

NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING



Communicating “REFER” or “DID NOT PASS” Results to Families

DO say a positive message:

“Your baby did not pass the hearing screen in his/her [indicate which ear/s], which means that further testing is needed.”

- Follow-up testing to identify potential hearing problems early is essential to avoid delays in speech and language development

DO provide written details on follow-up:

“Here’s what you need to do next.”

- Discuss when & where the family should follow-up with the next appointment according to your hospital’s newborn hearing screening procedures
- Ask what barriers may prevent the family from attending follow-up visits and refer to local public health if assistance may be needed

DO NOT

say misleading messages:

- The baby failed (*‘did not pass’ is preferred language*)
- The baby has a hearing loss
- There is probably nothing wrong
- Everything will be okay
- A lot of babies don’t pass
- The baby doesn’t need follow-up testing
- Don’t worry - most babies won’t have a hearing loss
- The baby was fussy (*then it’s an invalid screen!*)
- The equipment’s not working right (*then it’s an invalid screen!*)
- It’s just fluid or vernix (*we can’t assume this!*)
- Don’t worry - there is no rush to follow-up

DO NOT

be afraid to give *REFER* results

- Performing multiple screens in an attempt to get a pass increases the risk of getting a false pass