



## Hearing Assessments for Children

### VISUAL REINFORCEMENT AUDIOMETRY

*For ages 9 months – 3 years*

Visual Reinforcement Audiometry (VRA) is a behavioural audiometric test obtained in a sound-treated room.

The child is seated in a high chair in front of a calibrated loudspeaker. When a sound is presented, he or she turns in response toward the sound source and is rewarded by activation of a puppet mounted near the loudspeaker. The child's attention is then distracted back to the midline so that additional sounds can be presented.

Any test performed through loudspeakers rather than headphones is called "sound field" audiometry and does not test each ear separately; rather, sound field audiometry yields an audiogram for the better-hearing ear if there happens to be a difference in hearing between each ear. However, if the child tolerates wearing headphones, each ear can be assessed separately.

*Who is suitable for this test?*

Children with head control who can turn towards the direction of a sound are suitable for this test. This is usually infants from 9 months of age to 3 years of age.

### PLAY AUDIOMETRY

*For ages 3 years +*

We use play audiometry to effectively assess a young child's hearing. That means we turn the hearing assessment into a game – so the child stays entertained whilst we gather accurate results.

This test uses an audiometer to transmit sounds at different volumes and pitches into the child's ears.

Children need to be comfortable wearing headphones and are required to follow instructions.

### CENTRAL AUDITORY PROCESSING TESTING

*For ages 7 years+*

Auditory processing describes the various skills used by the brain to extract meaningful information from sound. Efficient processing of auditory information is important for children to be successful in learning and communication. A Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD) can lead to difficulties with educational achievement, social development and emotional well-being.

*When should you refer?*

A CAPD assessment is recommended for children aged 7 and over with:

- reported hearing difficulties, where a hearing test has shown normal hearing
- attention, listening, learning and reading/spelling problems,
- a history of middle ear infections affecting auditory pathway development
- CAPD associated conditions such as dyslexia and ADD/ADHD.

### SOUND SENSITIVITY

*Hyperacusis* is an abnormal sensitivity or intolerance, a heightened sense of volume, and physical discomfort towards certain sounds, which other children can tolerate. Hyperacusis can develop in children with high anxiety levels, neurological disorders and auditory pathway problems.

*Misophonia* is a strongly aversive response to certain sound triggers, often made by family members (eg eating, breathing noises etc), which can develop in childhood or teenage years.

We have a unique expertise in research, evaluation and therapy for hyperacusis and misophonia.

**Further information is available from our website  
[www.dwmaudiology.com.au](http://www.dwmaudiology.com.au)**