

Using Social Media as a Tool to Spread Awareness of Deaf Education Services

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INTRODUCTION

Best practice recommendations emphasize the importance of connecting families to early intervention services and other support systems. Recent studies show the effectiveness of using social media and electronic mass communication to support these connections. Social media can provide up-to-date information and create a culture of parent and professional cohesion. Through the creation of these targeted social media accounts, programs can offer additional information for parents, professionals and future professionals regarding deaf education services. This can facilitate unity and stronger connections between the team members that serve children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH).

The Utah State University (USU) Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) social media accounts were created to:

1. Inform prospective graduate students of the breadth of LSL training options available in traditional campus-based training and in distance education options.
2. Inform families of services in Sound Beginnings, such as early intervention, toddler group, preschool, individual therapy, kindergarten, and pediatric audiology; and to help families develop connections with other families across the country.
3. Inform parents and professionals of the availability of tele-intervention therapy services. This provides an option for families to receive services from professionals with LSL expertise regardless of their location.

I like connecting on Instagram or FaceBook with other parents of children with microtia. It's been nice to connect with people all over the U.S. to ask questions. – Mother, Preschool

My child will come home and tell me we sang this song in class. Then I like when the teacher posted what they did in class, so if I don't understand what he said I can get information that helps me work on it at home. – Mother, Kindergarten

It's nice to see ideas and see what's out there. Once I started following our school on Instagram, I saw other accounts that were following our school or that our school was following that have given me even more ideas of things to work on. Mother, Early Intervention

I appreciate the LSL account because it exposes graduate students to different resources as future professionals and allows us to explore what options we have as service providers. I wish this resource was available as I was exploring what programs to apply to. – Graduate Student, Deaf Ed

I especially like the graduate student spotlights, which provide a sneak peek into who they are outside of "student mode". I also love to see the behind-the-scenes interactions and collaborations between students and staff, as well as how students spend their free time out in our community. -Graduate Student, Audiology

“ USER FEEDBACK ”

WHY USE SOCIAL MEDIA

- To connect families to available services, resources, and supports in a relevant and timely manner.
- To connect and engage with current and future graduate students interested in becoming service providers.

ACCOUNTS IN ACTION

LSL.AT.UTAHSTATEUNIVERSITY

- Recruits future professionals to be actively involved in the services for children who are DHH through quality training in best practice services, including
 - Master of Education in deaf education
 - Emphasis program for Speech Language Pathology (SLP) and Audiology students
 - LSL Endorsement program for currently licensed teachers and SLPs

SOUNDBEGINNINGS

- Unites parents and informs families of services available through Utah State for children who are DHH, such as
 - Early intervention home visits with parent coaching
 - Toddler group with parent coaching
 - Pre-school classroom
 - Kindergarten classroom
 - Individual therapy
 - Full service pediatric audiology
 - Family Connections Program
 - Tele-intervention for distance services



TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL ENGAGEMENT IN SOCIAL MEDIA

USE HASHTAGS

USING A VARIETY OF HASHTAGS UNITES PEOPLE INTERESTED IN THE SAME INFORMATION

RELEVANT CONTENT

THIS ENSURES THAT YOUR AUDIENCE STAYS ENGAGED AFTER FINDING YOUR PAGE.

QUALITY PHOTOS

USING PHOTOS THAT FOCUS ON ONE OR TWO SUBJECTS LOOKS GREAT AND ALLOWS YOUR CONTENT TO STAY FOCUSED.

POST CONSISTENTLY

THIS ALLOWS TIMELY AND UP-TO-DATE CONTENT FOR THOSE SEEKING IT.

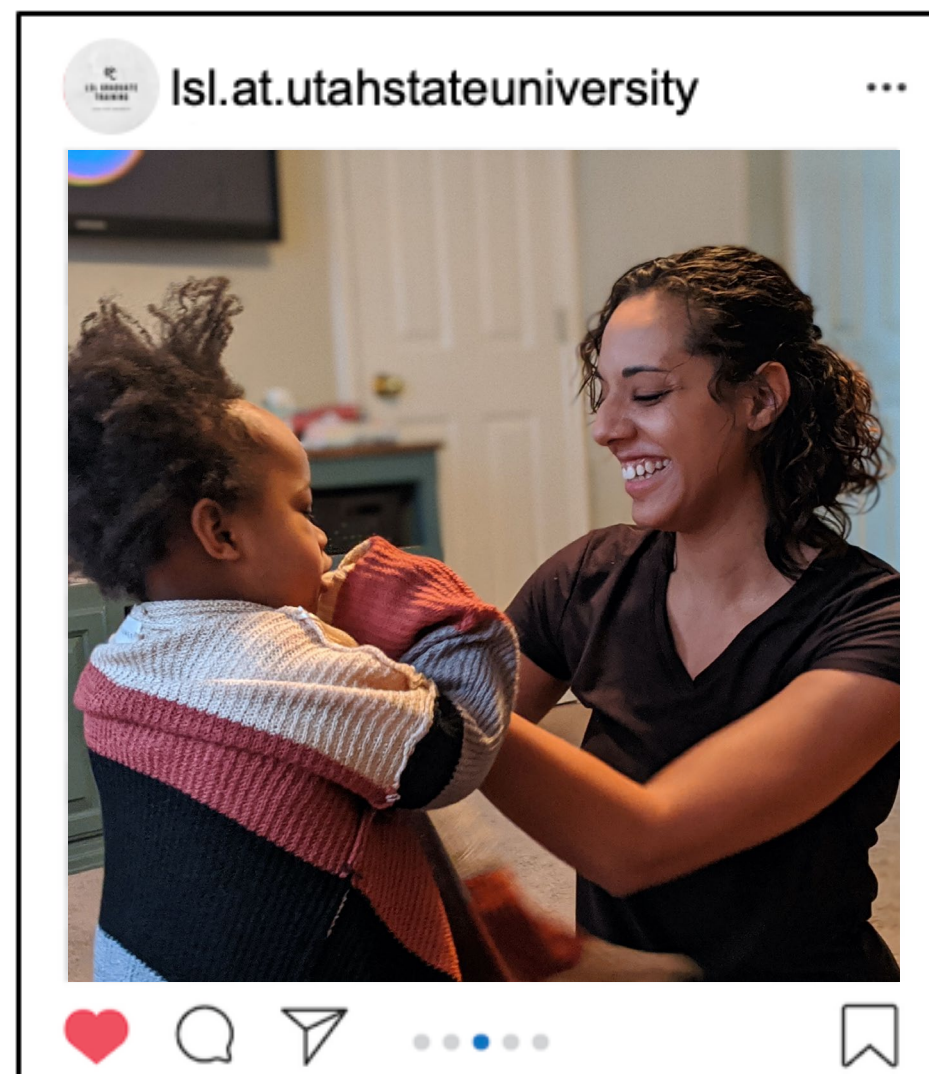
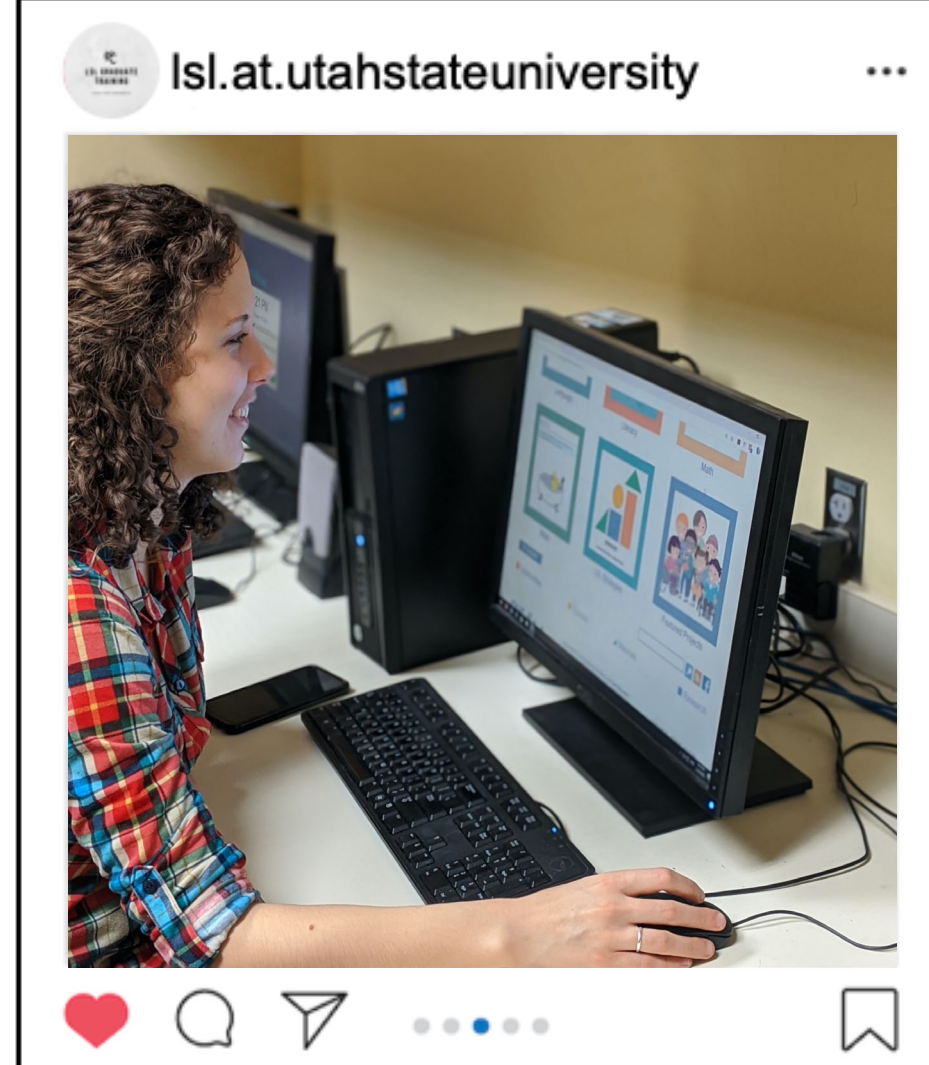
ANALYSIS TOOLS

THESE TOOLS ALLOW YOU TO ADJUST YOUR POSTING TIMES AND CONTENT AS NEEDED.

OUTREACH

KEEP CONNECTING! KNOW YOUR OUTREACH WILL ALWAYS BE HIGHER THAN THE NUMBER OF LIKES AND COMMENTS.

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY



POST EXAMPLES

@LSL.AT.UTAHSTATEUNIVERSITY

@SOUND.BEGINNINGS

My Materials

Program Peek

Degree Highlights

Family Spotlight

My Team Members

Developmental Milestones

Highlights professionally made resources to be used by parents and interventionists alike.

Highlights what graduate students are doing during their program placements.

Highlights the variety of professional training programs available.

Highlights the variety of experiences that families can have.

Highlights the variety of qualified professionals that serve children who are DHH.

Highlights the skills parents can expect children to develop at different ages.

Why It's Useful:

- Provides parents and professionals with relevant and age appropriate resources to be used both in the home and in clinical settings to implement best practice for serving children who are DHH.

Why It's Useful:

- Provides answers to the common questions like: "What does this program look like in action? What will I be doing in my daily learning? What can I expect to do if I become a student?"

Why It's Useful:

- Provides undergraduates with information about the various program options, the degree and licensure they would earn, and the qualifications needed to apply.

Why It's Useful:

- Allows parents to connect with other families to find support for the experiences and challenges they are facing as well as celebrating successes.

Why It's Useful:

- As parents meet each member of their child's team, they can better facilitate collaboration as their child's team leader by understanding the depth and scope of each professional's services.

Why It's Useful:

- Helps parents set realistic expectations for their children's development. Children are the most successful when intervention follows the same developmental patterns as their same-aged peers.