

## What is the SCOUT study?

Now that newborn babies can have hearing checks, hearing loss is often picked up soon after birth.

We know that newborn hearing programs help many children. But no-one knows how effective they are for *all* children. SCOUT will be the first project in the world to find this out.



SCOUT is studying all children born with bilateral hearing loss in NSW and Victoria between 2003 and 2005. During this time, New South Wales offered newborn hearing checks to all babies, while Victoria offered hearing checks only to babies at high risk for deafness. Now we want to study all children as they turn 5 years old. This will let SCOUT find out the benefits and costs of screening all babies, compared to screening only the high risk babies.

### Why are you telling us about SCOUT?

We are sending this letter to parents of all children who:

- have a bilateral hearing loss
- were fitted with hearing aids or a cochlear implant by 4 years old
- were born between March 2003 and February 2005 in New South Wales or Victoria.



### We are already in the LOCHI study.

SCOUT and LOCHI are asking different questions, so it's ok to take part in both studies.

The SCOUT visit will be very short – we don't need to assess your child again. We will ask for your permission to get some of your child's LOCHI 5-year-old results. That way, you and your child don't have to repeat what you've already done for LOCHI.

### If we join SCOUT, what do we have to do?

1. Fill out a short questionnaire. It asks about your child's behaviour and feelings, and about the services you have used for your child's hearing loss and how much they cost. It also has some questions about parents.
2. A SCOUT researcher will visit you (usually at your home or your child's preschool) to:
  - a. complete a short questionnaire with your child about his/her own well being
  - b. ask you about the services and health professionals you have seen in relation to your child, and ask you to fill out a short questionnaire about your child's general health and well being and your own well being
3. We will ask your permission to access your child's service records from Medicare, Australian Hearing and other services you have used. This will help to understand the costs, as well as the benefits, of universal newborn hearing screening.



### If we tick 'YES' what will happen next?

We will pass your contact details to SCOUT. Then a researcher will contact you to tell you more about SCOUT, and to answer any questions. We will send you an information pack, a consent form, and a questionnaire. If you then decide against SCOUT, nothing more will happen. If you decide to take part, you fill out the questionnaire and we make a time for the single SCOUT visit.

Do you have **any questions** about SCOUT? Please visit our website: <http://www.rch.org.au/ccch/scout> email us at: [scout.study@mcri.edu.au](mailto:scout.study@mcri.edu.au) or call us on (03) 9345 6528.

### The SCOUT Team:

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