

Late Onset Hearing Loss Awareness

Late Onset Hearing Loss Awareness week was established in March to shine a spotlight on a population of young children who go unnoticed and undiagnosed because they passed the newborn hearing screen, but developed hearing loss later on. Sometimes these children are not discovered for months or years following the onset of their hearing loss. Genetics, congenital illness, certain childhood syndromes and infections, head trauma, exposure to ototoxic medications, and excessive noise can all lead to hearing loss after birth, but sometimes the cause of it is unknown. The goal of this annual campaign is to raise community awareness so that families, childcare providers, preschools, pediatricians and others who observe or suspect missed developmental milestones in early childhood will ask the question, "Could this be linked to hearing loss?"

Reporting a newly identified hearing loss to your state Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Program ensures that families receive the appropriate resources and support!

Kansas Department of Health and Environment
Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Program
1000 SW Jackson St Suite 220
Phone: 785-368-7167
Fax: 785-559-4240
www.soundbeginnings.org



Take Notice - Take Action



Let's Talk About Pediatric Late-Onset Hearing Loss

Together we can find children with postnatal hearing loss.



Impacts of Late Identification

Signs and symptoms of hearing loss can be subtle and easily overlooked. Children with unidentified hearing loss are at increased risk of significant speech, language and developmental delays. These delays can impact literacy, communication, social and emotional health, and success in the classroom. Early Identification and intervention is key!



The CDC estimates that nearly 15% of students age 6-19 have significant hearing loss.

Did you know?

PREVALENCE

Incidence of pediatric hearing loss doubles between birth and school age. Some studies suggest acquired hearing loss may be more prevalent in historically underserved communities and these children are less likely to receive timely diagnosis.

RISK FACTORS

The Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) recommends ongoing hearing health monitoring for all children, especially those with certain risk factors, including:

- More than 5 days in the NICU
- Family History (genetics)
- In Utero Infections (ex: CMV)
- Exposure to Loud Noise
- Craniofacial Anomalies & Certain Syndromes
- Postnatal Infections (Meningitis)
- Untreated Otitis Media
- Head Trauma or Ototoxic Medications

COMMON SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Postnatal hearing loss can go unnoticed especially if there are no known risk factors. Signs that a child's hearing has changed may include:

- Not startled by loud sounds
- Limited or no speech
- Speech is difficult to understand
- Does not respond to their name
- Ignores people or trouble paying attention
- Easily frustrated

The Facts

In the United States, nearly 98% of newborns are screened for hearing loss. While the newborn hearing screening program is aimed at identifying hearing loss at the time of birth, sometimes the change in hearing status happens later. In fact, incidence of permanent hearing loss doubles between birth and school age. Too often young children with postnatal hearing loss fall through the cracks. They go unidentified for months or years which can lead additional delays and struggles.

Ongoing hearing health monitoring is important even when a child has passed their newborn hearing screen and there are no known risk factors. Increasing community awareness of the true prevalence, risk factors and common signs of childhood hearing loss increases the likelihood that late onset hearing loss can be identified. This identification allows families to be connected to the services and resources that will support their child's development.