

Tips for Parents when Selecting a Pediatric Audiologist¹

Cheryl DeConde Johnson

The following tips will help identify an audiologist who is appropriately trained to provide services to infants and young children. In addition, parents are always encouraged to ask the opinions of other parents through your state Hands & Voices network.

- ❑ *The audiologist is employed at a Children's Hospital audiology clinic or other clinic or hospital that specializes in infants and children. This setting generally insures that appropriate pediatric audiology standards are met.*
- ❑ *If not employed at a pediatric center, the audiologist has recent post-graduate experience providing audiological assessment and treatment services to infants and young children.*
 - ✓ *Look for a display of the audiologist's credentials.*
 - ✓ *Look at the office – Is it child friendly? Does it have children's books, games and materials? Is there artwork or other accoutrements that are inviting to children?*
 - ✓ *Ask the audiologist how many children per month she/he sees in the age ranges of <6 mo, 6 mo to 3 yrs, 3 – 8 yrs.*
 - ✓ *If your child has additional developmental problems, let the audiologist know in advance and ask about his/her ease with the situation.*
- ❑ *If not employed at a pediatric center, the audiologist has the necessary equipment to assess the hearing of infants below 6 months [click auditory brainstem response (ABR), bone conduction ABR or Auditory Steady State Response (ASSR), tone bursts or ASSR, high frequency tympanometry, and otoacoustic emissions (OAE)]; over 6 months [add diagnostic audiometer and sound booth test room to conduct behavioral assessment with ear inserts].*
 - ✓ *Ask for a list of diagnostic audiology services that are provided for these age groups.*
 - ✓ *If the audiologist does not have all of the necessary diagnostic equipment, ask if she/he partners with a pediatric center to provide specialized assessment or telehealth services.*
- ❑ *The audiologist has a collaborative relationship with EHDI, the local Part C program, the local school district, and family support organizations.*
 - ✓ *Ask the audiologist about his/her responsibilities with the state EHDI program.*
 - ✓ *Ask the audiologist to describe the state early intervention program for infants and toddlers who are deaf and hard of hearing.*
 - ✓ *Ask the audiologist to describe the activities that she/he participates in with the local Part C program.*
 - ✓ *Ask the audiologist to describe the activities that she/he participates in with the school district.*
 - ✓ *Ask the audiologist about his/her knowledge and connections to family support organizations (e.g., Hands & Voices, Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side Program).*
- ❑ *The audiologist is knowledgeable about intervention options.*
 - ✓ *Ask the audiologist to describe their philosophy on mode of communication.*
 - ✓ *Ask the audiologist to describe their philosophy on amplification.*

¹ Excerpted from Hands & Voices Communicator, Winter 2012

- ✓ *Ask the audiologist to describe their philosophy about early intervention services.*
- ✓ *Ask the audiologist to describe their philosophy on education for children who are deaf and hard of hearing.*

- *The audiologist has a record of supporting family choice.*
 - ✓ *Ask the audiologist to describe how they work with families to address intervention and make recommendations.*

To learn more about the American Board of Audiology's Pediatric Specialty Certification:
<http://www.americanboardofaudiology.org/pediatric-audiology-specialty-certification/>

To locate the contacts for your state EHDI programs: www.infanthearing.org/status/cnhs.html