

# Nebraska Language Assessment Program for Children Birth to Age 5 who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing



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## What is the Language Assessment Program for Children Ages Birth-5 Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing?

In 2020, Nebraska Revised State Statute SS-71-4746 recognized American Sign Language as a distinct and separate language and established a language assessment program for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The State of Nebraska Department of Education, in collaboration with the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NCDHH) also provides a joint report every year about the language and literacy developmental milestones for Nebraska children ages birth 5. You may review the report here: <https://www.education.ne.gov/sped/lead-k/>.

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## What does this mean for your child and family?

Your existing IFSP/IEP team will use additional assessments to track your child's language development on an annual basis, aligning with your child's Annual IFSP or IEP. Deidentified data will be collected statewide to monitor that children who are deaf or hard of hearing have language skills needed to be ready for kindergarten. No individualized information regarding your child will be shared. Your Language Assessment team may partner with the Hands and Voices Guide By Your Side program to ensure that all resources are being provided to your family.





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## What can you expect during the language assessment?

The language assessment will be provided at no cost to families and will be conducted as a part of the existing evaluation and assessment processes through state and federal regulations. These assessments may include asking you about your child's communication and interacting with your child. For more information, including a list of the recommended language assessments please visit <https://www.education.ne.gov/sped/lead-k/>. Parents and caregivers can ask for more information from Hands and Voices Guide By Your Side or the Parent Training and Information Center of Nebraska.

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## Your Rights as a Parent

Your school district must provide you with prior written notice and obtain your written consent prior to conducting any evaluations or assessments of your child. Parents of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers receiving IFSP/IEP services have the right to decline the language assessment without jeopardizing the receipt of any other IFSP/IEP services your child/family may be receiving. As a parent, you can invite any outside agency, family member, advocate or individual with knowledge of your child to participate in the assessment. For more information about your rights, you may speak to your child's Early Development Network Services Coordinator (for children ages 0-3), Nebraska Department of Education-Office of Special Education (402-471-2471), the Parent Training Institute of Nebraska (800-284-8520), or Disability Rights Nebraska (800-442-6691).

