

COMMUNICATING SCREENING RESULTS

We recommend that you laminate a sheet describing what to tell parents during each of the following screening scenarios and keep it with your screening equipment for your screeners to reference.

BILATERAL PASS

When a baby passes the hearing screening in both ears, this means that the structures of the ear are working normally, and should indicate that hearing is normal. Remind parents that the screening indicates how their baby is hearing on the day of the test. It does not predict how well they will hear in the future. **Encourage parents to seek further evaluation at any time if they are concerned about their baby's hearing.** If their baby is at risk for delayed onset or progressive hearing loss, their baby's hearing should be monitored at 6-8 months age by an Audiologist. Some common risk factors for hearing loss are a family history of hearing loss, chronic middle ear problems, bacterial meningitis, severe hyperbilirubinemia, and exposure to ototoxic medications. Parents should also seek further evaluation if their baby does not reach predicted speech and language milestones. Include a checklist of speech and language milestones in the baby's discharge packet for the parents' reference.

UNILATERAL REFER

DO NOT USE THE WORDS "FAIL" OR "DID NOT PASS". Tell the parents that you are referring their baby for further testing because a good test could not be obtained in one ear. If a baby is referred for a second screening, it means that a hearing problem **may** exist, but further testing is needed to confirm. Stress the importance of returning for a follow-up screening test. There are several reasons why a baby does not pass the first screening, including the presence of birthing debris blocking the ear canal (most common), presence of middle ear fluid, or a permanent hearing loss (approximately 3 in 1000 births). Schedule an appointment for a follow-up hearing screening before the parents leave the hospital. Try to have them come back within 2 weeks of discharge, while their baby is still sleeping frequently. Send the parents home with a contact phone number should they have any questions prior to the re-screen.

BILATERAL REFER

DO NOT USE THE WORDS "FAIL" OR "DID NOT PASS". Tell the parents that you are referring their baby for further testing because a good test could not be obtained today. If a baby is referred for a second screening, it means that a hearing problem **may** exist, but further testing is needed to confirm. Stress the importance of returning for a follow-up screening test. There are several reasons why a baby does not pass the first screening, including the presence of birthing debris blocking the ear canal (most common), presence of middle ear fluid, or a permanent hearing loss (approximately 3 in 1000 births). Schedule an appointment for a follow-up hearing screening before the parents leave the hospital. Try to have them come back within 2 weeks of discharge, while their baby is still sleeping frequently. Send the parents home with a contact phone number should they have any questions prior to the re-screen.