

Signs of hearing loss

If a parent believes a child of any age is having difficulty hearing, they should act on their concern. Signs of hearing loss to look for include:

- delay in speech development
- not responding to soft speech
- frequent requests to repeat something said to them
- a tendency to increase the volume of the TV
- aversion to loud sounds
- shouting or whispering while speaking
- distracting other children in school and being easily distracted.



Where to get your child's hearing tested

- Ask the advice of your family doctor, who may refer you to an Ear Nose and Throat Specialist for examination.
- Your local hospital, providing it has the facilities available.
- Your state/territory health service can provide the location of paediatric audiological facilities.
- Australian Hearing provides services for children and young people up to 21 years of age who have an educationally significant hearing loss requiring hearing aids.

Conductive hearing loss can fluctuate. If you suspect a hearing loss have your child's hearing tested again if you are still concerned because Conductive Hearing Loss can return.

For further information

Please contact the Deafness Forum.

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Conductive Hearing Loss



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What is Conductive Hearing Loss?

There are two type of hearing loss – **Conductive** and **Sensori-neural** (also known as Nerve Deafness). Conductive Hearing Loss is the most common but both types can occur together.

Conductive Hearing Loss happens most frequently in young children.

It interferes with the transmission of sounds to the hearing nerve and is most frequently caused by a middle ear problem.



How does Conductive Hearing Loss happen?

There are a number of causes but in pre-school children and young school age children Conductive Hearing Loss frequently occurs if the Eustachian Tube is blocked. The air in the middle ear cavity is absorbed and replaced by fluid which can become thick and 'glue-like' (hence the term 'glue-ear'). This is an infection known medically as Otitis Media with Effusion (OME). Hearing loss can be present even before fluid builds up and without infection being present.

Almost every child under two years will have at least one episode of middle ear infection with Conductive Hearing Loss.

At any point in time, one in three primary school age children will experience some degree of Conductive Hearing Loss.



Early detection is essential

If hearing loss is not detected during the critical periods of language development it can contribute to learning difficulties which may not become apparent until much later.

Even a mild temporary Conductive Hearing Loss may have an impact on educational progress.

Conductive Hearing Loss may also be mistaken for behavioral problems. Parents and teachers may become annoyed with children who seem to hear only when they want to, when in reality they may not be able to hear at all.

Any parent who has any concerns about their child's hearing should have the child examined medically or taken for a hearing test.

If a child has had a Conductive Hearing Loss then a follow-up hearing test is just as important as the first test because Conductive Hearing Loss can return.