

STARTING POINTS FOR SERVICE COORDINATORS FOR CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS

This list is not meant to be all inclusive. Consider additions appropriate for the particular child and family you are serving. Be sure to obtain parental consent before contacting the audiologist or pediatrician and be mindful that some families may choose to share this information with you directly.

1. Connect with child's audiologist:
 - Type and degree of loss
 - Plans for amplification, cochlear implant (?)
 - Schedule for ongoing audiological visits
 - Any special concerns?

2. Connect with pediatrician
 - Review needs for additional assessments – especially vision
 - Referral to geneticist?

3. Determine eligibility for entitlements, based on family's financial situation
 - DPH Hearing aid program (for income eligible families). Info at Community Support Line at 1-800-882-1435
 - MassHealth/CommonHealth
 - Kaleigh Mulligan – info at Community Support Line 1-800-882-1435
 - Catastrophic Illness – info at Community Support Line 1-800-882-1435
 - SSI
 - WIC
 - Food Stamps

4. Review sections of UNHS Parent Information Kit with family. This is provided by the diagnosing audiologist. If the family does not have it, call Richard Wentworth at 617-624-5911 for a copy. The Kit contains information about the following services and is available in English and Spanish. Look in the Specialty Services section of the EI Policies Manual for additional information and referral forms.

Is the family interested in:

- Family Sign Language program?
- Referral to MCDHH Children's Specialist?

- Referral to Specialty Service Provider(s) for children with hearing loss?
List those in your area:

- Opportunity to talk with other parents of children with hearing loss? (Refer to Family Ties: 1-800-905-TIES (8437))
- Opportunity to talk with staff of Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program (Refer to: Richard Wentworth at 617-624-5911 or 1-800-882-1435 if they want to speak with a parent of children with hearing loss; Amarilys Triana at 617-994-9816 if they prefer to speak in Spanish)
- Interest in developing advocacy and leadership skills (Refer to EI Parent Leadership Project (877-353-4757))
- Other sources of information about hearing loss and communication options: web, books, videos

5. Keep tabs on:

- Whether family has received unbiased information about communication approaches for children with hearing loss
- Early language exposure
 - Is family providing a language rich environment?
 - Are both parents involved in whatever communication approaches are being used?
 - Are childcare providers involved if learning ASL? (RCP may be able to help with childcare provider training)
- How frequently the child is wearing hearing aids - is need for additional help indicated?
- Is parent able to troubleshoot the hearing aid?
- Periodic in-depth assessment of child's language development
- Referral to RCP or DPH Care Coordination if child has on-going significant medical issues
- Need for early referral to LEA
(might be time to reconnect with MCDHH Children's Specialists)
- Other adaptive equipment needs (e.g., FM system?)