re glad we started services early.

We didn’t realize how important the sessions were for our child’s social and emotional development.”



Many parents find it helpful to connect with others who have been through something similar.

Guide By Your Side™ – a Hands & Voices program



GUIDE BY
YOUR SIDE™

Connects you with trained, experienced Guides in BC

- Parent Guides – parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing Guides – role models who have grown up deaf or hard of hearing

www.phsa.ca/earlyhearing

gbys@phsa.ca



STEPS TO START SERVICES



Step 1

A BCEHP Service Coordinator calls you.



Step 2

Guide By Your Side Program is available to support you.



Step 3

Parents choose the early language services that best suit their family.



Step 4

The Service Provider will work directly with your family.



Continue with audiology services and getting hearing aids if beneficial.

RESOURCES

Early Language Services: Local and Provincial

BC Early Hearing Program partners with community-based and provincial service providers so families can start services early.

Community-Based Services: Many communities have a Child Development Centre or Public Health Unit with services.

Provincial Services: These agencies work specifically with children who are deaf or hard of hearing (birth – age five).



BC Family Hearing Resource Society	Children's Hearing & Speech Centre of BC	Deaf Children's Society of BC
www.bcfamilyhearing.com	www.childrenshearing.ca	www.deafchildren.bc.ca
info@bcfamilyhearing.com	info@childrenshearing.ca	office@deafchildren.bc.ca
604-584-2827 Toll-free: 1-877-584-2827	604-437-0255	604-525-6056

The BCEHP Service Coordinator will help you get started with services tailored to your baby and family.

BC Early Hearing Program

Program information: www.phsa.ca/earlyhearing

Videos: <http://bit.ly/bcehpyoutube>

How Hearing Works

- Typical Process of Hearing
- Sensorineural Hearing Loss
- Conductive Hearing Loss
- Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder (ANSD)

For Parents

- *Nice to Meet You* – role model interviews
- *The Road Taken* – parent interviews
- *Your Child's Hearing* – First Nations Health Authority

BC Hands & Voices

A parent-driven, non-profit organization supporting families with children age 0-5 who are deaf or hard of hearing.
www.bchandsandvoices.com

Deaf, Hard of Hearing & Deaf-Blind Well-Being Program

A province-wide program that includes support for parents of children who are deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind.
www.deafwellbeing.vch.ca/services/chilyouthfamilies



“Every year approximately 100 babies born in BC are identified as deaf or hard of hearing. Most are born into families with no hearing loss. Some have complex health needs.”

Services for babies identified with permanent hearing loss

Babies identified with a permanent hearing loss through the BC Early Hearing Program (BCEHP) are eligible for early services. Services are tailored to the baby's needs and may include any or all of the following:

- hearing aids for children who will benefit including
 - first set of hearing aids for children under five years of age and
 - earmolds and batteries funded for three years or until child turns five years of age, whichever comes first
- service coordination available to parents of babies under two years of age
- parent support from the Guide By Your Side Program
- one-to-one speech and language services, including American Sign Language instruction, available for up to two years when babies enrol before two years of age*

BC Public Health Audiologists automatically enrol eligible babies in the program.

* The Ministry of Children and Family Development also funds services for children who are deaf/hard of hearing, from the time of identification until school entry.

Do you have concerns about your baby's hearing?

BC parents concerned about their baby's hearing can have it checked at any time by contacting their local public health hearing clinic.

Clinic listings at
www.phsa.ca/earlyhearing

YOUR QUESTIONS



It is common to have questions. Your BC Early Hearing Program Service Coordinator is here to help you find the answers. Write down your questions here.



BC Early Hearing Program

A service of BC Children's Hospital
and the Provincial Health Services Authority

Phone: 604-875-2345 ext 4848
Toll Free: 1-866-612-2347
Email: bcehp@phsa.ca
Website: www.phsa.ca/earlyhearing

