

Micro-Mentoring in Early Intervention

Making Important Connections

Alex Mestres, MSEd

Theo Valles-Picon



So glad you to be here!!!

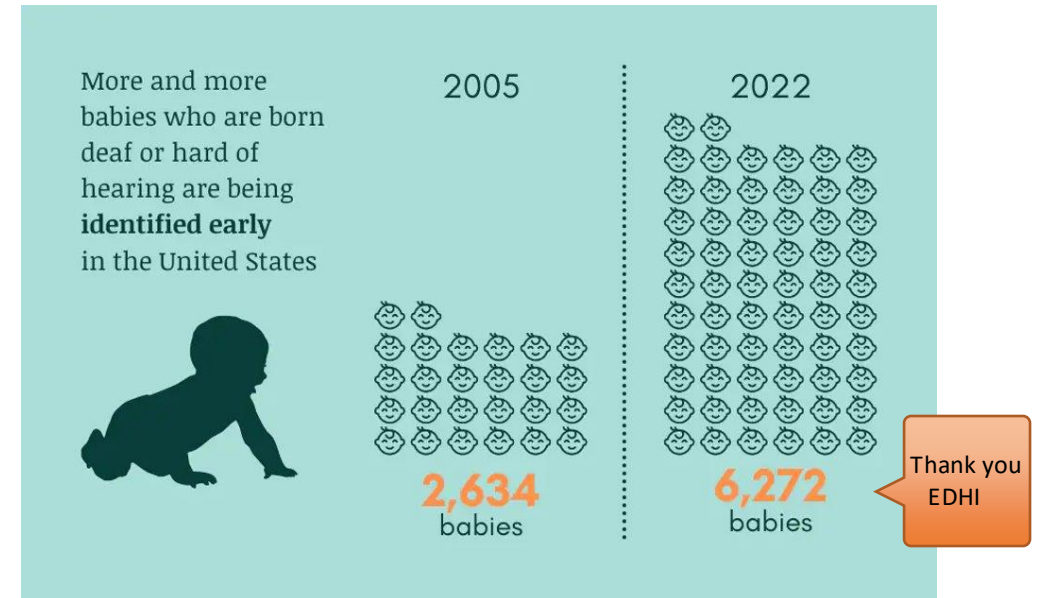
- BAEd in Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and Elementary Education.
MSEd in Applied Learning Sciences.
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist for the University of Miami Children's Hearing Program.
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist for various charter schools across six counties in Florida.



Alex Mestres

Some facts...

- After diagnosis, it often becomes the parents and caregivers role to become the educational advocate for their child.
- Parents who take an active role in their young students' academic life can help boost grades, test scores and motivation (Shumow & Miller, 2001).
- Hearing loss is a low incident disability.
- Many early interventionist and teachers that are working with these students have little to no experience working with children that have any degree of hearing loss.



About 2 to 3 out of every 1,000 children in the United States are born with a detectable level of hearing loss in one or both ears.

Children with disabilities (regardless of the disability) benefit when they have early and/or consistent educational intervention and supports on a long term basis.

Children with hearing loss are no different.



First things first...the diagnosis...

- Parents can get caught-up in stereotypes.
- Parents are overwhelmed by the information or lack of information.
- Parents are dealing with cultural and familial boundaries.
- Parents are grieving.
- They need time off of work to make everything happen.



Expectations of Parents

Understand medical aspects of hearing loss.

Understand the impact of hearing loss.

Understand amplification.

Understand access.

Begin to process the need for support.



Understand educational impact of hearing loss.

Understand eligibility and identification process.

Understand potential outcomes.

Understand academic choices.

Understand available supports and services.

Children's Hearing Program

**CHRISANDA SANCHEZ, AUD
IVETTE CEJAS, PHD**

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI EAR INSTITUTE
DEPARTMENT OF OTOLARYNGOLOGY
HEAD & NECK SURGERY

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
MILLER SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

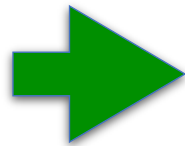


3 Otolaryngologists and surgeons.

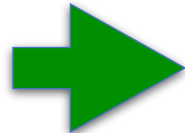
4 Pediatric Audiologist working with: Hearing Aids, BaHa, and Cochlear Implants.

Multi-Disciplinary Family Service Team

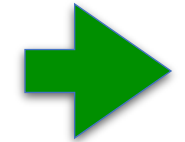
2 AVT Therapists



Psychologist and interns



Social Workers



Patient Navigator

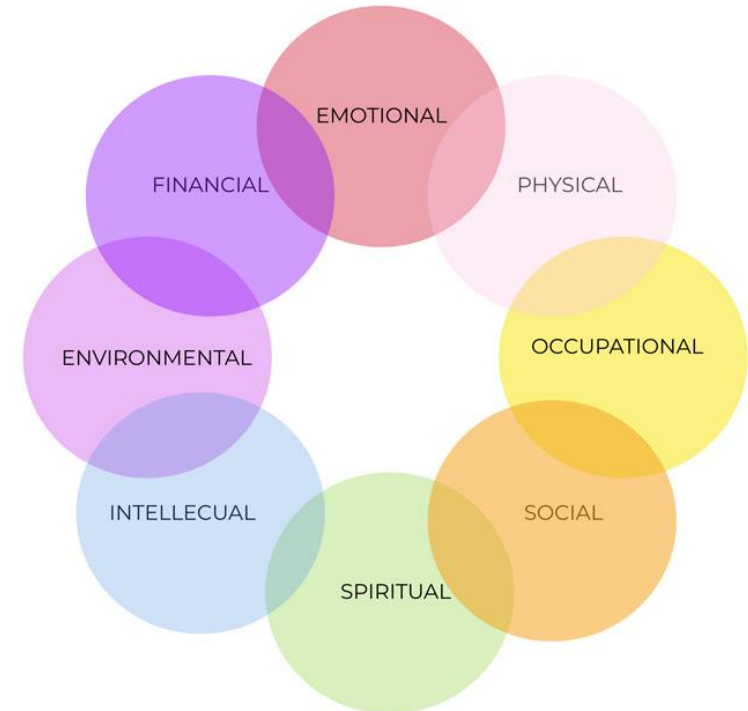


Educational Specialist

Families needs are not one dimensional...

What clinicians know (interventionist too)...

Early intervention alone does not ensure that a child with hearing loss will meet developmental and academic milestones.



Are there families out there that look like us?

Hands and Voices

When defining what mentors said:

“Deaf and hard of hearing (d/hh) mentors, guides or role models are uniquely qualified to provide the child, parents and professionals with a **positive and hopeful perspective from their day-to-day, real life experiences as a d/hh person living in a hearing world**. In sharing these experiences and insights, d/hh mentors may be able to articulate what the child cannot, which brings an important perspective and credibility to the team discussion of the child’s needs which can extend beyond academics.”

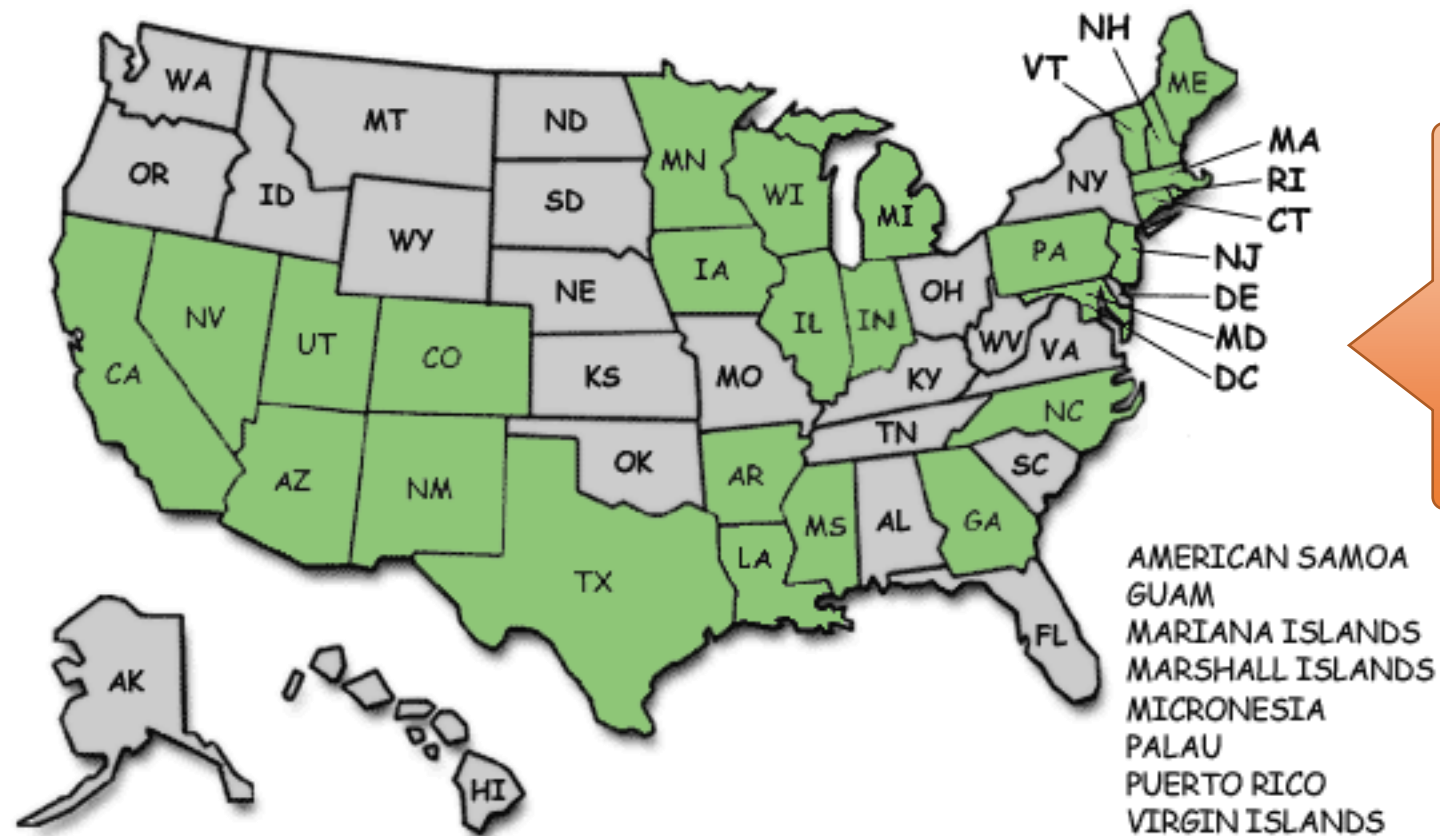


Olson, S., *Deaf and Hard of Hearing Mentors & Role Models* What role can adults who are deaf or hard of hearing play in Communication Considerations? <https://handsandvoices.org/comcon/articles/mentorsRolemodels.htm>

Mentoring supports positive outcomes?

- Supports language development.
- Supports family centered approach.
- Supports shared experiences.
- Reduces stress and anxiety for families.
- Supports families to become advocates for what they need.





Thanks again
EHD!

<https://www.infanthearing.org/dhhadultinvolvement/states/index.html>

The challenges for clinic families...

- Time and commitment.
- Immediacy of need.
- Location.
- Like models.

Where are the children and families just like mine?



How can we solve the
problem at the clinic level?

Let's meet Theo!

- Hearing aid user until 2016 when he received his first CI then the second in 2018.
- Senior at Ransom Everglades, a top private school in Miami.
- Accepted at multiple universities across the country.
- Attended LOFT.
- Under Armor's Athlete You Didn't See Coming for water polo and crew.
- Testified at both the state and federal level about access to better hearing health.
- Congressional Page in the Florida House.
- Ask to attend: Achieve Anything: Global Summit in London.



An idea was born...

Create a program that engages young adults to act as short-term mentors in order to support clinic families that have young children with hearing loss.



What would it look like?

Mentors

- Would need to be over the age of 17 and commit to a 1 time training session.
- Would need to represent diversity in hearing loss including communication modality.
- Would need to be committed to at least two meetings with a family they matched with. The meetings could be virtual or in person.
- Would have the option to continue the relationship at their own discretion.
- Would need to be willing to answer families questions about their personal hearing loss journey.

Families

- Would want to participate in program.
- Would need to fill out an interest form including information on their child's hearing loss journey.
- Would need to fill out a pre-questionnaire for the mentor.
- Would need to commit to at least 1 session with the mentor.

From the family side...



The Hearing Loss Journey
Does your child have hearing loss?

Do you ask yourself: what does the future hold in store for my child?

Do you wish you had someone to talk with that can share their experiences?

Join Us and meet a hearing loss mentor!
Connect with a young adult that has hearing loss. These mentors and their families have traveled down your road and they are ready to answer your questions. Click on the QR code below. Fill out a brief informational survey and get matched as well as connected with one of our mentors.



(Mentoring session can last approximately 1 hour.)

97 words

Families that are interested in participating will receive a flyer from the clinic.

A QR code will link the family to the application.

Families can fill out and submit the application on line through Google documents.

Families are matched with a mentor and sessions begin.

Mentoring Project Application

Parent's Name: _____
E-Mail: _____
Phone Number: _____
Address: _____

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____
Preferred modality: ☐ Listen and Spoken language ☐ American Sign Language
☐ Cued Speech ☐ combination of modalities

Does your child currently have any hearing loss devices: ☐ Y ☐ N
☐ Hearing Aid(s). ☐ Cochlear Implant(s) ☐ BaHa ☐ bi-modal
☐ bi-lateral. ☐ unilateral ☐ sensorineural ☐ conductive

What else should we know about your child's hearing loss:

What questions do you have about your child's hearing loss journey?

From the mentor side...

All mentors filled out an information application.

15 mentors were recruited including:
CI, HA, and BAHA users, LSL and ASL users

All met individually or in small groups to discuss best practices with families and expectations.

Mentors would be matched with family based on hearing loss, amplification and communication style.

Mentor Information Application

Mentor's Name: _____

E-Mail: _____

Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____ Age: _____

Preferred modality: ☐ Listen and Spoken language ☐ American Sign Language

☐ Cued Speech ☐ combination of modalities

Does you currently have any amplification devices: Y____ N____

☐ Hearing Aid(s) ☐ Cochlear Implant(s) ☐ BaHa ☐ bi-modal

☐ bi-lateral ☐ unilateral ☐ sensorineural ☐ conductive

What else should we know about your hearing loss journey:

Are you willing to answer family's questions about your hearing loss? ☐ yes ☐ no

Do you understand that you will be asked to do the following:

- Commit to at least 2 meetings with a family you have been matched with not lasting more than 1 hour.
- Participate in an informational session (approx. 45 min) on expectations and best practices for working with families.
- Answer questions about your personal hearing loss journey.
- Participate with families either in person or via Zoom meeting.
 - We will set up the Zoom meeting for security.

We sincerely appreciate your time and effort in supporting families that are new to the hearing loss journey.

Signature: _____



New steps and challenges moving forward...

- Making a clinic wide effort.
- Educating providers on program.
- Finding mentors that represent language diversity.
- Maintaining engagement of mentors.
- Recruiting mentors with unilateral hearing loss.
- Engaging families with hard of hearing children.
- Sustainability of program.



In conclusion...

- Overall the results are positive.
- Families are benefitting from the connections being made.
- Can be done on a small scale.
- Mentors can be found in the clinic or in the community.
- The time commitment from family and mentor is “doable.”
- Virtual platform makes accessible.
- Connections are able to be made in a short amount of time.
- This is a model that can be used in any clinic.

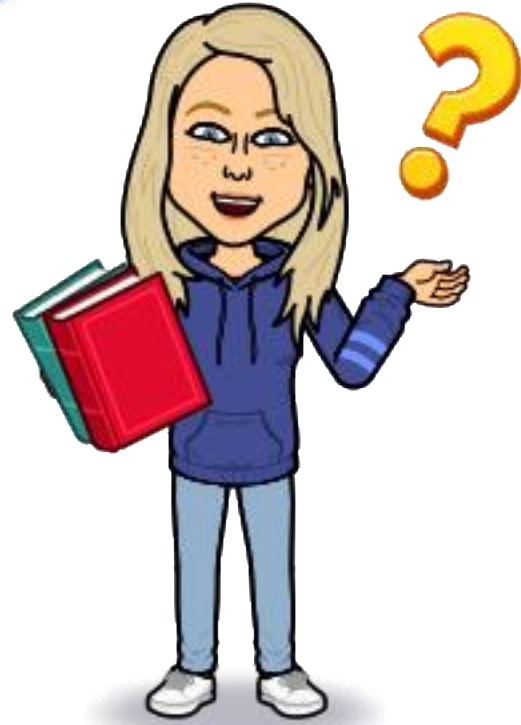


Resources...

- [Hands and Voices Involvement Guide](#)
- [EHDI Resources for Mentoring](#)
- [Ski-Hi Mentoring](#)
- [DeafConnect](#)
- [Mentoring Needs Assessment](#)
- [Mentoring: Benefits to Families](#)



Any Questions?



Thank you!



Alex Mestres MEd
asm120@med.miami.edu