



Indiana State Department of Health

Division of Maternal and Child Health - Genomics and Newborn Screening
Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI Program)

EHDI—Staff Highlight

REBEKAH CUNNINGHAM, PH.D.—DIRECTOR

EARLY HEARING DETECTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM



Rebekah Cunningham, PhD is the Director for the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program at the Indiana State Department of Health. She was formerly at Cardon Children's Medical Center Department of Audiology in Mesa, AZ, where she performed comprehensive evaluations and provided rehabilitation to infants and young children. She was an Associate Professor in the Department of Audiology at A.T. Still University (ATSU), the Arizona School of Health Sciences for twelve years. Her passion has always been pediatric-focused, whether teaching/mentoring audiology students, providing services or overseeing programs responsible for ensuring timely and appropriate newborn hearing screenings and follow up. She has served for 20+ years on committees and task forces for local and national audiology organizations. Dr. Cunningham has taught, presented, and published for over 15 years on the topics of assessment and management of children with hearing loss and/or auditory processing difficulties.

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Hands and Voices Family Conference

On Saturday, March 19th, 35 families arrived at Conner Prairie Museum for the EHDI Family Conference, hosted by Hands and Voices.

Attendees participated in learning sessions throughout the day and networked with other parents with children who are deaf or hard of hearing, and with professionals who assist them on their journey.

Kelly & Katie DiBenedetto provided the *Roots to Wings* Keynote presentation; *Audiology* by Rebekah Cunningham; *Language Development* by Bethany Colson; *Family Roles* by Lisa Condes, as well as a “teen panel” discussion. Exhibitor booths were available during lunch for participants to visit. Graduate students from Purdue, Ball State and Indiana Universities provided childcare for over 60 children.



National Professional Resources

American Academy of Audiology www.audiology.org/

The American Academy of Audiology is “the world's largest professional organization of, by, and for audiologists”. The Academy has a consumer website, www.HowsYourHearing.org that features an overview of topics to include hearing, hearing loss prevention, hearing aids, cochlear implants, common conditions, and more. It also features easy access to the "Find an Audiologist" directory.

American Academy of Pediatrics- EHDI

www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/PEHDIC/Pages/Early-Hearing-Detection-and-Intervention.aspx

This program of the American Academy of Pediatrics in cooperation with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and Maternal and Child Health Bureau/ HRSA, enhances the health and development of infants and children by ensuring that every child with hearing loss is diagnosed and receives appropriate, and timely intervention.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association www.asha.org/

American Speech Language Hearing Association (ASHA) is the professional association for speech language pathologists and audiologists. This page has a link for the public which provides information about many topics including hearing screening, hearing testing, hearing aids, cochlear implants, early hearing detection and intervention.

National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM)

www.infanthearing.org/

The center serves as the **National Resource Center** for the implementation and improvement of comprehensive and effective Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) systems. As a multidisciplinary Center, its goal is to ensure that all infants and toddlers with hearing loss are identified as early as possible and provided with timely and appropriate audiological, educational, and medical intervention.” Family members can find information about early hearing detection program directors/contacts in their state and read about federal and state legislation for newborn hearing screening programs.

- UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| <u>April 13-16, 2016:</u> | Audiology NOW (American Academy of Audiology Conference), Phoenix, AZ |
| <u>April 14-16, 2016:</u> | Indiana Speech Language Hearing Association (ISHA) Conference |
| <u>May 20-21, 2016</u> | Auditory Development Conference, Boys Town National Research Hospital, Omaha, NE |
| <u>May 2016</u> | May is Better Speech and Hearing Month! |
| <u>June 21-23, 2016</u> | Educational Audiology Association Conference, Paradise Valley, AZ |

Have questions? Please contact us to let us know information you would like to see in future newsletters!

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

TEXTING!! Indiana EHDI Employs a Creative Approach to Contacting Parents

One of the primary responsibilities of Indiana EHDI is to support parents as they navigate the process from newborn hearing screening referral to diagnostic testing.

The Problem

Indiana EHDI has historically used letters and phone calls to contact families.

As any person who has any contact with millennials can attest, young adults are often poor responders to these “outdated” methods. In fact, a recent examination of the patterns of 164 parents who were contacted by EHDI revealed that successful communication occurred at a rate of only 34.8%. Only 25% of parents could be reached by the first phone call and only 9% returned calls. Other problems included: no answer or out of service, no voicemail, vague voicemail, and voicemail full.

The Solution

Enter current technology – Cell phones

As of 2013, 81% of cell phone users text. In 2014, 90% of American adults own a cell phone and 64% own a Smartphone. The Indiana State Department of Health Legal Department approved the use of state issued iPhones for texting parents in an attempt to assist them with follow-up after their baby did not pass the newborn hearing screening.

The Application

Texting is initiated 1) if voicemail is full, 2) if voicemail is not accepting new voicemails, 3) no voicemail is setup, 4) vague voicemail. First and second contacts are initiated using a script.

Success Story

After implementation of texting, the patterns of 211 parents were examined and results were as follows: 32.4% overall response percentage to the conventional approaches (letter and phone calls) and 58.8% overall response percent after texting was added. The response rate from parents almost doubled after adding text messaging from parents.

**Coming in our next newsletter:
Indiana newborn hearing screening statistics for 2014
National parent resources**

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Division of Maternal and Child Health
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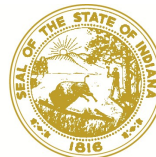
**We're on the web! Check out
our newly updated website at:**

www.hearing.in.gov

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Indiana State Department of Health

Early Hearing Detection
and Intervention Program

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