

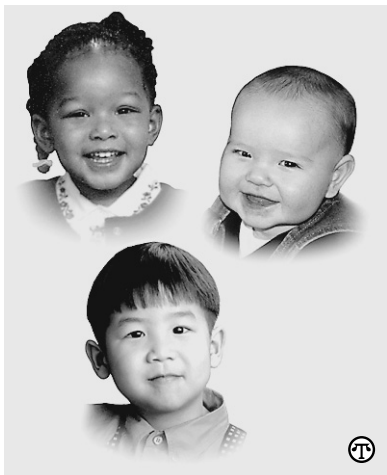
# Pointers For Parents

## Will Your Baby's Hearing Be Screened?

(NAPSA)—Of every 1,000 babies born in the United States, at least two are going to be deaf or have difficulty hearing. Experts at the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), at the National Institutes of Health, say your baby should have a hearing screening within the first month of life. Ideally, he or she should be screened before you both leave the hospital.

More and more hospitals are automatically screening newborns for hearing loss. Does yours? Prospective parents as well as parents of newborns should check to see if this screen was done or will be done at your birthing hospital. The next step is really important. If your baby is identified as having a possible hearing loss, parents need to work with the hospital or their pediatrician to arrange a follow-up appointment to be sure the hearing loss is present, to diagnose its cause, and to create a plan for the child to get help from hearing health professionals.

NIDCD urges screening and early identification of hearing problems because the most important time for a child to be exposed to language and begin to use language is in the first months and years of life. There is good news. There are a wide variety of assistive devices and strategies for children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. The strategies include



**It would be a sound idea for parents to have their babies screened for hearing loss early.**

those that depend upon residual hearing like hearing aids, those that create new ways of hearing like the cochlear implant, or those that depend upon sign language. Each child has a unique experience and set of circumstances. That's why it is so important for parents to work with their physician to ensure the best outcome for each child.

For more information on hearing, deafness, hearing loss, assistive devices, speech and language development, communication options, or any other question on human communication, call NIDCD at 1-800-241-1044 or visit [www.nidcd.nih.gov](http://www.nidcd.nih.gov).