

A Behind the Scenes Look at Building a Deaf Mentor Program in Ohio



Disclosures

The Ohio Department of Health selected the SKI-HI Deaf Mentor and Snapshots curriculum to provide Deaf Mentor services to Ohio's families.

Learning Objectives

- Participants will learn key strategies and steps for developing a Deaf Mentor/Snapshots program and the importance of collaborative initiatives.
- Participants will learn about challenges faced while implementing the Deaf Mentor/Snapshots program to help others avoid these potential barriers.
- Participants will learn about the roles Deaf Mentors and Snapshots providers play as an adjunct to Part C early intervention services.

Importance of Mentoring

- Over 90% of children identified with hearing loss are born into hearing families.
- Mentoring contributes to the child's
 - Communication/language development.
 - Social-emotional development.
 - Identity development.
 - Cognitive development.

Selecting a Program for Ohio

SKI-HI (Sensory Kids Impaired Home Intervention) Evidence-based, family-centered, and proven educational program.

- SKI-HI Deaf Mentor and Snapshots Curriculum.

Ohio has no formal ASL acquisition Program

- Research studies show using ASL does not prevent Deaf children from learning or understanding spoken language.

Deaf Mentors and Snapshots Providers

Deaf Mentors

- Fluent users of American Sign Language (ASL).
- Trained to use the SKI-HI Deaf Mentor Curriculum to promote early visual communication, formal ASL instruction, and introduction to the local Deaf community and Deaf culture.
- One year of ASL and Deaf History/Culture instruction with the same Deaf Mentor.

Snapshots Providers

- Communicate by using Listening and Spoken Language, ASL, and/or Cued Speech/Cued English.
- Trained to use the SKI-HI Snapshots program which focuses on sharing and answering questions about life experiences as a deaf person in a hearing world.
- Up to 6 sessions per family with the same individual each session or different.

Developing a Program

Multifaceted:

- Select a training program.
- Interview, select, and train mentors.
- Determine the population served.
- Develop forms and processes.
 - Referrals, Intake, Measurables, Exit.

Get the Word Out!

- Advertise the training opportunity.
 - Include training dates, responsibilities, qualifications, and work hours.
- Ohio created a flyer - shared via email:
 - Deaf Community Centers.
 - Schools for the Deaf.
 - Advisory Board members.
 - State agencies.
 - Stakeholders.

Select Trainees

- Develop an Interview/Application Process.
- Require a current Vitae.
- Mentors should be:
 - Friendly, positive, and open-minded.
 - Comfortable talking/signing and interacting with hearing individuals.
 - Have the desire to support hearing families raising deaf children.
 - Flexible in scheduling meeting times.

Training Challenges

- In-person or virtual?
- Scheduling time.
- Will the training be presented in spoken English or ASL?
- Ohio chose virtual trainings presented in ASL
 - Limited to 8 participants.

Next Steps – Program Development

Who will manage the program?

- Ohio elected to work with a contractor, the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities that subcontracted the Ohio School for the Deaf to render services.

How will information be shared between the Deaf Mentors/Snapshots Providers program and your agency?

- Deaf Mentor coordinator.
- Tracking sheets!
- Regularly scheduled check-in meetings.

Service Eligibility

Who can receive services?

- Enrolled in Part C Early Intervention.
 - Services terminate at age 3.
- Diagnosed with permanent hearing loss.

Referral Form

- Ohio uses an online referral form.
 - Survey Monkey Platform.
 - Same referral form for both Snapshots and Deaf Mentors.
 - Parent selects one or both programs.
 - Capture parent/child demographics.
 - Who will participate in the sessions?
 - Preferred times to meet.
 - How family communicates with their child.
 - Type of listening device used, if any.

Referral Process

- Important to connect with families in a timely manner once a referral is received.

Ohio's Process –

- On-line referral.
 - Received by ODH and sent to Deaf Mentor program within 3 days.
- Deaf Mentor/Snapshots Program.
 - Reaches out to the family within 3 days.
 - Deaf Mentor/Snapshots Provider Coordinator contacts family – sets up a meeting.

Data Collection

- Intake and Exit Surveys for both programs.
 - Developed based on SKI-HI materials.
 - Intake survey.
 - Parent goals for their child's future.
 - Exit survey.
 - Same survey for both Deaf Mentors and Snapshots programs.
 - Focus on communication and satisfaction.
 - Participation in "Deaf" community activities.

Data Collection

Building Partnerships.

- The Ohio Department of Health worked with SKI-HI and the Deaf Mentor Program at the Tennessee School for the Deaf.

Language/Communication Growth.

- SKI-HI Language Development Scale for Families enrolled in the Deaf Mentor Program.
- Measures receptive/expressive language in ASL and English.
- Assessment is given 3 times.
 - Program entry, at 6 months of services, and program exit.

Collaboration with Part C Providers

- Deaf Mentors and Snapshot providers support and share the importance of early intervention services and family support on a personal level.
- Deaf Mentors work with Hearing Service Providers to provide holistic support to families and promote early access to communication.
- Deaf Mentors administer the Language Development Specialist in partnership with Hearing Service Providers to measure outcomes and assess verbal and sign language acquisition.

Ohio's First Year

Challenges:

- New pilot program started during the pandemic.
 - Contracting/ Subcontracting/ Sub-subcontracting.

Successes:

- Currently serving 15 families in Ohio.
 - Many families have opted to complete both the Snapshot Program and the Deaf Mentor Program.

Questions?

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