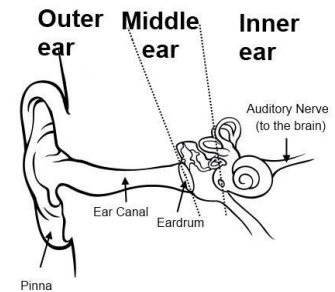# HEARING LOSS FACT SHEET

What is hearing loss?

Hearing loss can happen when a part of the ear is not working the right way. This includes parts like the outer ear, middle ear, inner ear and nerves. Hearing loss can be in one or both ears. Hearing loss may cause a child to have problems with how they talk, and have trouble learning. It can also cause problems with their social skills and behavior.

Signs and Symptoms

You may find out your child has hearing loss when they are born. All babies are tested before they leave the hospital. Hearing loss can happen or be noticed as they are growing up. The signs and symptoms of hearing loss are different for each child. Your child may have hearing loss if he/she:

- Was late to begin speaking as a toddler
- Does not speak clearly
- Does not follow directions (you may think they are not paying attention or just ignoring you)
- Often says, "Huh?"
- Turns the TV volume up too high
- Has no reaction to loud noises
- Shows no response to your voice
- Complains of earaches, ear pain or head noises

Screening and Diagnosis

A **hearing screening** can show if your child might have hearing loss. A hearing screening is easy and is not painful. Usually it includes soft sounds played into headphones. Your child will be asked to raise their hand every time they hear the sound. Children should have their hearing screened before they enter school. Take your child to the doctor if you think they have hearing loss. Children who do not pass the hearing screening, need to get a full hearing test as soon as possible.

A **full hearing test** is a complete test that takes place at a hearing clinic. This test will help determine if the hearing loss will go away, or will stay. It will also help decide what kind of treatment is best to help your child's hearing loss.

What can you do?

Ask your child's doctor to check their hearing if it has never been checked. Children are more likely to learn and grow better if they take care of their hearing problem early. Don't wait!