



## Spring 2005 Newsletter

### Who Are We?

The Tri-Region encompasses: York, Durham, and HKPR (Haliburton, Kawartha and Pine Ridge Regions). The program reports to the Ontario Ministry of Child and Youth's Services. The program offers a wide range of services, including: universal newborn hearing screening, high risk monitoring, audiology assessment, hearing aid fitting, family support worker counseling, and communication programming. Eligibility for service is dependent on the child's age and service required:

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Universal Newborn Hearing Screening | 4 months   |
| High Risk Monitoring                | 2 years  |
| Audiology Assessments               | Must come from screening or High Risk Monitoring               |
| Hearing Aid Fitting                 | Must come from IHP diagnostic assessment                       |
| Audiology Reassessments             | 2 years post identification of a permanent hearing loss by IHP |
| Family Support Worker               | 2 years post identification of a permanent hearing loss by IHP |
| Communication Programming           | 2 years post identification of a permanent hearing loss by IHP |

### 30% Decline Rate for Second Screens

Approximately 30% of families are not returning for their second screen in the community following the refer result from the hospital screen. Families are either not returning our phone calls to book appointments, the numbers supplied by the hospitals are out of service or wrong number. Families should take a copy of their IHP screen to their doctor and discuss the results. We are asking physicians to encourage families to contact us to get a screen at 1-888-703-5437 (KIDS). The screening is generally conducted 1-2 months after birth.

We have had one family to date, where a second screen was declined and over a year later, a profound hearing loss was diagnosed. Hearing aids and intervention could have begun with the child being only a few months old! We don't want this to happen again!

### Our Numbers for the Tri-Region in April 2004 to March 2005

Number of infants receiving first screen = 14078 (11% refer rate)  
 Number of infants receiving second screen = 1104  
 Number of audiology assessments = 129 (1% of all infants screened)  
 Number of children identified with a permanent hearing loss = 25 (0.2% of all infants screened)  
 Number of children identified with severe/profound losses = 13 (0.1% of all infants screened)

## Early Years Centres – A Great Partnership!

Many of the screening clinics are located at the Early Years Centres in York and Durham Regions. This partnership allows families to be introduced to their local Early Years Centre and find out about their programming. Enrollment in to infant programs has increased since the IHP clinics have started at their sites.

### Translation Services for Non English Speaking Families

Screening appointments can be arranged over the phone using a translation service called Language Line. The IHP brochures are available in many languages. An on site translator can be arranged for audiology, family support worker and communication programming appointments.

### Communication Programming

Families are accessing all three options provided by IHP, including Auditory Verbal Therapy, American Sign Language (ASL) and the Dual approach which includes both ASL and spoken language. We are able to provide many options to families for this service provision, including some in home service.

## High Risk Monitoring

A new high risk monitoring protocol was launched in the fall. The criteria for defining high risk for progressive sensorineural hearing loss has become much more defined, resulting in fewer infants that require monitoring. These high risk infants are then monitored much more aggressively for their first 18 months of life. IHP audiologists will see them for screening Automated Brainstem Response (ABR) at 4 months and again at 8-12 months using Visual Response Audiometry (VRA). At any time, the audiologist can progress their testing to the full diagnostic protocol if screening results indicate the need. Finally, a telephone screen is conducted by an infant hearing screener at 18 months to determine if the child is meeting their hearing and speech milestones. Referrals to the local Preschool Speech and Language Programs may be recommended at this time.

## Loaner Aid Program

The IHP has ten different digital hearing aid models from Siemans, Phonak and Unitron that can be made available to families for a short term loan thru the IHP audiologists.

Hearing aids are generally loaned to:

- infants waiting for ADP/other funding for personal hearing aids,
- infants with fluctuating hearing levels or diagnosis in progress
- infants with minimal degrees of hearing loss who needs trial fitting of amplification before purchase is recommended
- infants awaiting a cochlear implant who expect to be implanted within 3 months

## Audiology Sites

### **York Region**

Markham Stouffville Hearing Services  
Upper Canada Hearing and Speech Centre

### **Toronto**

Rouge Valley Health System (Centenary Hospital)  
North York General Hospital  
Hospital for Sick Children\*  
Mt. Sinai Hospital\*  
Humber River Regional Hospital

### **HKPR**

Chemong Audiology & Hearing  
Services

### **Durham Region**

Grandview Children's Centre  
Durham Audiometric Services Limited

\*offer sedated procedures that must be coordinated by the Manager of the Tri-Regional Infant Hearing Program

## Family Support Worker Services

There are family support workers available to families in each of the three regions. Family support workers assist families to:

- Understand the Infant Hearing Program and what it has to offer
- Understand the communication options for that child's hearing loss
- Arrange visits to meet with the different service providers
- Apply for funding for hearing aids
- Transition from IHP services to existing community services when the child has completed their two years of IHP service
- Express their grief and concerns/worry to an unbiased listener