

Virginia Early Hearing Detection Intervention Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 22, 2023, 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

In-Person Meeting

Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association

[4200 Innslake Dr, Glen Allen, VA 23060](#)

Meeting called to order at 10:01 A.M.

In attendance:

Advisory Members: Judy Alonzi, Lisa Eickel, Tracey Yurechko, Wanda Council, Valerie Abbott, Terese Urban, Kara Norcross, Lindsey Richard, Christine Eubanks, Marcus Allen, and Alison King

Interested Parties: Giannina Thornton, Emily Pastore, Elizabeth Allen, Amelia Schuster, and Nicole Hutchinson

VDH Staff: Christen Crews, Daphne Miller, Deepali Sanghani, Durga Mahapatra, Nikki Van

ASL Interpretation provided by: Bernice McCormick and Catherine Clough

Advisory Committee Business:

- Introductions/Roll Call – A quorum was not achieved.
- Review of Agenda
- Approval of June 2023 Meeting Minutes
 - Meeting minutes will be reviewed at the next meeting as a quorum was not present.
- Travel reimbursement was discussed; advisory members requesting travel reimbursement will be sent travel forms via DocuSign by noon today September 22, 2023.

Agency Updates:

Technical Assistance Center for Children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Submitted by: Tracey Yurechko

Mission: The Technical Assistance Center for Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing is funded by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to provide training and technical

assistance in the area of deafness and hearing loss. Assistance is available to local public school systems as well as state-operated programs including early intervention through the Virginia Network of Consultants for Professionals Working with Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VNOC) in areas such as identification, assessment (educational, psychological), communication of children across the spectrum of modalities (listening and spoken language, American Sign Language, Signed English, etc.), specific needs of children with amplification including cochlear implants, and instructional strategies.

Updates:

1. The Technical Assistance Center for Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing is funded by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to provide training and technical assistance in deafness and hearing loss. Assistance is available to local public school systems as well as state-operated programs, including early intervention through the Virginia Network of Consultants for Professionals Working with Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VNOC) in areas such as identification, assessment (educational, psychological, language), communication of children across the spectrum of modalities (visual-combination-spoken), specific needs of children with amplification including cochlear implants, and instructional strategies.
2. **Updates:**
 1. Opening Doors - Unlocking Potential 2023(ODUP 2023) was held on June 22-24, 2023, at the Marriott Short Pump in Glenn Allen, Virginia. ODUP 2023 was the first in-person event since 2018. There was a total of 92 participants in attendance. Wanda Council, Educational Specialist for Sensory Disabilities from the Virginia Department of Education, and Tracey Yurechko, TAC-DHH Project Director, presented the welcome. The plenary session by Dr. Jennifer Catalano was on *Explicit Contextualized Vocabulary Instruction-DHH*, with follow-up sessions that provided opportunities for hands-on implementation. During the two days, there were six concurrent sessions, with three presentations occurring in each session for thirteen sessions overall, with four repeated sessions. A roundtable provided shared lived experiences from several professionals in a group setting. Four presentations occurred during breaks, which provided an opportunity for participants to interact with exhibitors. Ten total exhibitors were in attendance. Planning for Opening Doors - Unlocking Potential 2024 will begin in the new year. .
 2. There are several future events to note:
 1. **Sensory AccessABILITIES: The Unconference**, October 9, 2023, 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM with Coffee and Connection from 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM, Lewis and Clark Exploratory Center, Charlottesville, VA. More information will be forthcoming.
 2. **The Science of Reading and Sensory Disabilities**, 3-part watch party, September 13, 2023, October 16, 2023, November 15, 2023 from 5:00 - 7:00 PM, Link to register: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMldOivpzMqHtWgZlkmVujr3XNBN8aIsCcW#/registration>

3. If you want to keep up with future events at the TAC-DHH, please complete the following form: <https://airtable.com/shrgJBAmME9gYXjWz> to receive our weekly newsletter.

DBHDS/Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia:

The DBHDS/Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia provided no new updates.

University of Virginia Hearing Aid Loan Bank:

Provided by: Sandra Woodward/Vertie Wade

Mission: To provide loaner hearing aids/FM systems for a period of 6 months – 1 year to infants and young children following a diagnosis of hearing loss while families secure funding for permanent aids.

Updates: The University of Virginia Hearing Aid Loan Bank provided no new updates.

VDH Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN):

Submitted by: Marcus Allen

Mission: To support children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) include all children who “have or are at increased risk for chronic physical, developmental, behavioral or emotional conditions **and** who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.”

Updates: The Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program recently published results from a transition survey with the help of staff from Population Health Data. The survey results may be found at the link below.

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/62/2023/07/Youth-Transition-Survey-Results.pdf>

Center for Family Involvement @ VCU-Family to Family

Submitted by: Irene Schmalz

Updates:

Family to Family Support

- Twenty (20) families were referred by the EHDI program to the CFI Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Information collected from was entered into VISITS shared plan of care

Deaf/Hard of Hearing Family Educator updates

- The 1-3-6 Family Educators decided to change their name to Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Family educators meet every quarter (next meeting will be October/November)

Family Materials:

- A postcard about “If your baby did not pass the hearing screening” has been completed with QR codes and links for social media, group support, 1:1 support and resources. The postcard can be handed out in hard copy or can be emailed or texted
- The CFI served on the VA SELLR-DHH to discuss language milestones for young children who are deaf/hard of hearing. The CFI is partnering with the Virginia Departments of Education, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities to compile a new family resource guide based on the ‘orange’ and ‘green’ family resource guides. In addition, videos and one pagers will be developed to supplement the new resource guide

Direct any questions to Irene Schmalz at ischmalz@vcu.edu

Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind (VSDB):

Submitted by: Lindsey Richard

Updates:

The VSDB held a presentation at Connect for Success conference. Virtual PALS is a program that connects older students to younger students. Age range includes some younger children as young as 2-3 years of age but main focus is around school aged children.

VSDB hosted our first audiometry and OAE training for the Lions Clubs of Virginia on August 4th.

The Lions Clubs are well known for their vision screenings in schools, but have also provided hearing screenings too. Their hearing screenings ended when Covid began, and most of the clubs that provided the screenings prior to the pandemic have not gotten back into the school systems. Our goal with the training was to give them a refresher on their current audiometry skills and teach them about the option of OAEs so they can get back into the schools again.

Valerie Abbott, Robin Bliven, and myself held the training on VSDB's campus. We had 12 Lions Club members in attendance. They came from various parts of Virginia, including Roanoke, Rural Retreat, Amherst, and Wytheville. Their experience with hearing screenings varied from no previous experience to actively screening hearing. We had two additional audiologists assist in training the Lions members: Natalie Nunez from Prince William County, and Lindsay Roberts from e3diagnostics. The training included an educational presentation as well as hands on experience and training with audiometry and OAE equipment. The Lions Clubs of Virginia own three mobile screening RVs. They brought one to the training and we were all able to check that out.

Virginia Department of Education

Submitted by: Wanda Council

Mission: The mission of the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is to advance equitable and innovative learning.

Updates:

- Pursuant to new Virginia legislation (§ 22.1-217.04) implemented in July 2022, the VDOE collaborated with the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and the Department for Behavioral Health and Developmental Services on the development and implementation of the Virginia Supplemental Early Language and Literacy Resources for Deafness/Hard of Hearing (VA SELLR-DHH) Project. During the 2022-23 school year, the members of the VA SELLR-DHH Project advisory committee assisted with the selection of language developmental milestones resources that can assist the parents of young children (ages birth-five years) who are deaf or hard of hearing with monitoring and tracking their child's receptive and expressive language acquisition and developmental stages toward English literacy. A parent resource guide is currently under development. The advisory committee members also assisted with the selection of several language assessment and evaluation tools for professionals to use when evaluating the receptive and expressive language skills of young children who are deaf and hard of hearing. Materials and training in the use of those resources will be offered for professionals during the 2023-24 school year.
- The Virginia Guidelines for Early Childhood Inclusion have been revised. This guidance document is designed to assist Virginia's school divisions and early childhood communities in identifying, developing, and sustaining inclusive opportunities within high-quality early childhood programs for young children with disabilities. The revised guidelines contain updates to the research supporting early childhood inclusion and an enhanced section on measuring quality in inclusive classrooms.
- Smooth transitions from Early Intervention (Part C) to Early Childhood Special Education (Part B) are very important for children and families and require collaboration between sending and receiving programs. The VDOE updated the Transition from Early Intervention to Early Childhood Special Education Q&A Document with the most recent guidance for programs supporting transitioning students

Virginia Project for Children and Youth with Deaf-Blindness:

Submitted by: Ira Padhye

Mission: The Virginia Project for Children and Young Adults with Deaf-Blindness (VDBP) is committed to supporting families, teachers, and service providers in their endeavors to improve

outcomes for children and youth who experience both vision and hearing loss. Through providing technical assistance, training, and information, we aspire to improve the quality of life for people with deaf-blindness as they live in their homes, learn in their schools, socialize in their communities and access the services they choose.

Updates:

- We received news in June 2023 that we have been funded for another 5 years! Thank you to all our agency partners for their letters of support.
- We hosted a Transition Retreat weekend in June 2023 for 5 families of middle school and high school aged students who are deafblind and their families. Families had their own separate sessions that were run by our Family Engagement Specialist, Dawn Snow, where she supported the families through topics such as supported decision making and guardianship. The young adults were paired with deafblind mentors who supported the young adults as they thought about life after high school. We do have pictures up on Facebook and Instagram from the weekend that we encourage you all to check out.
- We are moving offices with the Partnership for People with Disabilities. In October, we will be moving to One Holland Place (2235 Staples Mill Road; SUITE 400, Richmond, VA 23230).
- We supported 2 families to attend the National CHARGE Conference in Orlando, FL.
- The National Center on Deaf blindness released a new module for professionals titled, "Early Intervention for Children who are Deafblind".
- The Virginia Deafblind Project is collaborating with the Technical Center for Children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Outreach Services at the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind, to host our 2nd annual Sensory AccessABILITIES: The Unconference on Monday October 9th from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm at the Lewis and Clark Exploratory Center in Charlottesville, VA.

Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH):

Submitted by: Eric Raff

Mission: The Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH) promotes accessible communication so that persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing may fully participate in programs, services, and opportunities throughout the Commonwealth.

Updates:

Executive Management

VDDHH Advisory Board – The Advisory Board met on Wednesday May 3 at the VDDHH conference room. The Board received program managers’ and board members’ reports. The

Board received the final version of the “Smart Device App Guide” publication. Rhonda Jeter gave an overview of the budgetary process. Director Raff acknowledged Carrie Humphrey and Roy Martin for each having served (2) 4-year terms for a total of eight (8) years on the board.

Human Resources – Kristin Obeck started in the Administrative Assistant position on May 10th. Sharon Ellis Sandoval resigned as the Deaf Mentor Coordinator. VDDHH conducted interviews for the Deaf Mentor Coordinator and the Support Service Provider Coordinator wage positions. VDDHH is still recruiting for a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Regional Specialist serving the Richmond region. Next position is the Policy Analyst position which should be posted sometime later.

The Virginia Higher Education Accessibility Partners (VHEAP) – Director Raff is working with the VHEAP Captioning Work Group to promote post-production captioning, live captioning, remote captioning, audio description (for the blind) to executive agencies as well as review vendors’ quarterly reports. <https://vheap.org/vheap-captioning-initiative/> VHEAP also hosted an unConference at UVA last June.

HB649-SB265 relating to Language Milestones & Assessments of D/HH - Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) is the lead agency and established an advisory committee, “Virginia Supplemental Early Language and Literary Resources for Deafness and Hard of Hearing (VA SELLR-DHH)” to identify language milestones as a resource for parents and language assessment tools as resource for professionals. VDDHH (Eric Raff, Director) and Department for Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) (Teri Nelligan, Infant-Toddler Connection early intervention) is to advise and consult with VDOE (Wanda Council), supporting this initiative. VA SELLR-DHH advisory committee is tasked to identify, review and recommend the milestones and assessments to the three agencies. The final committee meeting was held May 4 to review several recommendations and last June 5, the three agencies made the final selections. A report was released at the end of June and a copy is included. <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/programs-services/special-education/specificdisabilities/sensory-disabilities/deaf-hard-of-hearing/va-sellr-dhh-project-advisory-committee> General information pertaining to the VA SELLR-DHH Advisory Committee is available at the VDOE website: VA SELLR-DHH Advisory Committee

Credentialing Interpreters in Legal Settings – Director Raff continue to facilitate a workgroup comprising of national subject matter experts related to legal interpreting including two key people: Star Grieser, Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) CEO and Bob Lichtenberg, Washington State Administrator of the Courts Interpreter Coordinator. The workgroup are exploring how to reinstate the knowledge and performance testing that will allow Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf to award Specialist Certification in Legal Interpreting (SC:L). Director Raff has been facilitating Zoom meetings on a monthly basis (4/21, 5/19, and 6/21). The

workgroup has been focusing on funding to develop the tests and accreditation processes. The first step is to fund and develop the Job Task Analysis (JTA) of legal interpreters which will provide the foundation for test development. An update about the workgroup will be shared during the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf conference when Legal Interpreters meet.

Department of Justice (DOJ) Steve Gordon, DOJ Assistant Attorney General invited Director Raff to join a webinar, “ADA Effective Communication Requirements in Healthcare Settings.” Director Raff was on a panel of people with disabilities sharing their experiences of facing barriers in healthcare settings. Karen Brimm, Interpreter Services manager was also invited on a panel of providers explaining what services are available. The webinar was broadcast to an audience of healthcare professionals, hospitals & clinics, federal, state and local government officials, and others. Approximately 2,000 people attended.

Virginia Relay

Digital Equity Act and Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) – ACP is a program under the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) postcards have been sent to the D/HH Regional Specialists for them to share in their regions. A Case Study for DHCD is almost complete (due August 1, 2023) which will provide funding that will be used for additional outreach efforts focused on the analog to digital transition. Some of these efforts include but are not limited to:

- Create videos/vlogs that explain the impact of the analog to digital transition for Relay users with specific focus on TTY users.
- Hosting of in-person and virtual townhall meetings and webinars geared towards educating relay users on their options for telecommunication services once analog lines are no longer available.
- Create resources documents (to be mailed and/or distributed during townhall meetings) that provide relay users with the options available in their areas once analog services are no longer available.
- Interpreting and CART services needed for townhalls and webinars.

Department of Social Services (DSS) Call Centers – VDDHH is partnering with DSS to improve telecommunication access to DSS call centers. The following activities have been planned:

1. Relay Partner training to all current DSS call centers.
2. Assisting DSS with adding language to their upcoming RFP for call center vendors to ensure that Relay Partner training is a requirement for all call centers.
3. In conjunction with Community Services who will provide training regarding accommodations for in person visits, VA Relay will provide Relay training. This training is for all local DSS offices.

4. Provide DSS local offices with TAP resource information to be readily available for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind DSS consumers who may qualify for equipment through TAP

Technology Assistance Program (TAP)

Online TAP Application - We are working to make the TAP application process available online for consumers. We met with IT to discuss the feasibility, potential security risks, security measures that can be implemented to safeguard the consumers information and how the online application can be routed to the appropriate Specialist.

Tablets – In the previous quarterly report, we were planning to add tablets into the TAP program by the third quarter of FY23. However, we learned that there is Federal program available which provides individuals with a tablet for \$10.99 and free internet services. This program is offered through a vendor called 360 Empower. Right now, we are working with them on drafting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for services. Once that has been drafted, it will be submitted to procurement for approval. However, before we can begin drafting the MOU, Empower 360 is working on identifying specific requirements needed to be able to work with state Equipment Distribution Programs.

Smart Apps - At the request of the VDDHH Advisory Board, the TAP has developed a guide/list of smart apps individuals can download for communication access. The final version was released to the public and is available on VDDHH website.

Interpreter Services Program (ISP) Promoting Equity in Healthcare Interpreting (PEHI) – VDDHH is continuing to participate in the Promoting Equity in Healthcare Interpreting (<https://www.isu.edu/pehi/>) project. PEHI is funded by a 5-year federal Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) grant and is conducted by Idaho State University and Gallaudet University in partnership. VDDHH is one of several partnering state agencies (PSAs) collaborating to provide training and expand the pool of sign language interpreters in healthcare settings. Several sign language interpreters from Virginia were in the first cohort and completed the training. Some of them are now participating in mentorship opportunities in healthcare settings. Of note, one of the state agencies partnering on the project withdrew, so the PEHI team informed VDDHH that there would be room in the program for second (2nd) Virginia cohort to begin training during summer 2023, whereas previously Virginia was not slated to have an additional cohort until 2024.

Supreme Court of Virginia - Regarding the Supreme Court of Virginia's effort to hire three staff interpreters and one CART provider, the Office of the Executive Secretary and ADA Coordinator's office and the Court's Foreign Language Services published job postings for staff

interpreter and CART positions. Interviewing or hiring has not occurred yet. VDDHH would coordinate assignments for these court staff members according to our updated MOU with the Supreme Court.

Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VOAS)

Testing rooms - New furniture has been installed in both testing rooms to replace old/dilapidated tables, chairs, television stands, and tripods. One testing room was repainted to provide an improved background and lighting appearance for candidate filming.

Community Services

Deaf Mentor (DM) Project 32 families are being served throughout the Commonwealth. VDDHH had already experienced some Deaf Mentor turnover due to relocation out of state and families had to be reassigned. VDDHH provided additional training to Deaf Mentors on April 14-15. VDDHH staff and some Deaf Mentor families attended the American Society for Deaf Children conference held in Williamsburg, VA last June.

Support Service Provider (SSP) Pilot Project Update: The collaborative SSP Work Group of Lynn Odom, Carrie Humphries, and Paige Berry of Reynolds Community College (RCC) and, Elizabeth Spiers of the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) met 2-3 hours weekly at VDDHH office to discuss and develop SSP curriculum development with Reynolds Community College. SSP recruitment resulted in 19 SSP positions filled. The 5-week online training for SSPs began July 5, 2023, with all 19 SSPs successfully registering with Reynolds Community College. DeafBlind candidates were carefully considered with a final 15 selected.

Virginia Hands & Voices:

Submitted by: Terese Urban

Mission: Virginia Hands & Voices is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), parent-driven organization. We are dedicated to supporting families with children who are deaf and hard-of-hearing without bias around communication modes or methodology. Virginia Hands & Voices provides parents with the resources, networks, and information they need to improve communication access and educational outcomes for their children.

Updates:

Virginia Hands & Voices board members are excited to begin planning the fall calendar now that school is back in session and summer vacation is behind us. Before we paused for the summer, we made many good connections at the Opening Doors Unlocking Potential

conference in Richmond as a presenter, exhibitor, and planning team member. It was a delight to meet so many supportive educators who are committed to the success of our deaf and hard of hearing children.

Looking ahead to our fall virtual and in-person events:

- General Membership Meeting for current 2023 members via Zoom - September 20 at 8:30 pm
- Exhibitor at Celebrate Communication 2023 in Springfield Mall Town Center, Springfield – September 23
- Teri Urban and Dr. Karen Woolman will attend the national Hands & Voices Leadership Conference in Grand Rapids, MI – late September
- Partner with the American Red Cross during Fire Prevention Week to host a Family Engagement webinar while offering free specialized smoke alarms to all those in need – October 10 or 11
- In-person event celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month in Alexandria or Woodbridge – October 14
- Parents/Professionals Night Out (mid-week) in Richmond and Northern VA – October/early November
- Let's Support the Siblings! virtual discussion for siblings of DHH children – early November
- Partner with Brita Hampton at Virginia Beach Public Schools to host a social event – date and location TBD
- Possible social event at Discovery Museum – Harrisonburg, time TBD

We received five requests this past quarter for Family Mentoring which were conducted over Zoom with Virginia Hands & Voices Board members. These requests come from our website, pediatricians, audiologists, Facebook, and other Hands & Voices chapters.

We are very excited to announce a new initiative to connect, support and provide resources to the Hispanic/Latino/Latinx community. We have welcomed Shalimar Alio to our team who brings a background in Communications and a passion for helping others in her community. Once her daughter was diagnosed with a severe hearing loss and received cochlear implants, she shifted her energy to help others who share her same journey. Our social events will be held in the Arlington/Alexandria/Woodbridge area until we identify other Hispanic parent leaders in other regions. We have been working on a Spanish Resources tab on our website and are in the process of translating other materials into Spanish. This has been a goal of our Chapter for years and we are ecstatic to finally be able to provide this support to families in Virginia.

EHDI Updates - D. Miller, D. Sanghani, D. Mahapatra, N. Van

- EHDI Team Updates

- A Grant Specialist position was filled by Durga Mahapatra in July 2023.
- The Follow-Up Specialist and cCMV Follow-Up Specialist positions are currently vacant.
- VA EHDI will be holding a 2024 EHDI Conference. Additional information will be provided to stakeholders in the coming months.
 - The VA EHDI Team is looking for a parent of a DHH child to represent them at the National EHDI Conference. If anyone is interested, please send an email to VA EHDI- va_ehdi@vdh.virginia.gov.
- HRSA & CDC PPILLS grant information:
 - The Notice of Funding Opportunity is out for the HRSA grant and the EHDI team is preparing to submit an application in November 2023.
 - The program has received a Notice of Award for a new CDC grant funding opportunity to support CMV screening in Virginia.
- HRSA NOFO
 - Funding dates: April 1, 2024- March 31, 2029 Application due date: November 6, 2023.
 - The grant will focus on improving language acquisition outcomes, improving education & increasing collaboration with stakeholders and expanding EHDI-IS capacity and improving data interoperability.
- CDC Pregnant People Infant Linked Longitudinal Surveillance Grant
 - Funding date: September 30, 2023 to September 29, 2028
 - Focus is enhancing EHDI-IS and follow-up to capture CMV referrals and outcomes and conduct longitudinal analysis and stakeholder engagement and education.
- VA EHDI Draft Newsletters to Stakeholders
 - Newsletters were created for stakeholders (hospitals, birthing centers, cCMV providers, audiologists, primary care providers, and early interventionists) with information such as VISITS access, current protocols and practices, and helpful resources.
 - The EHDI team plans to send the newsletters out Fall 2023.
- iPad Parent REDCap Survey Results 2023
 - REDCap surveys were sent out to 97 parents who received an iPad from the EHDI iPad program that launched in 2020 to assist children, who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, in literacy and language development, communication, and provide access to telehealth.
 - 28 parents (75.7%) reported that their iPad allowed their child to learn language acquisition (American Sign Language, Listening and Spoken Language, Cued Speech, etc.)
 - 35 parents (94.6%) believe that the iPad has made an impact in their child's learning.

- Having access to learning applications has expanded their child's vocabulary.
 - Learning experience in a home environment through speech therapy sessions.
 - Watching and learning from interactive videos by imitating and copying what is seen.
- Resource packets are mailed to children who are diagnosed with a permanent hearing loss with the following information:
 - Follow-up letter with next steps
 - SPOC for families
 - Virginia's Resource Guide for Families of Children with Hearing Loss
 - Family to Family Network of Virginia brochure
 - Care Connections for Children brochure
 - Virginia Hearing Aid Loan Bank brochure
 - American Sign Language Resources in Virginia
 - Sign It! Free ASL classes flyer
 - Family event flyers (as available)
- Follow-Up Data, 2020-2023
 - In 2022, there were 123 children diagnosed with permanent hearing loss. The EHDI team sends those families around 752 letters, 457 calls, 210 automated robo calls, and 472 text messages.
- Referral Data, 2020-2022
 - Each year, the EHDI team refers almost 100% of the infants diagnosed with hearing loss to early intervention services with the Infant and Toddler Connection. Only the children living out of state are not referred to services.
 - The most common referral, aside from referral to early intervention providers, is to otolaryngologists. In 2022, 34% of infants with hearing loss were referred to otolaryngologists.
- Outcome Data, 2020-2022
 - Of the 42 children who were referred to otolaryngologists, 40.5% received services. 66% of those children were referred to family-to-family services and enrolled, which is the highest percent enrollment out of the referrals.
- Communications Data, 2020-2022
 - Of the 123 children with hearing loss, 30.9% of children discussed other communication options.
 - 14.6% of the 123 children were fitted for hearing aids and one child received a cochlear implant.

- Postpartum Support Virginia is a non-profit dedicated to maternal mental health in VA, providing resources & support.
- Mission: To educate families, healthcare providers, and communities about Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs) and to provide resources to help new or expecting mothers and their families overcome PMADs.
- A majority of the services provided to clients are by referrals through the community.
- The warmline is a crisis line if individuals need direct support, are overwhelmed, or just want to chat.
- Returning to in-person support groups start taking off in Roanoke and Hampton Roads
- Care coordination helps families connect with mental health providers, doulas, or other support services.
- The Peer Mentors program pairs individuals with a trained volunteer who has recovered from a perinatal mental health issue for one-on-one support
- Shelane's Fund provides financial assistance to offset the cost of mental health care or other services needed to heal from a perinatal mental health state.
- Postpartum Support Virginia offers care coordination, support groups, local resources, and peer support for Spanish-speaking families.
- Recently acquired a case management system.
- People-of-color providers are eligible for a training scholarship.
- Contact information and resources:
 - Postpartumva.org
 - Warmline: 703-829-7152
 - Email: care@postpartumva.org

Family Support Organizations

Grafton Special Services program – J. Alonzi

- Developed through Infant Toddler Connection for underserved communities in Virginia.
- The program is working to reach out to every early interventionist agency (40) in the state to connect children to early intervention services, including vision.
- The program provides telehealth services in Southwest Virginia, due to a lack of therapists in the area.

Center for Family Involvement

- The Center for Family Involvement will share updates and information at a future EHDI Advisory meeting.

VA Hands & Voices – T. Urban and G. Thornton

- Mission: Virginia Hands & Voices is a non-profit, parent-driven organization made up of families and professionals. We are unbiased about communication methodologies and

believe that families can make the best choices for their child if they have access to good information and support.

- National Organization
 - Chapters in 38 states, 3 provinces in Canada, and 1 chapter in Africa.
 - Founded in Colorado, 1996.
- VA Hands & Voices provides local outreach by doing the following:
 - Provide parents with helpful resources, networks, and information.
 - Create social opportunities & outreach activities for parents, children, & professionals.
 - Offer outreach activities and parent/professional collaboration.
 - Provide virtual learning opportunities.
 - Help parents improve communication access and educational outcomes.
 - Connect families to local organizations and programs where they live.
 - Network with state agencies, stakeholders and nonprofits to uncover opportunities and build relationships.
- Collaborations
 - Virginia Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (VA EHDI)
 - Virginia Deaf Blind project
 - Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH)
 - Partnership for People with Disabilities
 - Virginia Department of Education
 - The Virginia School for the Deaf & the Blind
 - Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (VA DARS)
- What parents want from VA Hands & Voices:
 - Support in school system
 - IEP advocates and IFSP/IEP support
 - Deaf Mentor Support
 - Connect with other families of DHH children
 - Resources for families to learn ASL
 - Cochlear implant discussions and decisions
 - Social opportunities for teens/tweens
- VA Hands & Voices have received nine requests for Family Mentoring since January 2023.
- 2023 events – 12 virtual, exhibiting & in-person were hosted by VA Hands and Voices.
 - In 2022, 50 deaf adults, 175 professionals, and 350 families participated in events with VA Hands and Voices.
- Contact information for Virginia Hands & Voices:
 - www.vahandsandvoices.com
 - vahandsandvoices@gmail.com
 - (804) 404-3352

- Facebook and Instagram: Virginia Hands & Voices
- National Hands & Voices www.handsandvoices.org

Families to Families – E. Allen

- Families to Families provides support to families of deaf and hard-of-hearing children in the Tidewater region of Virginia.
- Families to Families was developed in January 2013 as a small support organization that would host four meetings every year.
 - Families share with one another informally and in parent discussion groups.
- Connects families to: other families, hearing siblings of D/HH children, the deaf community & deaf adults, volunteers, resources, agencies, and partners.
- Families to families supports the entire family at events and promotes all modalities of communication with the goal that children are receiving some language input.
- Volunteers from the deaf community and Interpreter training programs and speech and language students from Old Dominion University help make these events from families to families possible.
- Resources are shared with families at events including books, ASL virtual videos, resources lists and handouts.
- Families are connected to these agencies and partners:
 - Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind (VSDB)
 - Virginia Hands & Voices
 - Interpreters and teachers from area schools
 - Virginia’s Deaf Mentor Program
 - PEATC provided an IEP workshop
 - Presentation of VRS and communication devices from Sorenson and the Endependence Center
 - Virginia Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (VA EHDI)
- A typical agenda for the events for families to families includes activities for the young and old, story time signed in ASL with voice interpreter, a snack and then a parent discussion.
- Contact information and resources:
 - www.families2families.weebly.com
 - lizzyad@msn.com

Next Steps

The next advisory committee meeting date will be determined based on the Virginia EHDI Conference in January 2024. Date TBD.

Public Comment

VA EHDI staff remained on site until 2:00 PM to allow opportunity for public comment. However, no public comments were received.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned early at 12:23 P.M