

# Taking the Wheel of Early Intervention

## Wyoming Early Intervention Initiative

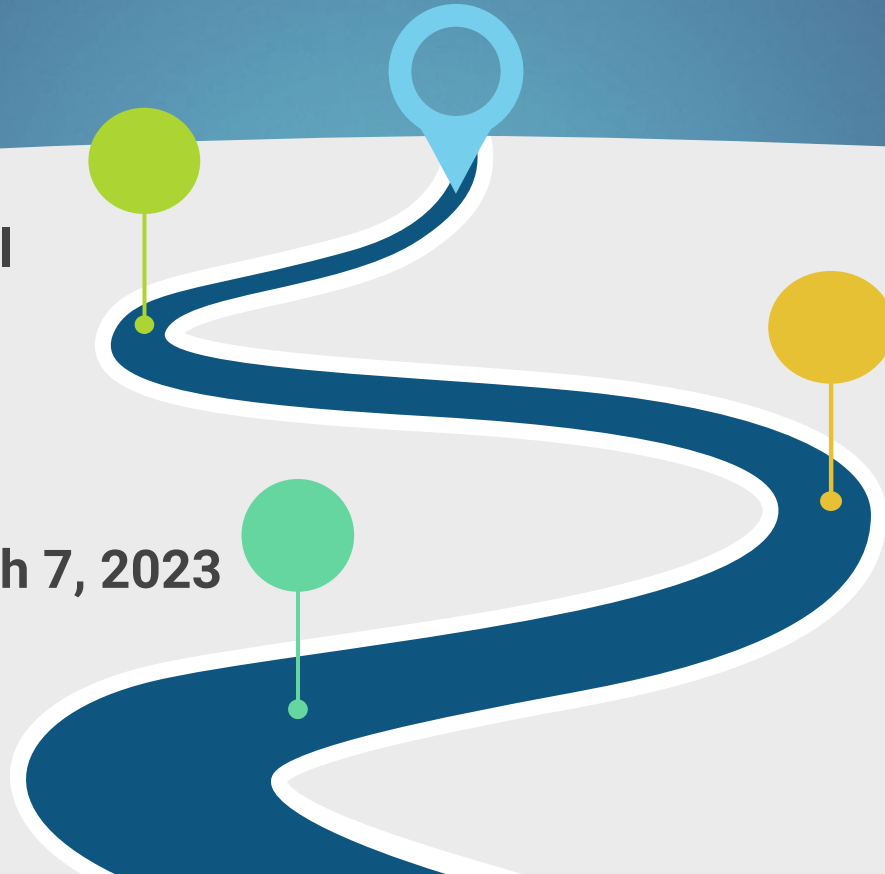


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**EHDI National  
Conference**

**March 7, 2023**

**Cincinnati, OH**



# TODAY'S OUTCOMES



- ❑ Share how stakeholders in Wyoming identified and agreed upon a process to improve early intervention for children who are deaf/hard of hearing (D/HH).
- ❑ Would this work in your state, territory, province, jurisdiction? It might!

# Getting the right pit crew

WY Families for Hands & Voices

WY Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program

WY Department of Health - Early Intervention and Education Program (EIEP)


University of WY - Communication Disorders

WY Department of Education - Outreach Services for the D/HH

Child Development Services of WY

Marion Downs Center





**“Pit Crew” - WELL Plus  
Core Team Members**

# Today's On Site WEll Core Team "Pit Crew"

- ✓ Christie Fritz: Wyoming Department of Education, Education Outreach Consultant, Teacher of the Deaf
- ✓ Sarah Fitzgerald: Wyoming Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program, Co-Coordinator
- ✓ Wendy Hewitt: Wyoming Families for Hands & Voices, Executive Director
- ✓ Kim Reimann: Wyoming Families for Hands & Voices, Guide By Your Side - Program Coordinator; CDC+ Audiology - Parent Advocate/Family Educator

# Today's On Site WEI Core Team "Pit Crew"

- ✓ Judy Juengel, M.S., Wyoming Department of Health, Early Intervention and Education Program (EIEP), Part C Coordinator
- ✓ Dr. Kalley Ellis, Au.D. Pediatric Audiologist CDC + Audiology, Wyoming EHDI Program Audiologist
- ✓ Cheryl Johnson, Ed.D.: Marion Downs Center, Consultant
- ✓ Sandra Abbott Gabbard, Ph.D. President/CEO Marion Downs Center

## More of the WEll Core Team“Pit Crew” Back Home



**Annette Landes SLP-  
CCC-A**  
**WEll Plus Coordinator,  
WY Families for  
Hands & Voices**



**Betsy Tengesdal**  
**Parent  
Teacher of the  
Deaf  
Behavior  
Consultant**



**Nancy Pajak M.S, CCC-A**  
**Educational Audiologist  
Consultant/Liaison  
Marion Downs Center**

## Additional WEI Larger Group Members

- **Kim Caylor**, Early Intervention and Education Program (EIEP) Unit Manager, WY Department of Health, Behavioral Health Division (WDH - BHD)
- **Teresa Garcia**, M.S., CCC-A, University of WY Clinical Professor/ Audiology Clinical Director
- **Jaime Stine**, Director of Regions 8 and 11, Child Development Services of WY Representative
- **Jennifer Petri**, 619 Coordinator, WY Department of Health Behavioral Health Division (WDH - BHD)



# Factors contributing TO GETTING STARTED

Federal  
Funding  
(HRSA)  
Developing  
the "I" in  
EHDI.

01

Marion Downs  
Center  
Gift from WY  
resident.  
Guidance and  
mentoring.

02

Colorado  
CO School for the Deaf and  
the Blind (CSDB)  
CO Home Intervention  
Program (CHIP)  
Outcomes and Developmental  
Data Assistance Center for  
EHDI Programs (ODDACE)

03

Wyoming  
DEVELOPING THE  
"I" IN EHDI.  
Awareness of and  
responsibility for the  
need for best  
practice EI service  
delivery model.

04



# Wyoming Early Intervention Initiative (WEII) for Families and Their Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing



# WEII Drives to Develop the “I” in EHDI

*The reason to screen is to intervene.*

We Recognized WHY Early Intervention is important:

- ▶ Brain development
- ▶ Language development
- ▶ Minimizing developmental delays
- ▶ Long term success



## **WEll Recognized WHY Early Intervention is Unique for children who are Deaf/hard of hearing (D/HH):**

- ▶ Small window for neurological development**
- ▶ Direct access to language needed**
- ▶ Lack of incidental language**
- ▶ Language (spoken/sign/visual) is the foundation for development**

# Considerations for Wyoming

Rural and Frontier

50th in population  
10th in physical size

D/ HH Specific  
Very few specialized  
EI providers.

No School for the Deaf

Part C (birth to 3)  
and Part B (3 to 5)

Qualifying for Part C

Any type, degree of  
hearing loss.

14 CDC Regions with  
40+ sites under Dept. of  
Health

Change can be difficult

# Overall WEII Goal

To promote collaborative efforts to increase Wyoming's capacity to provide quality early intervention services for children who are deaf or hard of hearing birth to kindergarten and their families.

**\*THIS IS A SYSTEMS CHANGE.**



# Looking back at the starting line....



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## Leadership Team planning (Late 2019)

- Identifying purpose
- Identifying state stakeholders
- Facilitator - Marion Downs Center

## Initial stakeholder meeting (2020)

- Background - why are we here?
- Developing a shared understanding
  - SWOT Analysis
- Creating a cohesive team
- Agency and stakeholder commitments
- Next steps planning



## Gathered Data on WY Needs (2020)

- JCIH (Joint Committee on Infant Hearing) principles and guidelines for early intervention (Assessment tool uploaded)

Supplement to the JCIH 2007 Position Statement adapted by MN EHDI to create the “EHDI System Self-Assessment Tool”: [https://www.handsandvoices.org/fl3/fl3-docs/EHDI-System\\_Self-Assessment12-19.pdf](https://www.handsandvoices.org/fl3/fl3-docs/EHDI-System_Self-Assessment12-19.pdf)

- Survey of WY EI service providers & families

## Used Data to Determine Next Steps (2020-21)

- Development and prioritization of goals
- Logic Model
- Small group work began Ongoing: Qrtrly Core Team and Stakeholder meetings

# Our Goals Were Set and Prioritized and Monthly Small Group Work Began

**Family to Family  
Support**

02

01

**Communication**

**Professional  
and Parent  
Training**

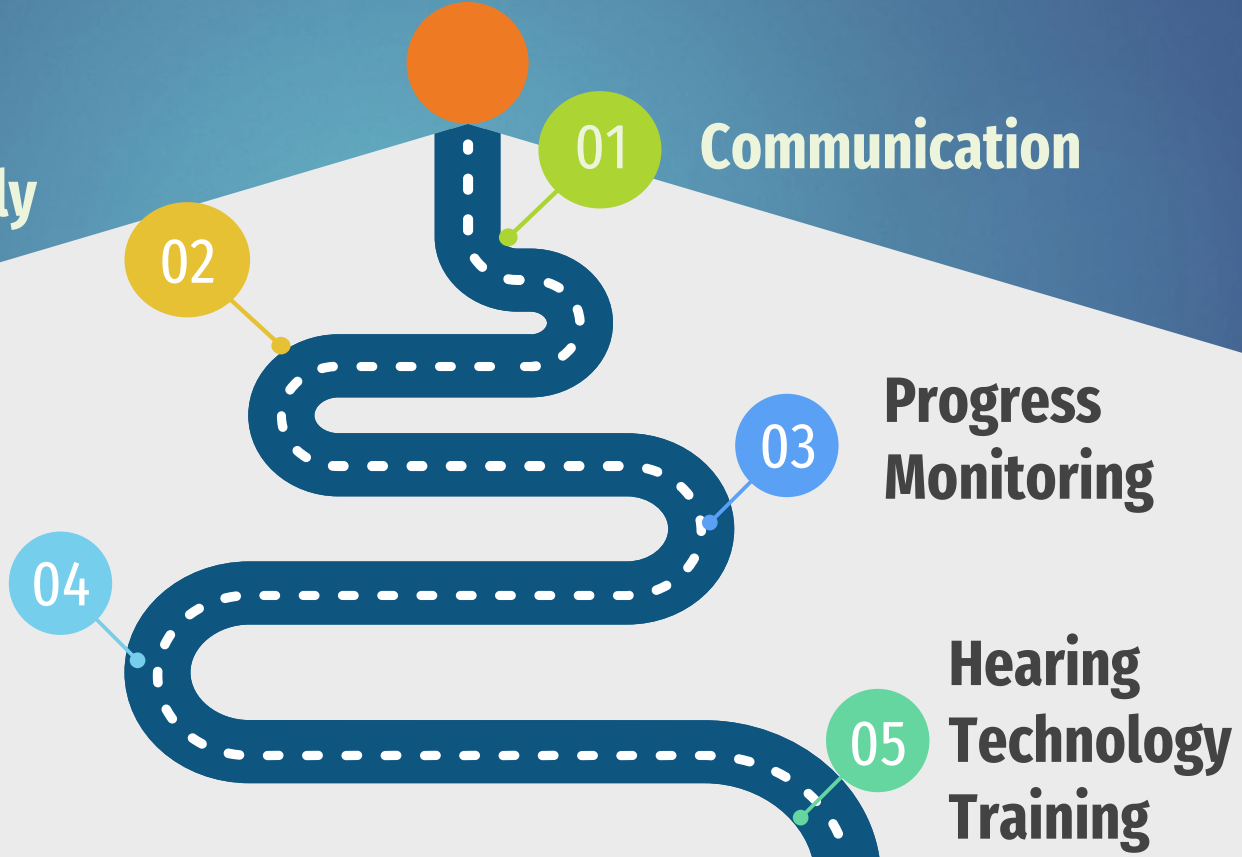
04

03

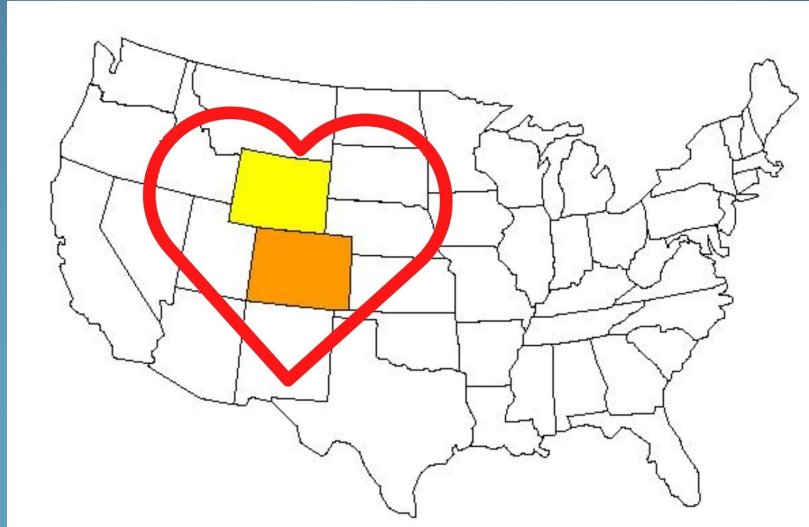
**Progress  
Monitoring**

**Hearing  
Technology  
Training**

05



# Pit Stop!



It is with heartfelt gratitude and respect that we acknowledge the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) and the Colorado Home Intervention Program (CHIP) for granting the Wyoming Early Intervention Initiative (WEII) permission to modify and use the CHIP Manual to support Wyoming families with children who are D/HH.

We could not ask for better neighbors.

Thank you!

# Wyoming Family Resource Manual



WEII Manual

Wyoming Early Intervention Initiative (WEII) for families  
and their children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

1771 Centennial Dr., Ste. 220  
Laramie, WY 82070  
307.721.6212 • 307.721.6313 fax  
[www.wyomingehdi.org](http://www.wyomingehdi.org)



We combined our  
WY Resource Guide  
for Wyoming  
Families and the  
Colorado Home  
Intervention Program  
(CHIP) Manual

# Late 2021-2022

We Arrived at an Intersection



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The WEII Team Determined a Need to Support  
Early Interventionists with Increased Intention

Using Our WEI Goals the Team  
Created a Program of Support within  
WEI called:


# WEI Plus Program

Using training, coaching and mentoring, parents and professionals are guided and supported as they access critical information and service needed for children who are D/HH to develop to their fullest potential.

# WEII Plus Program Description



- ▶ Statewide service delivery model provided through the WY Child Development Centers....working to build capacity.
- ▶ Purpose: Empower early intervention providers and families by providing training, resources, strategies, and **coaching specific to the diagnosis of hearing loss.**
- ▶ The intended outcome is that **early intervention providers and families** are supported in making informed decisions to give the child the opportunity to achieve their highest potential.



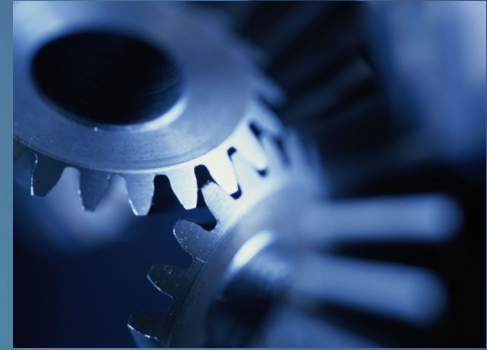
# WEII Plus Program: Critical Component (the turbo boost)

- ▶ Provision in contracts between Part C and the child development centers requiring that provide Part C services that interventionists who work with children who are D/HH must connect with the WEII Plus Coordinator – (As of July 1, 2022) - **SYSTEM CHANGE SUCCESS! \*\*\*\*\***



# WEII Plus Program: The Gears in Motion

- ▶ WEII Plus Coordinator –  
SLP who specializes in working with young children who are D/HH - Wyoming Families for Hands & Voices
- ▶ WEII Plus Facilitators –  
Interventionists at the Wyoming Child Development Centers
- ▶ ASL Instructors -  
Work with families: contracted by the WY Child Development Centers
- ▶ LSL Coach -  
Supports the Facilitators: Provided by the WEII Core Team



# WEII Plus Program: Under the Hood

## ➤ WEII Plus Facilitators identified in each CDC Region

Speech language pathologists or Teachers of the Deaf

- Generally the SLPs are already on staff, TODs may be added
- These facilitators are funded by the Child Development Centers



## ➤ Initial On-Boarding of WEII Plus Facilitator:

- Trainings held virtually annually or more as needed

## ➤ ODDACE assessments

- Accountability for developmental progress
- Inform IFSP goals and outcomes

## ➤ WEII Coordinator meets to coach and mentor facilitators

- Regular check ins and trainings (1:1 or with families)

# WEII Plus Program Process

ID of child  
birth - 2 who is D/HH

01

Referral to Part C EI and  
WY Hands & Voices

03

Permission from family  
for WEII Plus Coordinator  
to contact EI Providers

02

WEII Plus Coordinator  
contacts Family Service  
Coordinator and WEII Plus  
Facilitator

Family provided with WY  
Family Resource Manual

04

WEII Plus Coordinator  
makes initial phone call  
to family to share info  
and schedule meeting

05

WEII Plus Facilitator  
given access to WEII  
Resources

06

07

Initial meeting with  
family with WEII  
Plus Coordinator,  
FSC, and Facilitator

08

# WEII Plus Program Resources Developed to Support Facilitators

## WEII Plus Scope and Sequence



FILLABLE FORM



LINKS TO PADLET  
RESOURCES



DATE OF INITIAL  
DISCUSSION

# More WEII Plus Program Resources Developed

## WEII Plus Facilitator Manual

Facilitators being mentored in this subject matter

Introduction and WEII Plus Program Mission Statement

WEII Plus Program Stakeholders Information and Child Development Center Regions Map

WEII Plus Provider Responsibilities

The Importance of Early Intervention

Communication Options and Family Support

Auditory Resources and Strategies

Communication/Language Resources and Strategies

Play and Gesture Development

Early Literacy Development

Visual Language Development

Self-Advocacy Skills

Social/Emotional Development Support

Additional Family Supports

UHL Considerations

ODDACE Guidelines

Language Environmental Analysis (LENA) Guidelines

Transition

Mentoring a new WEII Plus Facilitator

# More WEII Plus Program Resources Developed

WEII Plus Padlet – Digital sharing platform for our facilitator with their resources placed in one location and easily accessible.

The image displays a screenshot of a WEII Plus Padlet board, a digital sharing platform. The board is organized into a grid of resource cards, each representing a different educational or support resource. The resources are categorized into several main areas:

- Program Description:** Includes a PDF of the "WEII Plus Facilitator Manual".
- Program Forms:** Features "Art and Science of a Home Visit" and "Sign Vocabulary Checklist for Parents".
- Auditory Resources, Strategies, Amplification Support, Impact of Hearing Loss and Speech Development:** Contains "Simultaneous Bilateral Cochlear Implant Users - Children" and "Speech Strategies".
- Unilateral Hearing Loss Resources for Parents:** Includes "The Developing Child with Unilateral Hearing Loss by Karen Anderson" and "Hands and Voices: Unilateral Hearing Loss tips".
- Literacy Development and Experience Book Resources for Parents:** Features "Predictable Book List", "15 Principles for Reading to Deaf Children", "Increasing Literacy Skills in Your Deaf Infant", and "Reading Starting at Birth".
- Self-Advocacy:** Includes "Self-Advocacy Cards: Carol Flexor", "Self-Advocacy Experience Book", and "Self-Advocacy Cards: Carol Flexor".
- Theory Of Mind:** Contains "Keep This Theory in Mind: Children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing" and "Theory of Mind Conversation Starters".
- Part C to Part B Transition Documents and Resources:** Includes "Part C to Part B Flowchart" and "Assessment Wheel".
- ODDACE Assessment Forms - Fillable:** Features "Google Drive ODDACE Forms" and "Release of Information Fillable".
- Pragmatics Checklist Fillable:** Includes "Pragmatics Checklist Fillable".
- Tempest's Transition Experience Book:** Features "Tempest's Transition Experience Book".
- Minnesota Letters and Numbers Fillable:** Includes "Minnesota Letters and Numbers Fillable".

The board also includes a "Video Conferencing Agreement" and "Sign Vocabulary Checklist for Parents". The background of the board is a soft-focus image of pink cherry blossoms. The WEII Plus logo and name are visible in the top left corner of the board interface.

# WEll Plus Program Supports Families

- Focus on families' communication choices and literacy
- Family participation in ODDACE assessments
- Mentoring and coaching for families by the WEll Coordinator in Collaboration with the WEll Facilitators.
- Family advocacy support
  - Connections to Parent Guides
  - Connections to D/HH Role Models
  - Advocacy, Support, and Training (ASTra)



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**Active family participation is critical and fostered!**

# Timeline Overview

Start

2019-2020

Vision  
SWOT and  
Partner  
Commitments

Logic Model  
Plan

5 Goal Small  
Group Work  
Begins

Self  
Assessments

Meet to Review  
Year One

Begin work on  
Year Two Goals  
in Small  
Groups

Meet to  
Develop Year 2  
Goals

Baseline  
Outcomes  
Evaluation

2021-22

Begin to  
Develop WEII  
Plus

WEII Plus  
Connection  
into Part C  
Contracts

Review  
ODDACE Data  
Work on  
Proposal to  
Governor's  
Office

Adding ASL  
Instructor and  
LSL Coach

2022-23

WEII Plus Roll  
Out July 1st  
2022

2020-21



# CHALLENGES... so far

Progress takes time and is not always linear

Getting and keeping stakeholders on board - persistence

Developing and maintaining a cohesive core team

Getting and keeping CDCs and EI providers on board

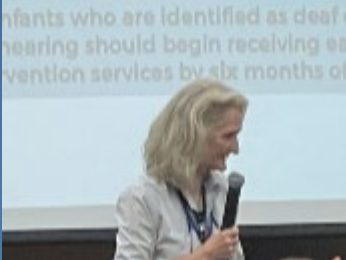
Providers and Administrators Understanding the need for and benefits of specialized EI

WY EI providers may only work with a children who is D/HH every few years

Desire for a boots on the ground position in the EI Department Specific to Children who are D/HH

Families understanding the importance and urgency of EI

# This is our “Why”... to impact families and the providers who support them!



# The Road Goes on Forever!



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## We have more plans!



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**Thank you!!**

# Additional Information to Take Home



# Contact Information

- ▶ **Christie Fritz, Wyoming Department of Education, Deaf/HH Outreach Services, [christie.fritz@wyo.gov](mailto:christie.fritz@wyo.gov)**
- ▶ **Sarah Fitzgerald: Wyoming EHDI Program, Co-Coordinator, 307-399-2889, [sarah.fitzgerald@wyo.gov](mailto:sarah.fitzgerald@wyo.gov)**
- ▶ **Wendy Hewitt: Wyoming Families for Hands & Voices, Executive Director, 307-780-6476, [wendy@wyhandsandvoices.org](mailto:wendy@wyhandsandvoices.org)**
- ▶ **Kim Reimann: Wyoming Families for Hands & Voices, Assistant Director/Guide By Your Side - Program Coordinator; CDC+ Audiology - Parent Advocate/Family Educator, 307-258-0967, [kimr@wyhandsandvoices.org](mailto:kimr@wyhandsandvoices.org)**
- ▶ **Cheryl Johnson, Ed.D.: Marion Downs Center, Consultant, [cheryl@colorado.edu](mailto:cheryl@colorado.edu)**

# Desired Outcomes of WEII



1. Families and practitioners know how to access the resources for accurate appropriate information.
2. Information is available in an easily accessible format.
3. Data informs intervention decisions and practices to improve early intervention on the individual and statewide level.
4. Progress monitoring is sustainable statewide using the ODDACE in addition to the state of Wyoming mandated list of approved/recommended child development assessments.
5. Families are aware of and participate in family -based trainings and support opportunities.
6. Families know of essential resources in Wyoming and can utilize them.
7. Families, early intervention providers, childcare providers and other essential persons to the child's development understand appropriate use and implications of hearing technology.



**More Information about our 5 Goals**



# Goal 1: Communication

Increase awareness of and access to available resources and services for young children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families.

- WEII Report - January 2020 - August 2021
  - Needs Assessment
  - First Year of Progress
- **Organized** quarterly meetings
  - Agendas
  - PowerPoint presentations
- **Tracked** progress on goals and activities

Wyoming Early Intervention Initiative (WEII)  
for Families and their Children who are  
Deaf or Hard of Hearing



An initiative promoting collaborative efforts to increase Wyoming's capacity to provide quality early intervention services for families and their children who are deaf or hard of hearing from birth to kindergarten.

January 2020 - August 2021

# Goal 2: Family to Family Support ...

Create a system in which families who have children who are deaf or hard of hearing (from birth to kindergarten) are consistently made aware of and have the ability to utilize available resources in Wyoming.

- Who's Who Form
- Online Resources
- Advocacy, Support, and Training (ASTra)
  - January 2021
  - November 2022 - upcoming
- Annual Wyoming Families for Hands & Voices Parent Training

## Tracking Your Team

### WHO'S WHO - PROFESSIONALS IN YOUR CHILD'S LIFE

Once your child has been diagnosed with a hearing loss, you will be introduced to many people who are available to help you and your child. Keeping a list of Who's Who may help you to remember each person and their role. Some families have found it helpful to make copies of the Who's Who List and distribute it to their team members. Keep in mind not all of these professionals may be involved with your family. You and your child's needs determine the professionals who are involved.

Pediatric Audiologist	Guide By Your Side Parent Guide
Phone Number	Phone Number
Email	Email
Family Service Coordinator	WEII Plus Coordinator

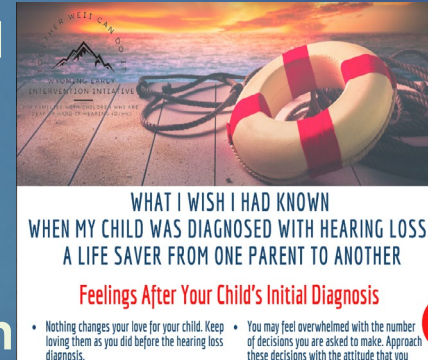


# Goal 2: Family to Family Support ...



## Quick Start Guides

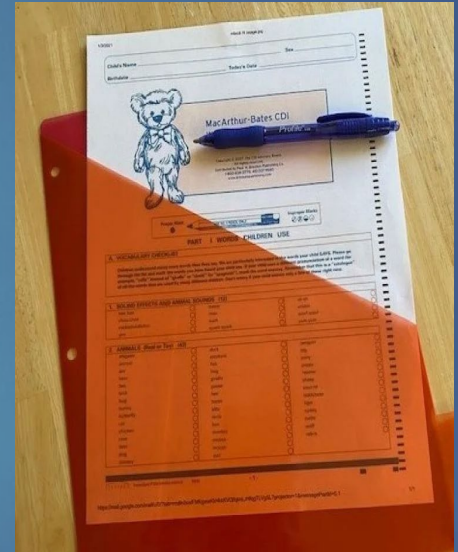
- What I Wish I Had Known When My Child was Diagnosed with Hearing Loss: A Life Saver From One Parent to Another
- Practical Strategies for Families of Infants who are D/HH
- What is Early Intervention?
- Assistive Listening Devices
- Practical Strategies for Daycare Providers of Infants with Hearing Loss
- Tips for Preparing for Your Infant's/Toddler's Individualized Family Service Plan (ISFP) Meeting



# Goal 3: Progress Monitoring

WY children receiving early intervention will have access to and participate in a uniform/statewide system for gathering and analyzing developmental outcome data for children who are deaf/hard of hearing from birth to kindergarten.

Data will be used to inform intervention decisions and practices to improve early intervention on the individual and statewide level.



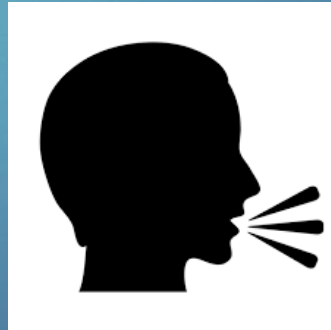
# Goal 3: Progress Monitoring...

ODDACE - Outcomes and Developmental Data  
Assistance Center for EHDI Programs

- ▶ Standardized assessment completed every 6 months starting at 9 months of age up to age 3
- ▶ Annual assessment from ages 3 to 5
- ▶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funding to Allison Sedey - University of Colorado

From September 2020 - July 2022

- ▶ 93 ODDACE Assessments
- ▶ 46 Children
  - ▶ (50-60% of those receiving Part C/B EI in WY)



ODDACE  
is pronounced like  
“Odyssey”

# Goal 4: Professional and Parent Training

Increase family aware of and engagement in existing family trainings and supports.

Family Service Coordinator Webinars

Quick Start Guides

1. Assistive Listening Devices
2. Practical Strategies for Preschool Classroom Teachers and EI Providers of Children Who Are D/HH
3. Transitioning Children Who are D/HH from Part C to Part B

Advocacy, Support, and Training (ASTra)

1. January 2021

Annual Wyoming Families for Hands & Voices Parent Training



# Goal 5: Hearing Technology Training

Increase knowledge and understanding on the appropriate use and implications of hearing technology by providing both online and in-person trainings and resources for families, early interventionists, and childcare providers.

## Quick Start Guide - Assistive Listening Devices

## Hearing Technology Videos for Families and Professionals

1. How to insert/remove earmold
2. How to know you need a new earmold
3. How an earmold impression is taken

## Luggage Tag



A QUICK START GUIDE - ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICES  
CREATED BY THE WYOMING EARLY INTERVENTION INITIATIVE (WEII) FOR  
FAMILIES AND THEIR CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING (D/HH)\*

### What Are Assistive Listening Devices (ALD)

- Remote Microphones (RM) and personal Frequency Modulation (FM) systems are examples of assistive listening devices. They are small devices available to help children who are D/HH.