



## Improving Child Health with Early Hearing Detection & Intervention

Each year in the United States, more than 12,000 babies are born with a hearing loss. Without early screening, hearing loss can go unnoticed. And without early identification and intervention, children with a hearing loss can have delays in speech and language development. When hearing loss is identified early, a child's family and health care providers can make sure the child receives timely and appropriate early intervention services.

When Deidra Green's son was born, their state did not offer universal newborn hearing screening. Deidra did not learn about her son's hearing difficulty until he was three years old. At that time, he entered an early education program because he qualified for services by having other risk factors. Tests showed he had mild to moderate hearing loss. "Many people think hearing loss is an all-or-nothing condition," says Green. "But there can be many different types and degrees of loss. That makes it especially important for parents to find out exactly what their child is dealing with." Screening, testing, and interventions are now paying off for Green and her son. He receives assistance to match his needs and his care plan is being reviewed and adjusted as he grows.

Beginning in 1999, CDC's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program partnered with the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA's) Maternal and Child Health Bureau to provide funds and technical assistance to states to:

- assist in the development and implementation of newborn hearing screening, diagnostic evaluation, and intervention programs in every state; and
- build data and surveillance systems to ensure that infants screened for hearing loss receive appropriate follow-up services.



**Deidra Green with her son**

When Deidra's son was born in 2000, less than 50% of newborns were screened for hearing loss. Currently, every state has an EHDI program, and over 92% of children born in the U.S. are screened for hearing loss. CDC remains committed to ensuring newborn hearing screening for every child, and is also striving to achieve similar goals in follow-up testing and referral for early intervention.

CDC also funds both intramural and extramural research to identify causes of hearing loss, learn more about how hearing loss affects children and families, and assess the effectiveness of EHDI programs.

For more information about CDC's Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/ehdi/>.

For more information about CDC at Work, please contact us at (202) 245-0600 or go to <http://www.cdc.gov/washington/>.