

Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education (CDHHE) Network

Early Intervention Roles and Services (Specific availability listed by service area provided upon referral)

The Joint Commission on Infant Hearing (JCIH) defines best practice goals including that “All children who are deaf or hard of hearing from birth to three years of age and their families have early intervention providers who have the professional qualifications and core knowledge and skills to optimize the child’s development and child/family well-being. The CDHHE Network*, administered by the Indiana State Department of Health, is designed to provide specialized seamless services for families of deaf and hard of hearing children to meet this goal. Families may be enrolled with a local provider agency as well as referred to the CDHHE Network and receive services from both networks as determined by the IFSP. The following First Steps credentialed professionals are uniquely qualified to provide specialized Early Intervention services for children identified as deaf or hard of hearing. Services should be chosen based on the family/child outcomes on the IFSP and may include one or several of the services listed below. Please feel free to contact the CDHHE Network with any questions at CDHHENetwork@isdh.in.gov .

- **Audiologists:** Provide initial and ongoing evaluations of hearing upon referral by the child’s primary care provider, ENT, First Steps Coordinators, or other First Steps provider agencies at the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education’s (the Center) central location in Indianapolis or their regional office in Northeast Indiana. This network has audiologists who are available statewide for follow up from Newborn Hearing Screening and may fit children with hearing aids. They are available to consult by phone with local audiologists as well as other providers in the network.
- **SKI-HI Parent Advisors:** Provide intensive language acquisition strategies through family coaching, providing information and provide comprehensive resources for families. SKI-HI Parent Advisors (PA) typically have degrees in one of the following fields: audiology, deaf education, early childhood (special) education, or speech-language pathology and have attended an intensive six-day training to become certified by the SKI-HI Institute as a Parent Advisor. PA’s also guide families through a process of learning about the unique aspects of parenting their deaf or hard of hearing child and how to encourage language acquisition, including determining communication opportunities that will benefit their child, using a holistic developmental model in an unbiased manner. They may also have varying degrees of experience in sign language.
- **Listening and Spoken Language Therapists:** Provide intensive listening and spoken language services through family coaching and direct service. Listening and spoken language therapists have extensive specialized training and experience in teaching spoken language through auditory development and may be certified as a Listening and Spoken Language Specialist. Listening and spoken language therapists may practice as Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist (DHH) or as Speech-Language Therapists (ST) and have training in: hearing, auditory functioning and development, speech development; infant/early childhood development; early communication development; literacy; adult learning styles, and parent training and support.
- **Speech Language Pathologists, specializing in working with deaf and hard of hearing children:** Provide speech and language services through family coaching and direct service. Speech-Language Pathologists who have extensive training and experience in working on spoken language development with children who are deaf or hard of hearing may also have certification as a Listening and Spoken Language Specialist and training in: hearing and hearing technology, auditory functioning and development, speech development; early childhood development; early communication development; literacy; adult learning styles, and parent training and support. SLP’s/ST’s are certified by the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA). They may also have varying degrees of experience in sign language.

Important Note: As determined by the family outcomes in the IFSP, more than one provider may be chosen with an understanding that providers will work collaboratively as an interdisciplinary team. Families of children who are in need of additional services may have providers from CDHHE Network in addition to their local agency, and there can be more than one Developmental Therapist (DT), Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist (DHH), or Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP) on the team when at least one of these providers is from the CDHHE Network and there are separate outcomes to support both services.

Other early intervention and family support services are offered through the Center and the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program (both programs administered by the Indiana State Department of Health). These services are provided at no cost to the family.

- **Deaf Mentors (DM):** Provide families with the experience of being connected with a Deaf adult by introduction, exposure and shared strategies involving American Sign Language (ASL), Deaf Culture and the Deaf Community. Home visits consist of engaging and activity-based lessons for the families to learn natural and routine-based strategies for communicating visually with their infant/young child, for example: establishing eye contact and attention, gesturing and learning ASL development and competency, and shared literacy tips. The Deaf Mentors have diverse backgrounds; including ASL, as well as both ASL and spoken language. The Deaf Mentors receive three days of comprehensive training and are certified by the SKI-HI Institute.
- **Guide by Your Side (GBYS) Parent Guides:** Provide unbiased family support to parents soon after their child is identified as Deaf or Hard of Hearing. The Guide By Your Side™ program is a Hands and Voices program and connects parents of newly identified children to a Parent Guide who has at least one child who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing and who has completed ongoing bi-annual trainings to support new families as they embark on their journey.
- **Participation in the Early Childhood Assessment:** Communication and Developmental checklists are completed by the family at ten month intervals to measure progress and outcomes of the early intervention services. The assessment is administered by trained providers and is scored and reported by the Center to provide the parent with a measure of their child's progress over time.
- **Play Groups:** Parent and child playgroups are available. Please contact Center for current information.
- **Interdisciplinary Collaborative Services:** Any provider in this network may partner with the family by attending audiology/cochlear implant appointments, participating in developmental and educational assessments, transition meetings, case conferences and consulting with First Steps and Local Education Agencies.

*Comprised of staff and contracted providers through the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education and St. Joseph Institute Indiana Services Corporation.

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