

# Sound Beginnings

## Newborn Hearing Screening Program

The Kansas Newborn Hearing Screening Program, is a service provided by the Kansas Department of Health & Environment to families with newborn infants in collaboration with participating hospitals, doctors and audiologists. Results will be reported to the Kansas Department of Health & Environment.

### *Why should my baby's hearing be screened?*

One out of every 250 babies has a significant hearing loss at birth. Hearing loss in babies is easy to overlook because it is not visible and they cannot tell us they are unable to hear. More than half of babies born with hearing loss are otherwise healthy and have no family history of hearing loss. Therefore, to be sure we identify every baby with hearing loss in Kansas, once parents have given consent, hospitals are required to screen each baby's hearing before they go home.

***Newborn hearing screening makes a difference for all children and their families. It is important for you to be sure that your baby has normal hearing. The first six months of life are the most critical for speech and language development.***

### *How do they screen my baby's hearing?*

A baby's hearing can be screened within 24 hours of life. There are two types of hearing screening tests: Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) and Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE). Both tests are harmless, take only minutes to complete, and most babies sleep through the hearing screening. The ABR screening uses miniature earphones and sensors (placed on the head, neck and shoulder) that measure your baby's brainwaves to determine if sounds are heard normally. OAE screening uses a soft ear probe and a miniature microphone to measure the "echo" that the ear makes as it sends sound to the brain.

***If, at any time, you have concerns about your child's hearing ability, speech or language development, ask your baby's doctor for a referral to an audiologist or ENT (ear, nose and throat doctor) to arrange for a hearing evaluation. Hearing can be tested at any age.***

### *Questions?*

**Sound Beginnings** 785-296-6135 or [www.soundbeginnings.org](http://www.soundbeginnings.org)

**Make a Difference Information Network** 800-332-6262 v/tty

**Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing** 800-432-0698 v/tty

**Families Together** 800-264-6343