

**Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Recommended Procedures for Hearing Checks**

**Functional Hearing Procedure:**

1. Select a quiet area or room for screening with little distraction or noise.
2. Have the parent sit directly in front of child or hold child facing them on their lap.
3. Have parent use a book or quiet toy to gain child's attention to them.
4. Have several noisemakers available – squeeze toys, bells, rattles, etc. Select these carefully to provide a variety of pitch and intensity levels.
  - Squeeze toy: a soft rubber squeeze toy that makes a high pitched sound. Make sure that when you squeeze the toy, direct the toy away from the child so the air from the toy does not blow in the child's direction.
  - Bell: a small bell produces a high soft ring. Compare bells and select the one that is highest and softest.
  - Rattle: An ordinary baby rattle is adequate.

The key is to have a low pitch, medium pitch and high pitch. Other suggested items for noisemakers are: soda can with rice/rocks, container such as a cup with block inside, noodles in a cup, etc.

5. The Screener is behind child at a 45-degree angle to the side of the child. Choose one of the noisemakers to make the sound. Make sure you are out of child's peripheral vision. Repeat on the other side. Continue through all noisemakers on each side. Depending on the age of the child they should turn in the direction of the noise. The expected response is as follows:
  - Newborn – arousal from sleep or eye widening/eye blinking
  - 3-4 months – rudimentary head turn; wobble of the head even slightly toward sound, eyes widening, stop sucking motion if child has a pacifier
  - 4-7 months – localizes (turns head) to the side only
  - 7-9 months – localizes to the side and directly below
  - 9-13 months – localizes to the side and below
  - 13-16 months – localizes to the side, below and indirectly above
  - 16-21 months – localizes all directions side, below, and above
  - 21-24 months – locates directly to a sound at any angle (Northern and Downs, 2002)

When there appears to be no response, repeat the sound again. Two repetitions should be adequate to establish the fact. Record the results.

**Whisper Test** – Whisper the child's name. Try this on both sides