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## The Early Intervention Provider's Guide for Children with Hearing Loss

When a child has been identified with a hearing loss, the parents may have many questions and there will be decisions they will need to make. You are one of the people to whom they will turn for help. This Guide will assist you in providing the best possible services to the family following the diagnosis of hearing loss. Together the Guides for Families, Early Intervention Providers, Physicians and Audiologists comprise a shared plan of care to help parents navigate the first part of their journey with their child with hearing loss.

### Here are some of the ways to help

#### Explain the importance of Early Intervention

Research has shown that the most effective strategy for the normal development of language in infants and toddlers with hearing loss is early identification followed by appropriate intervention. If you have little or no experience working with a family whose child has hearing loss, there are many resources available to help.

<https://www.infanthearing.org/earlyintervention>

- Call the family to explain early intervention services and answer any questions they may have
- Schedule an intake visit

#### Develop an IFSP with the Family

The Virginia Department of Health Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program has a series of videos that can help you identify the steps you need to take. The first video takes you through the intake process and IFSP.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjYD8-3z\\_DU&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjYD8-3z_DU&feature=youtu.be)

Prior to the assessment for service planning

- Request all the needed information from the audiologist
- Determine who needs to be at the meeting, based on your facility requirements and the needs of the individual child

During the assessment for service planning

- Administer the assessment tool used by the local agency
- Share the results with the family
- Explain how the hearing loss may be affecting areas of the child's development

During the development of the IFSP

- Discuss language and communication choices with the family
- Provide unbiased descriptions of the communication options for parents to make their decision for their child

*Virginia's Resource Guide for Families of Children with Hearing Loss*

o <https://bit.ly/2MKB7Wj>

Beginnings for Families of Children Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

o <https://ncbegin.org/reference-chart/>

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As professionals work with the family, it is important to remember that the family has to make many unexpected decisions, and that time and patience are needed. The following article provides an example of the support that many parents need.

- <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/557498d6e4b046e672b1529e/t/5b2acc9370a6adabd07c28c5/1529531539961/What+it+Means+to+Hold+SpaceApril2018+Communicator.pdf>

### **Role of the Therapist**

- Discuss how language is developed
- Discuss amplification needs for each communication option
- Observation of the child and parents
- Discuss the role of parents and caregivers in the success of the child's language development
  - Care of amplification, if needed for the communication option they choose
  - Parents are the child's primary teacher
  - They will need to learn ASL or cued speech if that is the option they choose for their child
- Provide resources for the family
  - Web resources
  - Hand-outs
  - Videos
- Teaching
- Demonstrating skills
- Help the family learn to organize the child's environment to maximize visual exposure
- Provide a checklist of language development skills that are needed for the child's communication modality
- Have the family read and sing with their child every day for all modes of communication
- Make a plan with the family and use a progress sheet to track what needs to be worked on in between sessions
- Assess the child's progress every six months and develop a new IFSP based on the needs identified
- Prepare the family for the transition from Infant-Toddler to the school system (Part B)
- Successful parent/professional partnerships will provide a means of family support, as well as leading to better outcomes for the child

If the family has chosen a communication option that you have little or no experience with, there are many resources available to help.

<https://www.infanthearing.org/earlyintervention/importance.html>

The second video in the series provided by the VA EHDI Program provides tips and ideas if you are working with a family that has chosen ASL or cued speech for their child.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7djHs8ECsg8>

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The third video in the series from the VA EHDI Program provides information on listening and spoken language.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKKqvyW0zQg&t=43s>

Each family should have received a copy of *Virginia's Resource Guide* from VDH.

<https://bit.ly/2MKB7Wj>

If they did not receive one, please contact VA EHDI to request that the Resource Guide be sent to the family.

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/early-hearing-detection-and-intervention/contact-us/>