

**Getting started:** Have copies of the PLUM and HATS tools, including the score sheet printed and ready to use. These can be downloaded and printed from our website.

**Tips**

- For each question give the parent or carer an example appropriate for the age of their child.
- Encourage the parent or carer to give examples of what their child has done in the last few days.
- Let the parent or carer know that some of the questions are asked twice: first for quiet times and then for noisy times.
- Practise using the tools with your co-workers or family.

1. Explain to the parent or carer

*'How your child listens in every day life is important. Can I ask you a few questions about what they do day to day? For each question, please tell me whether your child does these things:*

- Not yet
- A little
- Sometimes
- A lot, or
- Always'

QUESTION	SCORE
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
TOTAL	

2. Ask the first question and circle the parent or carer's answer.

3. Repeat for remaining 9 questions.

4. Write the score for each answer in the tally box on page 2.

5. Add the scores up to get the total score.

6. Go to the score sheet. Match the child's total score with their age bracket and circle the score in the score table.

**PLUM**

PLUM total score: \_\_\_\_\_

Mark the child's total PLUM score in the chart below, using the row that corresponds to their age in months.

Score	0 to 12	13 to 14	15 to 16	17 to 18	19 to 20	21 to 22	23 to 24	25 to 26	27 to 28	29 to 30	31 to 32	33 to 34	35 to 36	37 to 38	39 to 40
Age months															
6 to 11m	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
12 to 18m	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
19 to 24m	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●
25 to 30m	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
>30m	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●

**PLUM INTERPRETATION**

- Score in the white area: Listening skills are not yet on track. Refer to an Audiologist.
- Score in the shaded area: Listening skills are in the borderline range. Reassess in 3 months.
- Score in the black area: Listening skills are **on track**. Reassess in one year. Earlier if there are concerns.

Provide home strategies to help develop listening and communication skills.  
 If the parent/carer is worried about their child's listening and understanding skills, refer to an Audiologist.  
 If they have a high level of concern that their child may need hearing aids, refer to Hearing Australia.

7. Work out whether the child is 'not yet on track', in the 'borderline' range, or 'on track', and check what the recommended next steps are. See next page for more information on this.

### Interpreting the PLUM

We recommend the following pathway after you have completed the PLUM.

If a child scores in the **white** area their listening skills are **not yet on track**

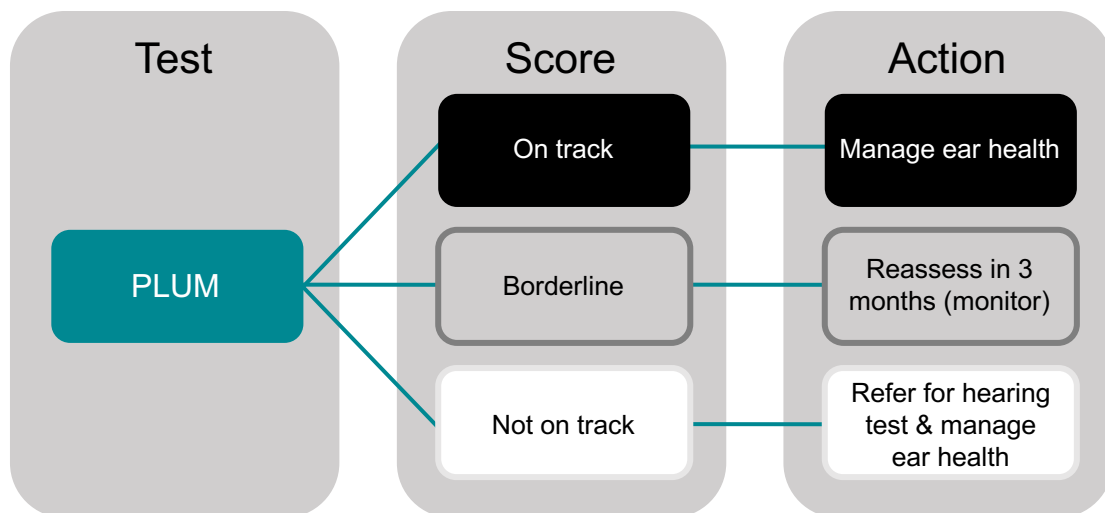
If a child scores in the **grey** area this is a **borderline score**. Reassess in 3 months

If a child scores in the **black** area their listening skills are **on track**

- This means the child’s listening skills are not yet on track for their age.
- Not hearing well is the most common reason for this.
- **Refer the child for a hearing assessment.**
- This means the child’s listening skills need monitoring.
- **Repeat the PLUM in 3 months.**
- This means the child’s listening skills are on track for their age.
- **Recheck in 12 months to make sure they stay on track, or earlier if there are concerns about ear health or hearing.**

### To summarise:

For children who score in the **borderline** area, we recommend you reassess them in three months time. If they score in the borderline area again when reassessed, then refer them for a hearing assessment.



### For all children

- Monitor and manage ear health.
- Encourage lots of yarning at home so they can practice their listening skills. Give the family a copy of our Yarning at Home resource.

If the parent or carer is very worried about their child’s hearing or their listening and understanding skills, refer to an Audiologist regardless.

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### Tips

- Encourage the parent or carer to give examples of what their child has done in the last few days.
- Practise using the tools with your co-workers or family.

1. Explain to the parent or carer

*'Can I ask you a few questions about what your child does day to day? Think about how your child plays, talks, and listens. For each question, please tell me whether your child does these things:*

- Not yet or a little
- Sometimes, or
- A lot or always'

2. Choose the child's age group in months.

3. Ask the parent all five questions in this age group.

4. For each question circle the parent's answer.

5. Write down the score for each answer in the tally box on page 2.

QUESTION	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
SCORE						

6. Add these scores up for the total score.

7. Go to the score sheet and circle the score in the score table.

**HATS**

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Total score: \_\_\_\_\_

Mark the child's total HATS score in the chart below.

0	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

**HATS INTERPRETATION**

Score in the white area: Communication skills are not yet on track. Refer to a Speech Pathologist.
Score in the shaded area: Communication skills are in the borderline range. Reassess in 3 months.
Score in the black area: Communication skills are <b>on track</b> . Reassess in 1 year. Earlier if there are concerns.

Provide home strategies to help develop communications skills.  
If the parent/carers is worried about their child's language and communication skills, refer to a Speech Pathologist.

8. Work out whether the child is 'not yet on track', in the 'borderline' range, or 'on track', and check what the recommended next steps are. See next page for more information on this.

## Interpreting the HATS

We recommend the following pathway after you have completed the HATS.

If a child scores in the **white** area their listening skills are **not yet on track**

- This means the child's talking or communication skills are not yet on track for their age.
- **Refer the child for a speech assessment.**

If a child scores in the **grey** area this is a **borderline score**. Reassess in 3 months

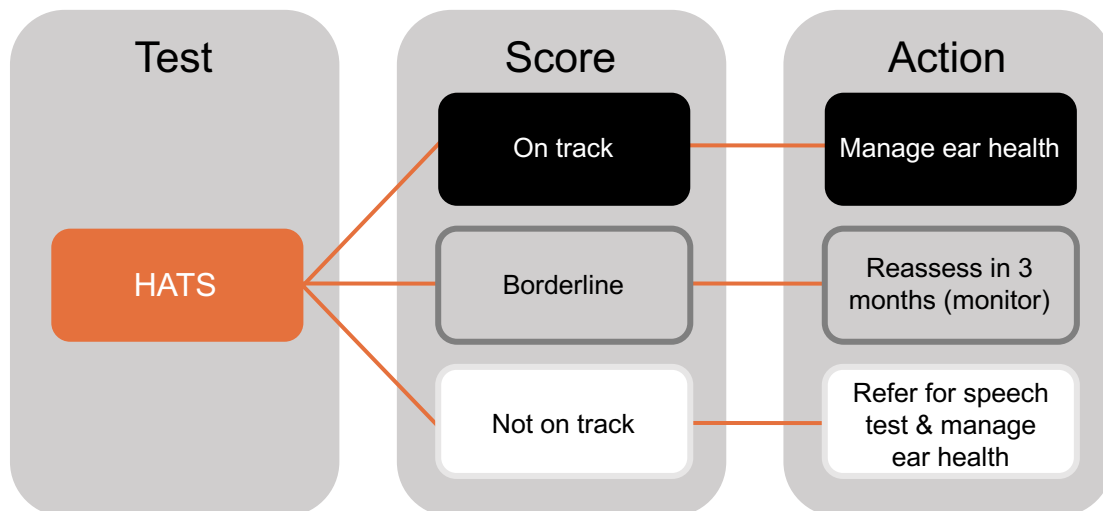
- This means the child's talking and communication skills need monitoring.
- **Repeat the HATS in 3 months.**

If a child scores in the **black** area their listening skills are **on track**

- This means the child's talking and communication skills are on track for their age.
- **Recheck in 12 months to make sure they stay on track, or earlier if there are concerns.**

### To summarise:

For children who score in the **borderline area**, we recommend you reassess them in three months time. If they score in the borderline area again when reassessed, then refer them for a speech assessment.



### For all children

- Monitor and manage ear health.
- Encourage lots of yarning at home so they can practice their communication skills. Give the family a copy of our Yarning at Home resource.

If the parent or carer is very worried about their child's talking or communication skills, refer to a Speech Pathologist regardless.