

DHH ADULT CONSUMER-TO-FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES: EXPLORING PARENT EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES



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Introduction

DHH adult consumer-to-family support services in Early Intervention (EI) is a critical component of EHDI because studies show positive social-emotional, language, and cognitive outcomes when parents engage with deaf adults. For example, deaf children with hearing parents who have access to deaf adults early have language gains (Watkins et al., 1998) and parents also feel more confident raising their deaf children (Hintermair, 2001). However, studies show that there is a need to increase deaf adult involvement (Gale et al., 2021; Ward et al., 2019). With the goal for EHDI programs funded by the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) during the 2020-2024 cycle to increase DHH adult-to-family support services, this study explored parents' experiences and perspectives.

2020-2024 HRSA goal for EHDI Programs

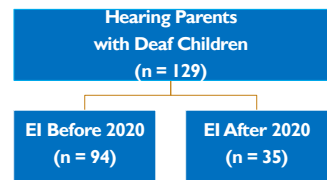
"Increase by 10% the number of families enrolled in DHH adult-to-family support services by no later than 9 months of age"

There are different professional perspectives on when families should be offered DHH adult-to-family support services. Is 9 months of age just right, too early, or too late?

What are parents' experiences and perspectives?

Survey Respondents:
Parents of DHH Children
Data Collection Period:
March 2023-July 2023

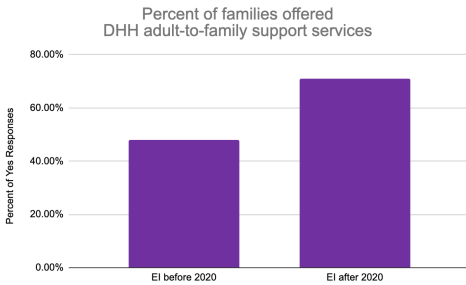
Respondents



Questions & Results

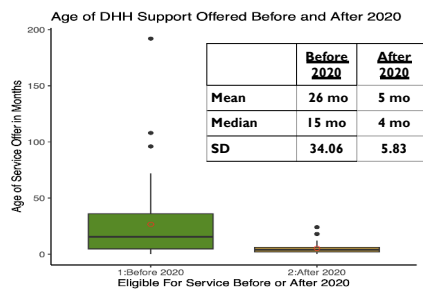
(all quotes are from parents who responded to the survey)

Was there an increase of families who were offered DHH adult-to-family support before and after 2020?



After 2020 more families were offered DHH adult-to-family support services.

How old were children when families were offered DHH adult-to-family support before and after 2020?



After 2020 children were significantly younger when offered DHH adult-to-family support services.

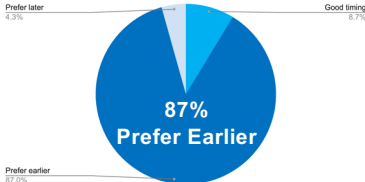
"Get involved in the local Deaf community and give your kiddo the village they deserve!"

When offered DHH adult-to-family support services
95%
of families accepted

"You will wish you met Deaf adults earlier once you get to know them." "There's no reason not to meet a D/HH adult and many reasons to do so"

What are parents' preferred timing for DHH adult-to-family support services compared to when they first received DHH adult support?

Parents enrolled in EI after 2020 preferred timing for DHH adult support compared to when they first received DHH support

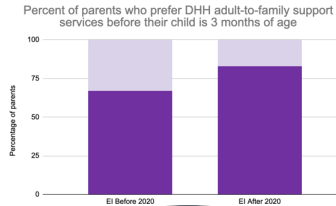


Parents who enrolled in DHH adult-to-family support services after 2020 preferred to enroll earlier than when they first received DHH adult support.

Note: parents in this study were offered DHH support when their children were around 5 months of age.

"Deaf mentors aren't just for our children, they are for us, the parents, showing what sort of wonderful adult our kids can grow up to be."

What are parents' preferred age for DHH adult-to-family support services?



83%
of families enrolled in EI after 2020 prefer DHH support before 3 months

CONCLUSION

It is never too early to offer parents DHH adult-to-family support services

CALL TO ACTION

Build Deaf leadership in EI at local, state & national levels

Action	Descriptions	Examples
Formalize & Fund	Funds for deaf adults in leadership roles	Protocols requiring deaf adults to be included
Collaborate & Communicate	Deaf adult Resources	Collaborative research projects
Educate & Evaluate	Programs to ensure deaf adults are infused	Measurable goals
Infuse & Include	Deaf adults in programs at all levels	Deaf adults from diverse backgrounds

"Meet Deaf role models as early as you can."

References

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