

Critical Review:
The Impact of Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Programs on language development of children with hearing loss.

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Hearing impairment at any age has a direct impact on communication capabilities. In particular, hearing loss in children can greatly affect language development. Therefore, it would stand to reason that early detection and intervention for children with hearing loss would be greatly beneficial. Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Programs (EHDI) have been implemented worldwide, and have been present in certain Canadian provinces like Ontario since 2002 as the Ontario Infant Hearing Program. However, there continue to be concerns in regards to the cost of these programs versus the benefit provided. This critical review examines the circulating literature in regards to EHDI programs and their influence on language development. Research suggests that EHDI pro

exclusion criteria were applied. Only articles written in 2005 to present day were included in the study in order to examine the most current literature and happenings in the field. Additionally, only those countries with similarities and relevance to the Canadian context were incorporated (i.e. Canadian, American, UK, Australian). Articles which discussed history and theoretical

Vohr et al (2011)

These authors put together a prospective longitudinal matched cohort study. It investigates the

Kennedy et al (2006)

This study was a quasi-experimental (between groups) design that examined the language ability of children after early detection of permanent childhood hearing impairment. The study was conducted in southern England, where screening for hearing loss is recommended before the age of 3 months, and appropriate follow-up intervention by 9 months. Although a larger number were initially identified, consent was obtained for 120 children with bilateral permanent hearing impairment. Reasons for this decline in number of partic

amount of compelling evidence for governments that are unconvinced of the cost effectiveness of EHDI.

The true uncertainty exists as to what the most appropriate age cutoff is for when intervention should occur to maximize the beneficial effects on functional, particularly on language, outcomes. All the examined studies vary on when this suggested age should be. For example, some studies propose intervention should be before 3 months, others before 6 months, and some before 9 months. Future research should focus on investigating the optimal age to maximize future outcomes for children with hearing impairment to receive intervention services. This way, resources can be directed in the appropriate manner, and children with hearing impairment are provided with the best advantage for ultimate language development.

Newborn hearing s