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Children Should Hear AND Be Heard by [Kamal A. Elliot](#)

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Children should have regular hearing checkups from infancy. It is important that their hearing functions. In developmental terms, the first five years are critical to a child's full and healthy development. Within the first year a child learns to speak by first hearing his or her parents and then by mimicking them back. If there isn't any regular interaction between parent and child, then the child is slow to develop and will need support services in school to catch up. It is vital during this first year that a child's ability to hear is well established, and in the next three years that his/her language and speech patterns continues to grow and his/her hearing is checked regularly for any aberrations.

When an abnormality in speech is first recognized, either by the parents or by a trained professional such as a pediatrician or early childhood teacher, the immediate assumption is that there is a hearing inadequacy. A referral is made to have the hearing checked and the child is taken to an audiologist for a hearing test. A hearing test of this nature is a little more in depth than the ones done in the delivery room with a newborn and in the pediatrician's office later on. An audiologist can even check the inner ear nerves to see if there is any damage. The results of the hearing test are then shared with the parent or parents. Who then in turn shares the results with pertinent childcare providers and/or teachers.

If the results of your child's hearing test shows that something has caused a mild to moderate hearing loss and it is affecting his/her speech, first finding the problem and then providing solutions is how you will proceed. If there is nerve damage or something wrong with the structure of the ear, the audiologist in conjunction with your pediatrician will look for causes to rule out that might be reversible. Any hearing loss that is reversible is worth looking into. After that, if it is found that the damage is irreversible, then the audiologist will recommend several hearing devices and hearing aids that will not only help your child hear better but significantly improve their speech and language development.

Once your child is fitted with a hearing aid or hearing aids, their hearing should still be checked by a hearing test regularly to make sure there is no further degradation down the road. A hearing test with hearing aids will also help the audiologist adjust the hearing aids as your child grows and develops so that they are always working at full capacity.

Surely now you can see the importance of a hearing test for children. Hopefully if you haven't taken your child to have their hearing checked yet or recently, that you will soon. Preventive medicine is less expensive than interventional medicine, and as a parent, you'll notice first if your child has problems.

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[Kamal A. Elliot](#) - About Author:

Kamal Elliot, Au.D. Doctor of Audiology Dr. Elliot is a licensed Audiologist who earned her Doctor of Audiology degree from the University of Florida and has been practicing since 1994. Dr. Elliot has over 17 years of experience and she brings a wealth of knowledge in audiology and hearing aid services. She is dedicated and committed to continuing to provide quality hearing care to you and

the entire Sun City Center, Florida and Hillsborough County community. a
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