

# Monitoring the Quality of OAE Screening and Follow-up Practices

Ways to monitor OAE hearing screening and follow-up practices and improve program quality are outlined below.

## 1. Monitor screening skills

Use the *OAE Screening Skills Acquisition Checklist* to determine how well screeners are employing effective screening strategies. Evaluate your own or others' skills using the Checklist and/or solicit observation and feedback from the following people:

- Peer Screener
- Supervisor
- Consulting audiologist

## 2. Monitor the initial (OAE 1) screening Pass Rate

Your OAE 1 Pass Rate (children who passed the screening on both ears) should be 70% or higher. It may be less than that when you are first learning to screen, but it should improve once you become more experienced.

*Note: During certain seasons, many children have head colds which can temporarily result in a lower-than-expected Pass Rate. This should not change your screening and follow-up protocol.*

## 3. Monitor adherence with the screening and follow-up protocol

There are two related elements of the protocol that are equally important in monitoring the quality of screening and follow-up:

- a) **Sequence** of screening and follow-up activities (i.e., are the steps for rescreening and referral occurring in the recommended order?)
- b) **Timing** of screening and follow-up activities (i.e., are the steps for rescreening and referral occurring within the recommended timeframe?)

The more closely you comply with the sequence and the timing of the steps recommended in the screening and follow-up protocol, the more effective you will be in identifying children with hearing-health needs.

## Ways to improve quality

- Review Training Materials (written & video) and access additional resources at <http://www.kidshearing.org/gainskills>
- Screen with peers who are effective screeners
- Screen in teams whenever possible (with another screener or with a teacher/parent who can use quiet toys to distract the child)
- Access Tracking and Monitoring Tools to determine your Pass Rate and obtain feedback on other aspects of program quality at <http://www.kidshearing.org/trackingtools>
- Seek telephone technical assistance and/or hands-on training from audiological consultants
- Seek hands-on technical assistance/follow-up training from audiological consultants
- Contact the equipment manufacturer or distributor if you think your equipment is malfunctioning (e.g., you are getting the same results for all children or you are consistently getting error messages)
- Evaluate your tracking and follow-up data management system to see if it provides sufficient prompts to help you adhere to the protocol