

Can I give the PLUM and HATS checklists to the parents/carers to fill out?

- No, it's important to have a conversation with the parents/carers about what the child does at home. It's important to give the parent examples of the questions that fit the age of their child. Talking through the checklists with parents/carers also helps them to understand what 'not hearing well' can look like at home.

Can an Early Childhood Educator fill in the PLUM and HATS?

- No, it's important to have a conversation with the parents/carers about what the child does at home. The PLUM and HATS checklists are meant to help Early Childhood Educator and parent/carers to yarn together about how the child using their listening and communication skills.
- We understand that Early Childhood Educators have enormous insights into how a child uses their listening and communication skills in an education setting, so an observational checklist is being developed for Early Childhood Educators to use as an additional tool (not to replace PLUM and HATS). You can contact us to find out more: plumandhats@nal.gov.au

Do I need to do both the PLUM and HATS?

- We recommend using both tools, as the PLUM asks about listening and hearing, and the HATS asks about talking and communication skills.
- If a child is already seeing a Speech Pathologist, then you may want to just do the PLUM.

If a child has other developmental issues, how will that effect the results of the PLUM and HATS?

- A child with other developmental issues may do poorly on the checklists and it may not have anything to do with their hearing. But we need to be more proactive with these children and it's a good idea for them to have a hearing assessment to rule out any hearing problems.

For the HATS, if a child has only just turned 2 or is just about to have a birthday, what age group should I use?

- Use the age range that the child fits into. If they are only at the very lower end of an age range and do poorly you may want to redo the HATS in 3 months and check how they do. Or if you have time, also ask the questions from the younger age range to make sure they do well with these.

What if a parent/carer talks about their child responding well when they use gestures, such as pointing and other visual cues?

- Reassure the parent/carer that it's great to be providing good visual back-up for communication, but encourage them to think of times when there were no visual cues so you can get a better idea of how the child hears.

Can I provide additional/different examples for the PLUM and HATS questions to suit the community and the parent/carer's living environment?

- Yes! It will help the parents/carers understand the questions and give you appropriate examples of their child's hearing, listening, and talking behaviours, and ensure you are understanding each other.
- When you're first getting used to the tool you could read the questions out and then give examples that are appropriate to the age and community of the child. Once you are more familiar with the tools you will be able to give more examples to help parents/carers understand the questions. It's great to encourage the parents/carers to give lots of examples of their children's hearing, listening, and talking behaviours.

If English is not the family's first language should I still use the checklists?

- Yes! You can explain to parents/carers that it does not matter what language or languages their family speaks to the child or which language/s the child is learning.
- Make sure parents/carers know that the questions are asking how the child is listening, understanding, and talking in *any* home language.
- If the parent/carer prefers to talk through the PLUM and HATS checklists in a language other than English, that is fine. If you do not speak that language, then it is important to arrange an interpreter (a trained interpreter if possible).

If a child has an on-track score with the PLUM and HATS but the parent/carer is still concerned about their hearing or communication, should I refer the child for further testing?

- Yes! It is always important ask a parent/carer about whether they have any concerns and to listen to these concerns, because they know their child best. There are different types of hearing, speech, and language problems and the PLUM and HATS are screening tools and will not detect all problems.

Where can I get further training?

- Training on the PLUM and HATS is available on our website: <https://plumandhats.nal.gov.au/> (you can watch a training webinar and do a quiz to test your knowledge, you just need to create a login)
- Additional training on the PLUM and HATS is available on TAFE NSW's EarTrain, a free online training program for primary health care professionals working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (funded by the Australian Government): <https://www.tafensw.edu.au/eartrain>
- If you would like any further training on the PLUM and HATS for you or your organisation, please contact us at: plumandhats@nal.gov.au

Where can I ask more questions?

- Please contact us at: plumandhats@nal.gov.au