



HEAR. LISTEN. YARN.

Use PLUM and
HATS to check
bub's listening
and talking skills

WHY do we need the PLUM and HATS?

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bubs have ear and hearing trouble. This often happens during the first few years of life – a critical period of learning. If bubs can't hear properly, bubs can't learn to listen, yarn and communicate. This can have a lifelong impact on education, employment opportunities and social life. However, hearing problems can be fixed if they are detected early. The National Acoustic Laboratories (NAL) have worked with Aboriginal health and early childhood services from both urban and remote communities to develop these checklists. They are a simple tool for use with parents of young children, and assist with early detection of children at risk. Timely treatment is the key to solving the problem.

WHAT are the PLUM and HATS?

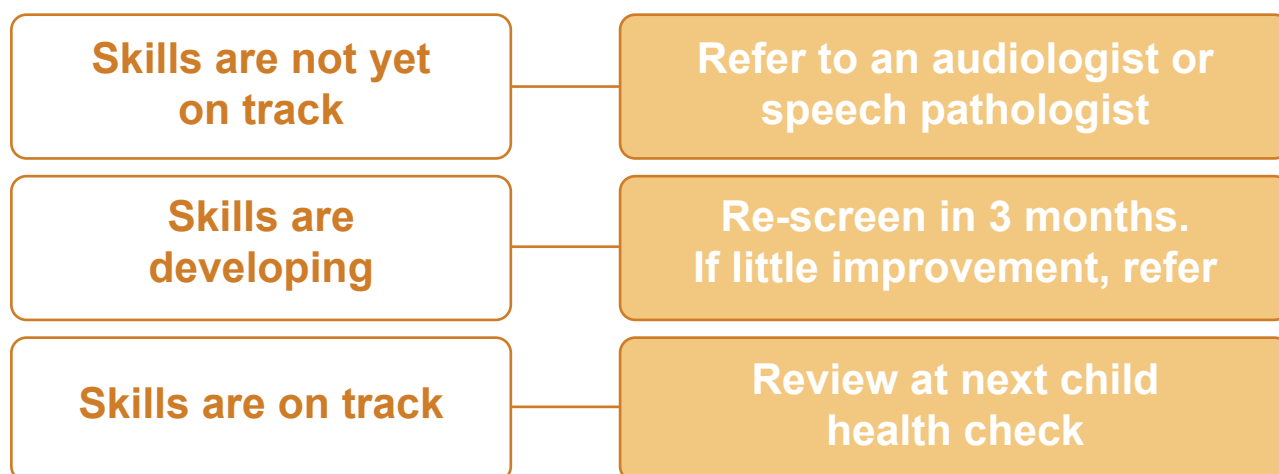
The PLUM (Parent-evaluated Listening & Understanding Measure) screens for hearing and listening problems in young children. The HATS (Hearing and Talking Scale) screens for communication problems. They are designed for use by people who provide services to families with young children, who may not be trained to perform hearing or language assessments. Primary health workers and early educators are well positioned to use the checklists with parents to detect children who need referral.

The checklists use a pictorial format to engage parents or carers to talk about their children's listening and talking activities in real-life situations. The checklists are validated for use with parents of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children below 6 years of age in urban, rural and remote communities. Both checklists have accuracy levels of >80%. That is, 8 of 10 children whose scores require referral have a hearing or communication problem when they receive professional assessments.

HOW are the scores used?

The PLUM scores show listening skills. The HATS scores show talking skills.

For each checklist, the score indicates whether a child's skills are 'not yet on track', 'developing', or 'on track' for their age.



For all children and families, the 'Yarning at Home' booklet provides activities that parents/carers may use to help their children develop better listening and talking skills for life.

WHERE is more information?

More information is available from the website: plumandhats.nal.gov.au

Here you will find a video that demonstrates how to use the PLUM and HATS, training options, PLUM and HATS checklist downloads, plus the 'Yarning at Home' booklet.

