




National Institute for Public Health
and the Environment
Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport



Informing parents about AABR hearing screening (3rd round)

The third round of screening

If, after two rounds of screening, it has not been proven that the child has satisfactory hearing in one or both ears, the regional coordinator performs a third screening test. This round of screening involves the AABR method.

- For further details about the AABR method see the Draaiboek at www.rivm.nl/gehoorscreening.

For some children, the AABR method is used straight away, in the first round of screening:

- children who have been hospitalised for a prolonged period of time
 - children who are at increased risk of auditory neuropathy.
- For further details see the hospital protocol in the Draaiboek at www.rivm.nl/gehoorscreening.

Making an appointment

- Contact the parents by phone and make an appointment for them to come by for a hearing test. Give them a few tips about how to ensure that the test goes well:
 - *Just before the hearing test, three adhesive pads will be attached to your child's skin. For this reason, I would like to ask you not to apply bath oil or a lotion to your child's skin on the day of the hearing test. Otherwise the adhesive pads will not stick properly.*
 - *It is also important for us to carry out the test in quiet surroundings.*
 - *It is best if your child is asleep during the test. Perhaps you could feed your child just before the test. Babies often fall asleep soon after a feed.*

The pre-test discussion

- Ask the parents how their child is doing and how the hearing screening tests have gone so far.
- Explain the details of the AABR method:

- *I am going to perform a test to see whether your child can hear well enough to learn to speak.*
- *[if hearing is unsatisfactory in one ear] I will only test the ear that we have not yet proven to have satisfactory hearing.*
- *In a moment, I will stick three electrodes onto your child's skin: one on its forehead, one on its neck and one on its back, breast bone or a cheek.*
- *One or two ear couplers will also be fitted to your child's head. These ear cups emit a quiet sound. At the same time, these ear couplers shield the ears from interference in the form of ambient noise.*
- *The equipment uses the electrodes to find out whether a signal is received by the brain.*
- *The device processes this information and, a short while later, presents the results.*
- *It is important that your child stays as still as possible while these measurements are being made.*

The post-test discussion

A. The test results for both ears are satisfactory.

Inform the parents of the results:

- The test results for both ears are satisfactory.
- This means that, at the present time, your child can hear well enough with both ears for it to learn to speak well.
- The test does not give a 100% guarantee that your child's hearing is satisfactory. It is, therefore, important that you stay focused on your child's hearing abilities. Another reason for doing so is that, very occasionally, children can also become hearing impaired later in their childhood.
- If you are worried about your child's hearing, you should consult your GP or the child health centre.

B. The test result is satisfactory for one ear, unsatisfactory for one ear.

Inform the parents of the results:

- The test result is satisfactory for one ear.
- This means that, at the present time, your child can hear well enough with this ear for it to learn to speak well.
- I cannot prove that for the other ear at the present time.
- There can be a variety of causes, such as ambient noise, ear-wax or the common cold. But it might also be that your child is hearing impaired.
- At the present time, the cause is not clear. It is, therefore, important to carry out further tests on your child's hearing in an audiology centre. This is an institution that specialises in testing hearing, language and speech. Some audiology centres are affiliated to a hospital.
- The tests carried out in the audiology centre are more extensive than the hearing test, but they will not cause your child any pain.

- Give them the 'Results of hearing screening unsatisfactory' leaflet and provide further details if necessary.
- Ask the parents whether they are prepared to consent to the follow-up test:
 - May I have your permission to refer your child to an audiology centre?
- If the answer is 'Yes', fill in the referral form together with the parents. For details, see the Draaiboek at www.rivm.nl/gehoorscreening/draaiboek.
- Tell them that the screening data will be sent to the audiology centre and to their GP.
- Make an appointment with the audiology centre and inform the parents.

C. The test results for both ears are unsatisfactory.

Inform the parents of the results:

- The test results for both ears are unsatisfactory.
- This means that, at the present time, I cannot prove that your child can hear well enough for it to learn to speak well.
- There can be a variety of causes, such as ambient noise, ear-wax or the common cold. But it might also be that your child is hearing impaired.
- At the present time, the cause is not clear. It is, therefore, important to carry out further tests on your child's hearing in an audiology centre. This is an institution that specialises in testing hearing, language and speech. Some audiology centres are affiliated to a hospital.
- The tests carried out in the audiology centre are more extensive than the hearing test, but they will not cause your child any pain.

For further information: see above.

Screening programmes can be identified by this logo:

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