

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Open Access



# School hearing screening program: an emerging need

Soumyajit Das\*

## The Editor

Universal newborn hearing screening (UNBHS) program is important for early detection of newborn deafness. It has advantage over high-risk targeted screening where nearly 50% cases of newborn deafness might be undiagnosed. There is a need to effectively implement the UNBHS program in a large country like India where there are multiple challenges related to resource availability, cultural beliefs, and lack of awareness. The socio-economic burden of disabilities is well known. Early intervention is necessary to achieve optimal results of rehabilitation. Moreover, it is necessary to keep in mind that many of the cases of childhood deafness might be manifested later in the school going children. We must remember that 65% of hearing impairment in school going children is conductive hearing loss which is reversible and preventable [1]. We need to focus our attention to children with mild and moderate unilateral hearing impairment who are often undiagnosed and labelled as 'slow learner', 'day dreamer', etc. In such scenarios, hearing impairment can lead to poor scholastic performance, with behavioral problems, low self-esteem, and problematic social interactions [2, 3]. The review by Ansari rightly pointed out the need to focus on hearing screening strategy in the school going children [2]. There is an added advantage in implementing the school hearing screening program such as the susceptible group can be easily identified as well as the screening can be performed only in the school premises. The program can be cost effective since the screening does not require additional manpower. The school teachers can be effectively

trained to perform the same with the use of simple device like the otoacoustic emission (OAE). Failed screen can be referred to a specialist for confirmation and diagnosis. Parents can play an important role and can be a part of the team to address a preventable and mostly reversible disability in this age group. This review by Ansari has touched upon an important aspect of school hearing screening program. It is hoped that more research will be taken up in this field, and necessary steps will be taken for successful implementation of school hearing screening program.

## Acknowledgements

Nil.

## Author's contributions

Dr. Soumyajit designed, created, edited the manuscript, and performed the literature review. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

## Funding

Nil.

## Availability of data and materials

No data associated with this article.

## Declarations

## Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

## Consent for publication

Not applicable.

## Competing interests

The author declares no competing interests.

Received: 7 December 2021 Accepted: 11 November 2022

Published online: 03 December 2022

\*Correspondence: [drsoumya\\_entamch@rediffmail.com](mailto:drsoumya_entamch@rediffmail.com)

Department of ENT All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Mangalagiri, Andhra Pradesh 522503, India

## References

1. Husseina S, Swanepoel D, Mahomed-Asmaila F, de Jagera L (2018) Hearing loss in preschool children from a low income South African community. *Int J Pediatr Otorhinolaryngol.* 115:145–148
2. Ansari M (2021) Hearing screening program for school going children in India: necessity, justification and suggested approaches. *The Egyptian. J Otolaryngol.* 37(118). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s43163-021-00182-x>
3. Rohlfs AK, Friedhoff J, Bohnert A et al (2017) Unilateral hearing loss in children: a retrospective study and a review of the current literature. *Eur J Pediatr* 176:475–486. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00431-016-2827-2>

## Publisher's Note

Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

**Submit your manuscript to a SpringerOpen<sup>®</sup> journal and benefit from:**

- ▶ Convenient online submission
- ▶ Rigorous peer review
- ▶ Open access: articles freely available online
- ▶ High visibility within the field
- ▶ Retaining the copyright to your article

---

Submit your next manuscript at ▶ [springeropen.com](https://www.springeropen.com)

---