

Beyond the Diagnosis: Strengthening Family Engagement in EHDI Services

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Program

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About Me

- ▶ Wife and mom to 4 children,
1 who is Deaf
- ▶ Family Support Coordinator,
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EHDI Family Support

- ▶ [What is EHDI Family Support?](#)
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What is EHDI Family Support?

EHDI Family support serves families in Iowa who have children with hearing differences ages birth-3.

- ▶ The EHDI Family Support program is designed to guide, empower and connect families during a critical stage of their child's development.

When a baby is identified with a hearing difference, the experience can feel overwhelming. Families often have many questions and face decisions about communication, technology, and early learning.

- ▶ EHDI Family Support provides families with reliable information, emotional encouragement and practical tools to help them navigate this journey.

What is EHDI Family Support?

Support can look like:

- ▶ Family and Deaf Mentors
- ▶ Connection to community resources
- ▶ Emotional support
- ▶ Information and education
- ▶ Family empowerment
- ▶ Family connections

EHDI Family Support Process

- ▶ Receive diagnosis
- ▶ Parent packets (including [family guide](#))
- ▶ Phone calls/texts to connect
- ▶ Triage needs
- ▶ Connect to resources
- ▶ Transition packets (including [transition guide](#))
- ▶ On-going access to support

EHDI Family Support VS Early ACCESS

EHDI Family Support is separate from Early ACCESS programs.

- ▶ Both programs serve children ages birth-3 and are free for families.

Early ACCESS is Iowa's early intervention Part C program for infants and toddlers not on track for development or who have a medical condition that can delay development. Early ACCESS focuses on helping families so they can support their child's growth and development during everyday activities and routines.

EHDI Family Support offered

- ▶ [Family Partners](#)
- ▶ [Deaf Mentors](#)
- ▶ [In-person events](#)
- ▶ [Book Club for Tots](#)
- ▶ [New to the Journey](#)
- ▶ [Connection to resources](#)

Family Partners

Family Partners are parents or caregivers of children with hearing differences that are trained to provide unbiased support for families that are interested in connecting with other families.

- Variety of experiences and diagnoses available to connect with newly diagnosed families
- Phone, Zoom, or in-person

Deaf Mentors

Deaf Mentors are Deaf or hard of hearing adults trained to work with families on a 1:1 basis.

- Variety of experiences and diagnoses available to connect with newly diagnosed families
- Share about experience growing up with a hearing difference
- Able to teach ASL to the family
- Connect families to resources
- Connect families to Deaf culture
- Zoom or in-person

In-Person Events

In-person events are offered throughout the year at different locations.

- Baby/Toddler Library Time
- Pumpkin Patch
- Bowling
- Animal Rescue League event
- Valentine's Day



Book Club for Tots

Book Club for Tots is a monthly story time held over Zoom.

- Deaf Mentor signs story – interpreter voices
- Teaches signs to practice at home
- New story each month
- Connection to other families



New to the Journey

Quarterly group for families to connect and learn different topics related to hearing differences.

- Resources in Iowa
- Technology for DHH
- IFSPs/IEPs/504s
- Sibling panel
- Fathers panel

Connection to Community Resources

Connection to resources based on individual family needs

- Monthly newsletter with upcoming events and resources
- Early ACCESS referral
- Medicaid/Waiver information
- [Funding resources](#)
- Transportation resources
- Deafblind Project referral
- ASL Class options

Questions

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Health and
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