



Tri-Regional Infant Hearing Program

Serving York, Durham,
Haliburton, Kawartha &
Pine Ridge (HKPR) Regions

FACT SHEET



The first months and years of a baby's life are critical for developing language. Most children can hear right from birth. They learn to talk by imitating the sounds around them and the voices of their parents and caregivers. But that's not true for every child. Every year in Ontario, nearly four in 1,000 babies are born deaf or hard of hearing. More lose their hearing later as they grow. Many of these children may need to learn speech and language differently, so it's important to detect hearing loss as early as possible.

The **Tri-Regional Infant Hearing Program** identifies children with permanent hearing loss and provides the follow-up services and supports to support language and literacy as needed until school entry. Since 2002, **Markham Stouffville Hospital** has been funded by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to offer these services to children and their families living in the York, Durham, Haliburton, Kawartha and Pine Ridge (HKPR) Regions. The Hospital offers these services in partnership with **Grandview Children's Centre** and **Five Counties Children's Centre**.



Who should be referred?

Not all children with hearing loss are identified at birth. Babies who have missed their newborn hearing or have a risk factor (see over) for permanent childhood hearing impairment should be referred to the Program. Contact the local Tri-Regional Infant Hearing Program and ask to speak with the Booking Clerk.

- York Region: 1-888-703-5437 and choose selection #4
- Durham Region: 905-728-1673 or 1-800-304-6180 ext. 2341
- Haliburton, Kawartha, and Pine Ridge (HKPR): 705-748-2337 ext. 457 or 1-888-779-9916 ext. 457
- TTY: 905-762-1350 or visit our website at www.beyond-words.org to download a referral form.

What happens next:

Babies under four months of age will be scheduled for hearing screening in one of our community screening clinics. Children over four months with a risk factor for hearing loss will be referred to our Infant Hearing Program audiologist. If a hearing loss is confirmed, follow-up supports and services are offered to the child and family.



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www.beyond-words.org

Fax: 905.473.7553



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What does the Program offer?

We are committed to making sure children with permanent childhood hearing loss are identified early and are receiving the supports they need to develop communication and literacy.

The Tri-Regional Infant Hearing Program provides:

High Risk Surveillance – Children who “PASS” their newborn screening but have a neonatal risk factor for hearing loss, such as low birth weight, are monitored closely for late onset hearing loss. These babies have a hearing screening test at four months and one year of age by our audiologist. Parents are contacted to complete a telephone survey of their child’s auditory skills at 18 and 30 months of age.

Family Support Services – Social Workers provide families with counselling, support, and general information about community agencies. The family support worker also provides families with information about the various communication options available to their child who is deaf or hard of hearing.

Audiology Services - Audiologists who are registered with the Provincial Infant Hearing Program provide hearing assessments, and where chosen by the family, prescribe and fit hearing aids. They have state of the art equipment and follow the protocols of the program. If hearing loss is identified, the infant is referred for medical assessment.

Communication Development Services - There are three main approaches offered through the Program that can be used to help a child with hearing impairment develop language and literacy. The options include spoken language (oral), manual language (sign language), or a combination of both. Depending on the option chosen by the family, Speech Language Pathologists, Auditory Verbal Therapists, or American Sign Language and Literacy Consultants will work with the family and child.

Post Natal Risk Factors for Hearing Loss

- ↳ a physician or audiologist has identified a permanent hearing loss;
- ↳ a post natal infection associated with a hearing impairment, including bacterial meningitis, viral encephalitis or labyrinthitis;
- ↳ a family history of permanent childhood hearing impairment;
- ↳ a diagnosis of a syndrome associated with permanent hearing loss such as Usher’s Syndrome or a neurodegenerative disorders such as Hunter Syndrome;
- ↳ a head trauma associated with permanent hearing loss.

Children with temporary hearing loss such as those caused by a middle ear infection are not eligible nor are children over four months unless there is an identified risk factor for hearing impairment.

Services offered in partnership with



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