

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI)

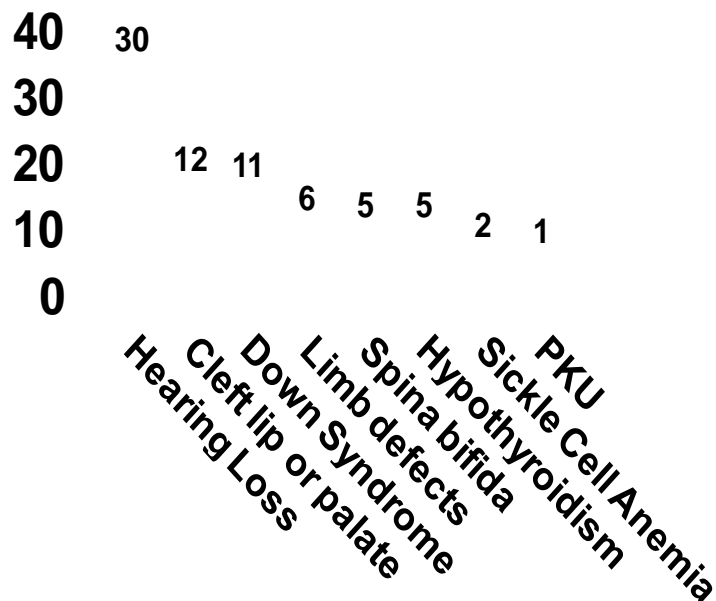
What is EHDI? EHDI refers to the process of identifying and serving infants with hearing loss. The mission of EHDI programs is to ensure universal newborn hearing screening, diagnostic follow-up for infants who do not pass, and early intervention for those infants identified with hearing loss.

1-3-6 National EHDI Timelines

- 1** Screen for hearing loss before one month of age
- 3** Diagnose hearing loss before three months of age
- 6** Enroll in early intervention programs before six months of age

Every day, 33 babies are born in the United States with permanent hearing loss. With three of every 1000 newborns having hearing loss, it is the most frequently occurring birth defect.

Incidence per 10,000 of Common Congenital Conditions



When a child's hearing loss is identified soon after birth, families and professionals can make sure the child receives intervention services at an early age. This will help the child to develop communication and language skills that last a lifetime.

Without EHDI and newborn hearing screening programs, the average age at which a child would be identified with hearing loss is 1.5-3 years. Babies learn from the time they are born, and one of the ways they learn is through hearing. If left undetected, hearing loss in infants can delay speech and language acquisition, academic achievement, and social and emotional development. Through EHDI, many children with hearing loss are now being identified before 3 months of age. Studies have shown that children who receive appropriate early intervention services in the first 6 months of life can improve language, social, and academic development to levels comparable to their normally hearing peers by 3-5 years of age.



TIMING IS EVERYTHING!

Recognizing the importance of early detection and intervention of childhood hearing loss, the State of Nevada passed legislation effective in 2002 (NRS 442.500 through NRS 442.590) requiring that all hospitals with more than 500 births per year screen the hearing of newborn babies. Prior to passage of this legislation, it was estimated that only 40% of Nevada's newborns received a hearing screening. In contrast, last year 98.9% of all hospital births were screened, with all hospitals—regardless of size—participating. Although we celebrate the success of Nevada's newborn hearing screening legislation, these screenings are just the first step of a comprehensive Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program. Nationally, about 45% of infants who do not pass the newborn hearing screening are lost to follow-up. Without a comprehensive reporting and tracking system, the diagnosis and treatment of a child's hearing loss can be delayed by months or even years.

Through a cooperative grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Nevada is implementing an EHDI tracking and monitoring system to build upon the success of our newborn hearing screenings. Through this system, and with the cooperation of hospitals and community providers, we can ensure that children receive the necessary follow-up testing and intervention services.