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# American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™



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## Hearing Screening for All Newborns

The Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AzAAP) supports state-mandated and state-supported universal newborn hearing screening, early diagnosis and intervention.

Newborn screening is a public health program aimed at the early identification of conditions for which early and timely interventions can lead to the elimination or reduction of associated death or disability. Through newborn metabolic screening, Arizona has developed a successful program for screening, short-term follow-up, diagnosis, early intervention and referral for eight common, serious diseases. Deafness is 20 times more prevalent than phenylketonuria (PKU) which was the first mandated disease for newborn screening. Arizona does not include hearing in our newborn screening program.

Reliance on physician observation and/or parental recognition has not been successful in detecting significant hearing loss in the first year of life. The average age of identification of significant hearing loss in the United States has been 2 ½ years of age, only recently reduced to 14 months of age by state newborn hearing screening programs. Arizona hospitals and physicians have been very successful in a voluntary program of universal newborn hearing screening, but there is no overriding service and follow-up intervention program parallel or equivalent to the Arizona metabolic screening program. Many states have combined newborn metabolic and hearing screening programs. By identifying and treating a child with severe hearing loss before 6 months of age, consistent improvement in expressive language scores, language comprehension scores, reduced educational costs has been proven, allowing higher lifelong success.

The Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics join all national and state hearing advocacy groups supporting state mandated and supported universal newborn hearing screening, early diagnosis and intervention.

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