

# CONNECTIONS

A publication of the Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education

*The Center of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Mission: To promote positive outcomes for all Deaf and Hard of Hearing children in Indiana through information, services, and education.*

From the Director... 1

Staff Spotlight... 2

Audiology... 3

Early Invention... 4

Language & Literacy... 5

Assessment... 6

Deaf Education... 7

Family/Community... 8

Center Contacts... 9

## From the Director

### Taking the High Road

As our Center ensures availability of our consultations and resources statewide, we are embarking on a new journey: a mobile unit!

Our mobile unit will be equipped with an audiology soundbooth and equipment as well as a consultation area. We will be taking this unit to a variety of locations throughout Indiana—planning each visit based on the specific needs of that community.

We will partner with local entities—schools, health departments, nonprofit organizations, and universities—coming alongside those professionals

in the community. We will collaborate on individual children/students as well as processes and systems in which our staff can be of assistance.

Our unit will be on the road at the end of 2020, and we look forward to the opportunity to connect with many of you as we plan for this new venture!



**Center for Deaf  
and Hard of Hearing  
Education**



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Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Education**

# STAFF SPOTLIGHT



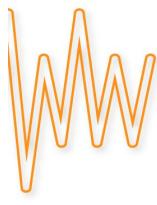
We welcome Erika Pearson to our Center team as the new Audiology Administrative Assistant.

Erika received her bachelor of arts in speech and hearing sciences from Indiana University. She went on to work as an assistant to speech language pathologists at five Indianapolis public schools from 2010 to 2012. She ended up pursuing her part-time job as a full-time career in 2012 at Smith's Jewelers. In 2018, she received her graduate gemologist diploma through the Gemological Institute of America.



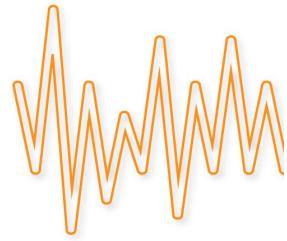
Erika was born in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, and moved to Indiana in 1998. Her father is Deaf and mother is hearing. Erika grew up in both the Deaf and Hearing communities and experienced communication barriers firsthand. She developed a strong desire to help bridge that communication gap.

After 16 years in the jewelry industry, she decided to follow her heart back to her roots. She is excited to apply her previous knowledge working with children and families, her understanding of the Deaf Community, and her communication skills here at the Center.



# SOUND ADVICE

## Audiology



### Impact of Face Coverings on Communication Access – Recent Studies

Studies investigating the impact of facial coverings on auditory and visual access to communication have been limited. Refer to two recent studies summarized below to gain insight into the variability of acoustic effects of face covering options and the potential impacts of these effects on speech understanding.



[Acoustic Effects of medical, cloth, and transparent face masks on speech signals, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#)

- The Illinois Augmented Listening Laboratory examined the decrease in speech signal caused by different facial coverings (cloth, medical, and transparent masks and shields) and the effect of a microphone placed at different positions (next to the mouth, cheek, forehead, lapel), with various masks.
- All masks decreased the speech signal above 1000 Hz; substantial variation occurred in results between mask types, especially for cloth masks with different materials and weaves (thickness was less important than weave, as loosely woven fabrics were better than tightly woven ones).
- Transparent masks (shields and cloth masks with clear windows) provided poorer acoustic performance compared to medical and cloth masks.
- Using a microphone placed at the lapel or forehead was most effective to capture sound deflected by masks to the side of the face (especially shields and masks with clear windows). Talkers wearing masks can improve transmission of high-frequency sounds by wearing a microphone.

- The Moog Center for Deaf Education studied how various facial coverings (cloth mask, cloth mask with window, and clear shield) with and without a personal remote microphone (RM) digital modulation (DM) system impact speech understanding in a classroom environment.
- Use of an RM system significantly improved speech understanding when used with the cloth mask and face shield, but resulted in poorer performance with the fully clear mask (ClearMask™).
- Functional listening assessments can be easily completed in the classroom to determine the best listening option for each child.





# BRAIN BUILDERS CORNER

## EARLY INTERVENTION

### Families Benefit from the Coaching Model Used During Virtual Visits

**Governor issues stay-at-home order in March, and Early Intervention services continue via new service delivery models:** The state First Steps office staff jumped into action by issuing temporary policy changes to allow Early Intervention (EI) services to continue for Hoosier families throughout this crucial time of development for all children. This allowed our CDHHE Network providers an opportunity to hone our skills in delivering services via tele-practice. While some providers have been doing this via iHear services for many years, others have attended seminars and webinars in anticipation to increase our ability to serve state-wide. Whether in the home or through virtual means, we coach parents and caregivers to use strategies and techniques and to apply them in their daily routines. Providers have seen families become empowered and gain confidence as they recognize their impact for growth with their little ones. After all, children learn best with familiar people during their everyday routines and activities, and now parents as well as other family members are recognizing the benefit of the virtual sessions.



#### Family tips to gain the most from their sessions

- Share information about your family preferences, goals, and dreams as you enter this partnership with your EI providers, and be willing to try new strategies provided by your early interventionist.
  - Let the providers know what has changed since your last visit, and share struggles and successes.
  - Record some interactions with your child and family members between visits that show his/her communication and interaction.
- Give feedback to your provider about what worked and didn't work so you can problem-solve together.

#### Provider tips to further empower families



- Begin sessions by sharing information and encouraging parents to share successes and updates.
- Observe the family interacting during a routine or activity and use reflective strategies. Partner with families to apply problem-solving strategies, as well as provide families with relevant information to make decisions regarding their child.
- Check out resources available on the [Family Guided Routines Based Intervention website](#) as well as the [Indiana Institute on Disability and Community's Early Childhood Center website](#).



# LANGUAGE AND LITERACY CORNER

## How Can Children Be Social while Social Distancing?

Children learn language best from other children. Peers can provide opportunities to learn new ways of play, resolving conflicts, sharing, problem-solving, creating, and so much more. Peers will also provide immediate feedback to your child if their communication (sign, speech, or augmentative/alternative) was understood and effective. With social distancing still encouraged, here are some ideas for ways your child could still interact with peers and continue to develop language and literacy.



### Outside Play Dates:

When the weather allows, some outside activities can be completed while still social distancing. Just be sure to encourage your child to keep their hands away from their face and wash their hands as soon as they are done playing. How about trying:

- Riding bikes (with helmets!)
- Playing catch or frisbee

### Other Ideas:

What if video chatting is not for your child? It may create anxiety, make them feel overwhelmed by all the visual and verbal cues on the screen, not catch their attention, or remind them that they cannot play with their friends. Try these activities to connect with peers:

- Write letters or draw pictures to send to friends
- Film a short video for friends such as saying hello or making a silly face

### Neighborhood Activities:

If you live in an area that has a way through social media for neighbors to communicate, you could try to organize:

- I-Spy scavenger hunts where neighbors hide specific things in yards for children to spy on a walk
- Putting up theme pictures in windows for parents to talk about when taking a walk with their family
- Sending messages to neighborhood friends using sidewalk chalk

### Video Calling:

Yes, we all may be sick of the video call, but have you tried these activities?

- Create a theme for the peer meeting. Plan ahead of time with the caregivers to have similar toys that children are playing with during the video call such as building blocks, arts and crafts, or action figures/dolls. Caregivers and children could engage in parallel play with adults modeling some social language for the children.
- Older children can take turns playing a song for everyone to dance to. Younger children may benefit from a caregiver playing the songs the children choose.
- Think about watching a movie together to take pressure off your child to entertain friends.
- Try simple science experiments (baking soda volcanos, glitter sensory jars, salt on water color paint).
- Have a rock-paper-scissor championship.
- Take a livestream museum tour together.
- Let your older children do school work with their peers through video.



# TACKLIN' Assessment

**T**herapists **A**ctively **C**onsulting & **K**nowledgeably **L**eading **I**Ndiana

## Available Resources During This “Unprecedented” Time

There are many resources available at our fingertips as we continue to navigate through current obstacles to meet the needs of children and students we serve. Some students are completing coursework in person, while other students are participating in remote learning or joining their cohorts in a hybrid model. The effects on the wellbeing of all our students over the last several months should be considered, especially those who have not had access to the necessary therapy and language models to make progress toward closing the gaps that impact them at home and school. When assessing their academic performance, these variables must be considered and appropriate caveats documented in their assessment and progress reports. When conducting in-person testing, document what type of facial covering you are using and consider the potential impact on the student's performance. Review the research studies available with regards to how masks (cloth, clinical, and transparent) and face shields alter the test administration.



### COVID-19 and Student Rights

[United States Department of Education Fact Sheet: Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Schools While Protecting the Civil Rights of Students](#)

[National Association of School Psychologists \(NASP\) COVID-19: Resource Library](#)



# TEACHERS' DEN

**Deaf Educator's Network**

## Welcome Back to School!

This school year is definitely like no other. The Deaf Education team at the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education has been busy creating continuous learning documents to assist school teams in ensuring that students who are deaf and hard of hearing have optimal access in a variety of educational settings. It is important to have discussions and incorporate those into students' educational plans to ensure smooth transitions should educational platforms change throughout the school year. Each student learns and accesses their environment differently. It is helpful to conduct functional assessments (listening, visual, or both) to gather information on unique student access needs.

The following Continuous Learning Guidance Documents can be found on the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education's website ([www.cdhhe.isdh.in.gov](http://www.cdhhe.isdh.in.gov)):

- [Masks and Face Shields](#)
- [Continuous Learning Guiding Questions](#)
- [Continuous Learning Educational Interpreter Considerations](#)
- [Continuous Learning HAT Considerations](#)



Additional technical assistance available on our website ([www.cdhhe.isdh.in.gov](http://www.cdhhe.isdh.in.gov)):

- [Audiology Tips and Tricks](#)
- [Considerations of Special Factors](#)
- [Indiana Deaf Education and Assessments of Language \(IDEAL\)](#)
- [Tips for Interpreters in the virtual setting](#)
- [Tips for working with virtual interpreters](#)

Please contact the Deaf Education team for more information and resources.



# Family & Community

Indiana Deaf Education and Assessments of Language

- ⇒ [Parent Document](#)
- ⇒ [List of Tools & Assessments](#)
- ⇒ [Technical Assistance](#)
- ⇒ [Assessment Reporting Portal](#)



Join IN Hands & Voices for a Parent's Night Out

THURSDAY, DEC. 3RD AT 6PM

*Sip and Shop*

Gratitude Boutique  
Fishers, IN

Meet other parents of D/HH kids while Holiday shopping.  
Drinks and snacks will be served.

[www.inhandsandvoices.org](http://www.inhandsandvoices.org)  
[facebook.com/inhandsandvoices/](https://facebook.com/inhandsandvoices/)

**Fostering Joy**  
Parent to Parent Zoom  
With Special Guest Candace Lindow-Davies

Candace is the mother of an adult son who is deaf plus other health concerns and she is a Core Member of the Hands & Voices Fostering Joy project, focusing on the joys of raising children who are D/HH.

**Friday October 23 at 11:00 EST**  
Register Here: [inhandsandvoices.org/joy](http://inhandsandvoices.org/joy)

[www.haapindiana.org](http://www.haapindiana.org)



Practice ASL online (parents or children) with American Society for Deaf Children

<https://deafchildren.org/sign-on/>



**Q&A**  
DROP-IN SESSIONS  
Advocating for your DHH Child/Students

Hands & Voices ASTRA™ Advocates will answer your questions.  
First Monday of each month, August - June.  
8:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. EST  
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. CST  
For Spanish language contact [MBarquet@isdh.in.gov](mailto:MBarquet@isdh.in.gov)

How can I help my DHH child with virtual school?  
I think my child needs an FM system but the school disagrees

IS MY CHILD ELIGIBLE FOR AN IEP?

ASK OUR ASTRA ADVOCATES  
FIRST MONDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 8PM EST  
Please register: [inhandsandvoices.org/astra-qa](http://inhandsandvoices.org/astra-qa)



Webinar: Using Deaf Mentors to Support Reading in the Home [www.infanthearing.org/webinars/2020/using-deaf-mentors-to-support-reading-in-the-home.html](http://www.infanthearing.org/webinars/2020/using-deaf-mentors-to-support-reading-in-the-home.html)



Parent Support Chats

The Listening Project with Jane Madell & Parent Reflection Discussion Sessions  
[form.jotform.com/20259565187](http://form.jotform.com/20259565187)  
1058

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