

Connections

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

Volume 9, Issue 9

Early Intervention

CDHHE Early Intervention Network



In our [4th issue of this Connections Newsletter](#) earlier this year, we shared reasons and support for families of deaf and hard of hearing children to begin early intervention services by 6 months of age. Our Center partners with [St Joseph Institute for the Deaf](#) to provide a statewide network of specialized providers, currently totaling more than 30 individuals. This newsletter will highlight what specialized services for deaf and hard of hearing infants/toddlers and their families are available in Indiana. Our [CDHHE Network services](#) are offered through [Indiana's First Steps early intervention system](#).

Early Intervention services are based on developmental goals written into the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). An IFSP is developed by the family and First Steps service coordinator. Services are added based on the families desired outcomes and may be changed as child and family needs change. Services can be offered in-person, virtually or a combination of the two. Frequency of service depends on goals and child/family needs. The plan is reviewed every six months and services may be added or decreased as goals are met.

Specialized Services

Parent Education

A parent advisor (PA) provides education, family coaching and comprehensive resources regarding all opportunities for language development. Topics covered are guided by family questions and needs to support families through a process of learning about the unique aspects of parenting a deaf or hard of hearing child. This includes how to encourage language acquisition, using a holistic developmental model in an unbiased manner.

Parent advisors are certified by the SKI-HI Institute and typically have a background in deaf education, early childhood or speech-language pathology.

Spoken Language

A listening and spoken language (LSL) therapist provides direct services and parent coaching. Services use specialized strategies to help infants/toddlers listen and talk with hearing technology. LSL therapists have training in a variety of topics including hearing, auditory functioning and development, speech development, infant/early childhood development, early communication development, and literacy. They may hold listening and spoken language specialist (LSL) certification in auditory verbal therapy (AVT) or education (AVEd).



Audiology

First Steps will cover audiological evaluations, hearing aids with two-year warranty and bone anchored devices with a five-year warranty, earmolds, and batteries. Families may select their audiologist during the IFSP process.

These First Steps service providers are independent of the CDHHE Network. Center audiologists are available should a family select them when creating their IFSP.

Visual Language

A deaf mentor (DM) provides introduction, exposure and shared strategies involving American Sign Language (ASL), Deaf Culture and Deaf Community. DMs are certified through SKI-HI using curriculum to assist families choosing to learn ASL and early visual language strategies. They coach and educate families through the use of ASL. They also bridge between family and deaf culture through events and activities.

Why specialized services?

JCIH position statement

The Joint Commission on Infant Hearing provides guidance to states on how to implement the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention programs. One of the goals of the [Supplement to the JCIH 2007 Position Statement](#) specifically supports the need to have professionals such as the ones offered through the CDHHE Network:

Goal 3: All Children Who Are D/HH From Birth to 3 Years of Age and Their Families Have EI Providers Who Have the Professional Qualifications and Core Knowledge and Skills to Optimize the Child's Development and Child/Family Well-being

How to refer to the CDHHE Network

Contact us at cdhhenetwork@health.in.gov or complete a referral form found on our website using the [online CDHHE Network Referral Form](#)

To **promote**, **protect**, and **improve** the health and safety of all Hoosiers