

# NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING

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

Infant Hearing Program, 5800 West 10th Street, Suite 808, Little Rock, AR 72204 (501) 280-4740, Fax (501) 280-4170

### 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 service agencies (i.e. DHS) if assistance may be needed.

### DO NOT say misleading messages:

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

### DO NOT be afraid to give *REFER* results

- Per the CDC, Congenital hearing loss affects two to three infants per 1,000 live births. Undiagnosed hearing loss can affect a child’s development.
- Performing multiple screens in an attempt to get a pass increases the risk of getting a false pass and a delayed diagnosis.

