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CONNECTIONS

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

From the Director

Christine Moody



Welcome to our first newsletter! We're excited for this opportunity to reach out to all of our stakeholders with updates, information and resources. This newsletter is called Connections because it is intended for a wide audience of families, professionals and community members collaborating and connecting for positive and improved outcomes for every child...and **with** the child (and family) as the focus of our efforts.

The state-legislated Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education (The Center) is committed to a seamless process: from screening and diagnosis to early intervention IDEA Part C services, through transition to IDEA Part B services at age 3, continuing through that crucial early childhood education time, to kindergarten entry, through each grade of school, and finally including successful transition to post-secondary goals for each student, as productive adults with strong self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy skills. It is more complicated than you might think, which is why it takes all of us working together with high expectations and accountability for all. Together we can help all deaf and hard of hearing children in Indiana reach their greatest potential.

We follow the tenets of the Joint Commission on Infant Hearing, and as a Department of Education (DOE) Indiana Resource Network, we are aligned with the goals of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). In this newsletter, you'll get a picture of who works here and what we do. We're dedicated to having the expertise and experience to support quality professional development, to provide thorough assessments and specialized early intervention, to share resources, support and information, and to bring families together on this unique journey. It doesn't matter what path the family is on, as long as the child has access to language and learning in all environments and is making necessary progress socially and academically. We empower families with resources and knowledge to make informed decisions; we do not act as gatekeepers of information or as decision-makers for families. We encourage the perspective of the whole child and the CONNECTIONS necessary to enable their success.

We hope you find this newsletter valuable and agree it has something for everyone. Be sure to LIKE us on Facebook to see the most current information and resources from the Center between quarterly newsletters (www.facebook.com/CDHHE).



Center for Deaf
and Hard of Hearing
Education



SOUND ADVICE

Audiology

Hello from the Audiology Team at the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education! Currently, our team consists of Michelle Wagner Escobar and Dana Ramsey, two audiologists who aspire to improve the lives of children who are deaf and hard of hearing in Indiana. Our team has the pleasure of serving Indiana families in a variety of ways throughout their childhood and educational journey.

Infants: The audiologists of the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education work with the Indiana Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program by offering follow-up Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) assessments to families of infants who refer on the newborn hearing screening after birth and provide initial screening for some infants who did not receive their initial screen at birth.

Birth-3 years: We are proud to provide hearing evaluations and hearing aid services to support families of children who are eligible to receive those services through Indiana First Steps. As members of the CDHHE Network, our team collaborates with a number of other service providers who are experienced and passionate about working with kids who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

3 years-school exit: Our audiologists provide comprehensive hearing evaluations for school-aged children who need them. These evaluations may be necessary to prepare for their transition from First Steps to the local education system, identify a suspected hearing loss, or evaluate auditory skills at a given time to support the Multi-disciplinary Assessment Team in providing appropriate assessments and recommendations for children who are enrolled in schools across the state.

Although the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education serves families throughout the calendar year, here are some tips to keep in mind for a good school year.

Don't Forget! 



TIPS FOR A GOOD SCHOOL YEAR

- Provide **copies of the most recent audiogram** for school staff
- Make sure that everyone on the educational team is **aware of any changes** made to the child's technology (hearing aids and/or cochlear implants), especially if your child is wearing a *loaner* or *backup device*.
- If your educational team does not have a current **signed consent** to communicate directly with the child's audiologist, ask for one. Collaboration among providers can make the school year a lot easier!
- Attend Back to School or Meet the Teacher events, if at all possible, to meet your child's teachers. Remind them of who your child is and **establish** the best means of parent-teacher **communication** throughout the year
- Ensure that your child has **extra batteries** and establish the best place to store them with school staff.



BRAIN BUILDERS' CORNER

Early Intervention

Early Intervention is defined as “a system of coordinated services that promotes the child's age-appropriate growth and development and supports families during the critical **early** years.” Indiana’s Early Intervention system is First Steps, a division under the Family and Social Services Administration in Indiana. First Steps has designated the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Network as the early intervention agency specially designed to serve deaf and hard of hearing children statewide by providing unique specialists to ensure optimal outcomes for children and families.

The Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) provides guidelines on establishing strong early interventions (EI) systems with appropriate expertise to meet the needs of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. In fact, that is the ultimate purpose and goal of identifying children as early as possible. Prompt EI services provided by providers with optimal knowledge and skill levels based on research, best practices and proven models are necessary to make use of this window of opportunity for language. Goal 3 in the 2013 Supplement to the JCIH position statement (EI best practice guide-lines) is: *“All Children who are deaf or hard of hearing 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.”*

Research has told us that the brain needs accessible language in order to learn and develop thinking skills and academic skills later when they arrive at kindergarten. The Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Network of providers is available to help families work toward their goals by providing professionals with expertise in visual and spoken language opportunities, as well as other specialists who can coach parents in furthering the development of their child.



So, let’s talk about how we can be brain builders through appropriate specialized service delivery.

Our first edition FAQ is: **Why are services usually provided in the family’s home?**

Answer: Research shows children are more likely to generalize what they learn if it is learned in their typical everyday environment in the context of everyday routines, activities and places. Other benefits include parents and caregivers being an integral part and feeling ownership in order to carry out the techniques and practices that foster language acquisition and learning throughout their everyday lives.

If you know of a family in need of specialized services available through the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Network, contact us at 1-855-875-5193 or email cdhhenetwork@isdh.in.gov.

References:

American Academy of Pediatrics, Supplement to the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing: Year 2007: Principles and Guidelines for Early Intervention after Confirmation that a Child is Deaf or Hard of Hearing, 2013.



TEACHERS' DEN

Teachers' Deaf Education Network

The Deaf Education team of the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education has received numerous requests for professional development this school year. As the state-legislated resource, the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education is available to collaborate with professionals to provide support, resources, and professional development at no cost that are specific to Deaf and Hard of Hearing children. These services adhere to all federal, state, and local laws, follow current evidence-based best practices, and align with national and statewide trends regarding:

- Accommodations
- Audiology and Auditory Skill Development
- Effective Communication
- Direct Communication Opportunities with Peers and Adults
- Eligibility for Deaf and Hard of Hearing services
- Equal Access in the Educational Setting
- Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) devices
- Language Development
- Least Restrictive Environment (explanation of the differences for DHH LRE)
- Provision of Educational Services and Related Services
- Universal Design for Learning



The Deaf Education team can provide professional development to any number of school staff at no cost and will also provide Professional Growth Points (PGP) for any school professional in attendance. Information regarding upcoming conferences, workshops, webinars, and DHH Roundtables can be found on the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education's Learning Connection Community. Contact Sarah Kiefer at SKiefer@isdh.in.gov for information on how to join this community.

Archived webinars can be viewed here: <http://videocenter.isdh.in.gov/videos/channel/49/>

The Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education also has a comprehensive list of other online sources of professional development and learning opportunities on a multitude of topics. For more information, please contact Sarah Kiefer, Deaf Education Coordinator, at skiefer@isdh.in.gov or 317-232-0971, and let us know how we can be of further assistance for the DHH students you are serving in your schools.





FAMILY & COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

One of the most important missions of the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education is to serve and support families as they navigate the early intervention and K-12 educational systems for their children. All children benefit when their parents are informed and involved, and collaboration between families and professionals improves language development and educational outcomes. The Center incorporates family support into every service and program that we provide, but there are also special services and programs specifically designed for families.

Family Support Phone Line and E-mail

Sandra Lerman, Family and Community Education Liaison, can be reached by phone or email at 317-232-2826; slerman@isdh.in.gov. As a parent with experience navigating services for deaf and hard of children, Sandi can answer general questions, provide resources, and make connections to services, and information and support for families. In addition to being the parent of a deaf child, she has many years of experience working with families as a parent coach and educator. She is also fluent in ASL and Spanish.

Family Resource Center

The Family and Community Liaison maintains a resource center with materials, brochures, booklets, websites, and nationwide information and contacts for families. Contact Sandra Lerman for more information.

First Friday Family FOCUS: Families Online for Community Understanding and Support

This monthly online chat group for families with deaf and hard of hearing children takes place at lunchtime on the first Friday of each month. Attendance is open to any adult family member of a deaf or hard of hearing child. Visit our Facebook page, subscribe to our newsletter, or contact Sandra Lerman for dates and login information.

Family Events

The Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education provides special family events throughout the year. Recently we had more than 30 families and 60 children attend our Hands Land Family Workshop. Like and visit our Facebook page regularly to stay informed about upcoming events.

Website, Facebook Page, and Newsletter

Bookmark our website, like our Facebook page, and subscribe to our newsletter:

Website: www.cdhe.isdh.in.gov

Facebook: www.facebook.com/cdhe

Newsletter: Contact Sandi Lerman to have your email added to the list:

slerman@isdh.in.gov



Indiana Hands and Voices

The Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education collaborates with Indiana Hands and Voices to provide information and support to families in an unbiased manner. Visit the Indiana Hands and Voices website at www.indianahandsandvoices.org.

Family Events and Activities



Parent & Child PLAYGROUP!



PLAY

CONNECT

LEARN

Monthly Topics Include:

- * Outdoor Play *
- * Communication Opportunities and Strategies *
- * Importance of Play *
- * Transition to School Age *
- * Toys: Back to the Basics *
- * Self-Care for Parents *
- * Potty Training *
- * All about Reading to Littles *
- * Indiana and National Resources *
- * Parent & Child Temperament *
- * Male Role Models *
- * What Comes Before Words? *
- * Routines: Why Routines are Important *
- * Audiology: People & Vocabulary *


Come together to meet with other families who are raising a deaf or hard of hearing infant or toddler, ask questions, and, of course, have fun! All family members and friends involved in your child's life are welcome.

1st Saturday of each Month
 (Some exceptions for State Holidays)
Ages: Birth to 5 years old
From 10:00 am to 11:30 am

Raney South, Room 126
1200 E. 42nd Street, Indianapolis, IN 46205

Kjari Newell: knewell@isdh.in.gov 317-232-0690

*Please RSVP Monthly.
 If no RSVPs are received by Wednesday before, Playgroup will not meet.



First Friday

FOCUS

Group

FAMILIES ONLINE FOR COMMUNITY, UNDERSTANDING, AND SUPPORT

Every First Friday
from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. EST
Find the Link on Facebook:
[Facebook.com/CDHHE](https://www.facebook.com/CDHHE)

Indiana Deaf & Hard of Hearing Transition Day



Are you Prepared for your Future? Come and Learn!

Hosted by
 Indiana Deaf and Hard of Hearing Transition Alliance

Save the Date: Thursday, March 9, 2017
Location: Indiana Government Center South
Indianapolis, Indiana Contact: IndianaDHHtransition@gmail.com

HAAPI

Hearing Aid Assistance Program of Indiana

What an exciting year this has been since the Hearing Aid Assistance Program of Indiana (HAAPI) came into existence!

The HAAPI program was created out of legislation (IC-16-35-8) to provide hearing aids to school-age children throughout Indiana. With the knowledge that many insurance companies do not cover the cost of hearing aids, our state sought to generate a funding stream for those children and families who have previously been left holding the bill. This program is funded to provide approximately 300 hearing aids annually, giving priority to those children under the age of 14.

For **families** interested in this program, please visit the HAAPI website for more information on how to apply: www.happindiana.org. The basic qualifications are enrollment in kindergarten to 12th grade, medical clearance for hearing aids, and lack of coverage from other entities to cover the cost of hearing aids. Even if you have partial coverage, HAAPI may be able to provide the remainder of the cost.

For **audiologists** interested in becoming a participating audiologist, please visit the HAAPI website for more information: www.happindiana.org. All licensed audiologists are welcome to register, allowing the HAAPI program to assist in ordering and paying for hearing aids for your school-age patients.

For educators, speech-language pathologists and other professionals in related fields, please spread the word about this program to families you serve! Brochures are available for you to distribute- contact the HAAPI administrator info@happindiana.org to request brochures.



Do you know a child who needs hearing aids?

The Hearing Aid Assistance Program of Indiana Can Help

For more information, visit HAAPIndiana.org

haapi hearing aid assistance program of indiana
administered by **hearing** indiana

Phone: 317-828-0211
Fax: 888-887-0932
Email: Info@HAAPIndiana.org

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