

Hands & Voices: A Parent's Guide to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Early Intervention Recommendations



Two parent leaders from the Hands & Voices organization served as co-chairpersons of the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Parent to Parent Committee, an interdisciplinary, inter-agency/inter-organizational, and diverse parent/professional committee. This committee collaborated to develop [A Parent's Guide to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Early Intervention Recommendations](#). It is intended to educate, empower, and more directly communicate with parents regarding rights and expectations around quality Early Intervention (EI) practices for children who are identified as deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) as indicated in *The Supplement to the JCIH 2007 Position Statement: Principles and Guidelines for Early Intervention after Confirmation That a Child Is Deaf or Hard of Hearing*.

Primary Accomplishments

- Provided education regarding the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) recommendations and emphasized the importance of timely entry into Early Intervention (EI)
- Encouraged families to be proactive in partnering with their medical home and EI specialists in care coordination planning and intervention
- Supported families by engaging diverse deaf and hard of hearing adults to offer support and guidance

Background Information

- Type of Setting: Interdisciplinary, inter-agency/inter-organizational, and diverse parent/professional committee
- Location: National
- Population Served: Families with children who are identified as deaf or hard of hearing

Implementation Strategies/Intended Outcomes

- Educates families about best practices and Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) recommendations around appropriate and timely entry into Early Intervention (EI)
- Provides information that empowers families to be more proactive in partnering with their medical home and EI specialists in care coordination, planning, and participation in interventions regardless of where they live
- Prepares families to address specific questions and considerations regarding appropriate care
- Provides definitions and explanations for Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI)-related terminology
- Provides resources that empowered parents to make important connections with providers and advocates that supported their child and family
- Addresses the value and importance of family-to-family and direct parent-to-parent support
- Highlights strategies and "rights" for families regarding accessing support
- Emphasizes the value and importance for families raising children who are deaf or hard of hearing to connect with diverse deaf and hard of hearing adult mentors
- Encourages families to get involved in improving the systems designed to help all children who are deaf or hard of hearing at both the local and state levels

Challenges

- This project was established and managed by volunteers who were able to meet only monthly due to competing personal, family, and professional commitments.
- There was a large volume of work and progress was slow due in large part to the collaborative nature of the project (completion took nearly two years).

More Information

- For more information, contact [Terri Patterson](#), Director of Chapter Support, Hands & Voices Headquarters.
- For more information about American Academy of Pediatrics Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) initiatives, visit aap.org/ehdi.