

"I Hear That!"

by Dave Sindrey, M.Cl.Sc. LSLS Cert. AVT

When babies have hearing, they are born into a world of sound along with a bombardment of input from other senses. The sound of their mother's voice is experienced with the touch of mother and the smell of mother and the sight of mother. The sound of the dog drinking is paired with the sight of the dog drinking. At bath time, the woosh of the water is experienced with the feel of the water with the sight of the water. As they are experienced together they become associated. As the baby learns, the sound of his mother's voice will bring with it the memory of her touch. These bundles of associations that go with the daily experiences of a baby are learned as he starts to make sense of his world. When a baby has less hearing he may have missed some of the chances to add the all important sound that goes with these association bundles. This is especially true for babies who have severe or profound hearing loss and for those who have had to wait for their hearing aids or cochlear implants.

Now that baby has his new hearing through a listening device such as a cochlear implant or hearing aids, there is a simple tried and true technique for parents to use. This technique is designed to help your baby to notice and then to learn the sounds around him. This technique is called the "I Hear That!" cue.

You are with your baby and you notice a sound. If it is a sound that is connected to something your baby is really interested in; even better (eg. Daddy knocking on the door because he is home, the bath running, or the microwave beeping because his bottle is ready). Here are the steps you can now take with any sound you hear and want to point out to baby:

1. Put your finger to your ear and look like you are interested and concentrating.
2. Stay still. Move your eyes but look at nothing. You are pointing out "sound" to your baby. By moving your eyes but looking at nothing, we say "this is not something to look at.....Listen!".
3. Say "I Hear That!"
4. Keep your finger to your ear and listen some more.
5. Imitate the sound (eg. if you hear your husband running the baby's bath say "Listen.....shhhhhhhhhhh")
6. Show the baby the source of the sound.
7. Imitate the sound again, Point to your ear and say "I hear that".

Wow....seven steps! Don't worry, they are easy to learn. There are many chances throughout the day for you to practice this with your baby. You can even create more opportunities for listening with a little creative thinking. Set your telephone answering machine to pick up after 6 or more rings. This will give you...



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enough time to point out the phone's ring, imitate the ring, take the baby to the phone and to pick up and say "Hello!". The baby's bottle is an important thing to him, so it's a great thing to listen for the microwave "beep beep beep". Some microwaves beep only once and then wait for too long to remind you with a beep later. You can help your baby to notice by putting the bottle in the microwave together and then waiting together in the kitchen together. Don't look at the microwave. This is better because it will keep ringing until you go to it, point out the sound to baby, and show him that the sound means his bottle is ready. When Daddy comes home, he can knock on the door or ring the door bell and wait for Mommy to use the "I Hear That!" cue to help baby find him. It might be even better to come just inside the door and stay there while calling your baby's name. These are just a few ideas. I'm sure you can think of more ideas that will work with your particular home and family.

As your baby learns that sound is connected to meaningful things around him, he will start to listen. He will use sound to understand what is going on. At this point your baby will feel **DIS**connected when his hearing aids need a new battery, or his cochlear implant transmitter falls off. This is an important milestone. Hearing and listening become an important way for your child to connect, through sound, to the world around him.



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Cut this crib note out and put it on your fridge as a reminder of what was discussed in this handout....

Crib Notes

STEPS FOR THE "I HEAR THAT!" CUE

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