



THE EARLY YEARS PROJECT:

Strengthening Community
Partnerships for Enhanced
Kindergarten Readiness through
Communication, Language, &
Hearing Development

Your Presenters



Hanna Swearingen



Carrie Balian



Ginger Mullin

**Always
Together**



Disclosure for Ginger Mullin AuD



Dr. Mullin is an employee of the Illinois
Department of Public Health

The Illinois Early Hearing Detection and
Intervention Program (EHDI) is supported by
funding through the Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC) and Health Resources &
Services Administration (HRSA)

Accepted to present at the Hands & Voices
Leadership Conference Committee

Presenter does not personally receive any
financial or non-financial benefits from any
entities referenced in this presentation.

Disclosure for Carrie Balian



Mrs. Balian is a paid consultant for Illinois Hands & Voices Guide by Your Side (GBYS).

Illinois Hands & Voices is funded in part by support of Illinois EHDI. EHDI is supported by funding through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA)

Presenter does not personally receive any financial or non-financial benefits from any agencies referenced in this presentation.

Mrs. Balian is also a paid consultant for Hands & Voices HQ. She is the Region V Coordinator and the GBYS Program Lead.

Disclosure for Hanna Swearinger



Ms. Swearinger is a paid consultant for Illinois Hands & Voices Guide by Your Side (GBYS).

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Outline



How does this fit into EHDI?



Benefits



Community Based Stakeholders



Conclusions



monitoring Development



Quality Improvement
Feedback

EHDI Grants

FUNDING....DATA....PROGRESS....
IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO!

Fiscal Year 2024

Maternal and Child Health Bureau

Division of Services for Children with Special Health Needs

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention State/Territory Program

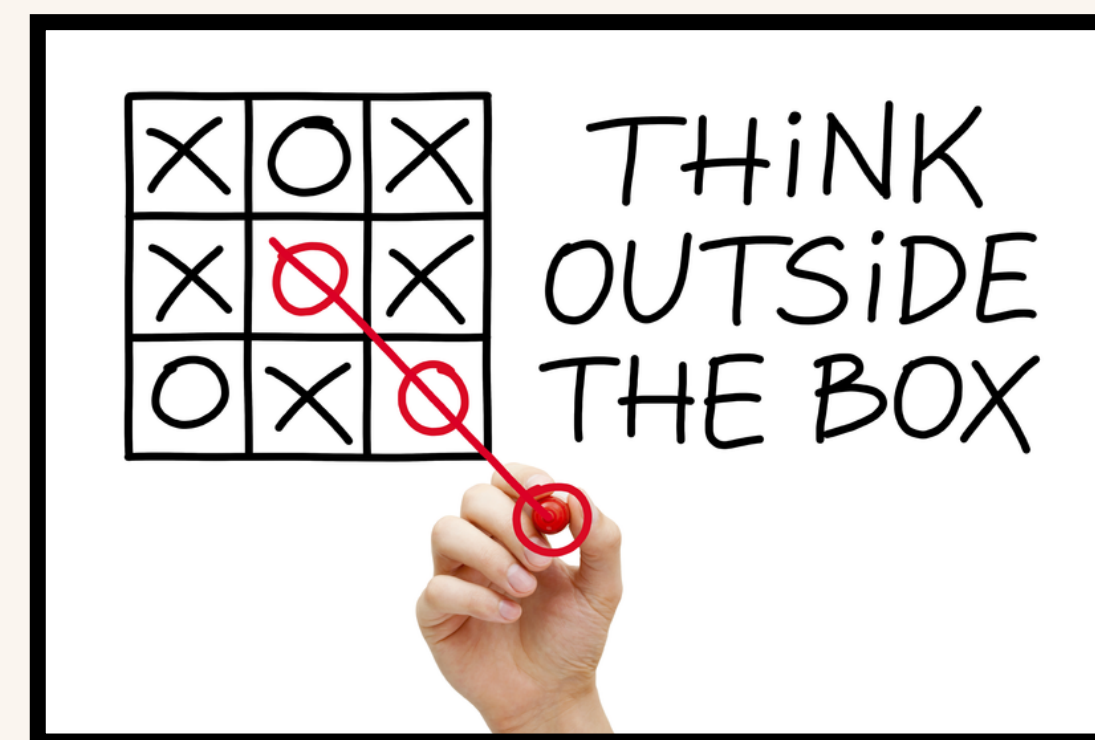
Funding Opportunity Number: HRSA-24-036

Funding Opportunity Type(s): Competing Continuation, New

Assistance Listing Number: 93.251

Page i:

Program Objective(s): to support newborn hearing screening and **language acquisition in children ages 0-3** while emphasizing data collection, **family engagement, provider education and partnerships.**



Prevalence

Children with hearing loss/ atypical hearing:

- Approximately 3 of every 1,000 children in the United States are born with a detectable hearing loss in one or both ears. Most children in the U.S. receive newborn hearing screening.
- 15% of school -age children (6 -19) have some degree of hearing loss. About 20% of teens do.
- Even a mild hearing loss can cause a child to miss 50% of classroom instruction, according to HLAA.



Community Based Stakeholders

Phase II - Implementation and Building Sustainable Practices

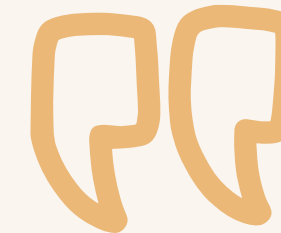
HOME VISITING

EARLY INTERVENTION

EARLY CHILDHOOD

CULTURAL/RELIGIOUS GROUPS

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS



Promoting and supporting the development of resources, trainings, educational materials and/or other initiatives to reduce/eliminate the barriers to access EHDI services for underserved populations.



Fostering Outreach



WHERE TO START

- Talk to existing stakeholders (who do they know)
- Google
- Cold Call / Email
 - Ask who they may recommend
- Ask your families for help in making connections



TELL THEM

- What you have to offer
 - Free, easy to use
 - With staff shortages, new hires
- About the prevalence and impact on families
- “You don’t know what you don’t know”

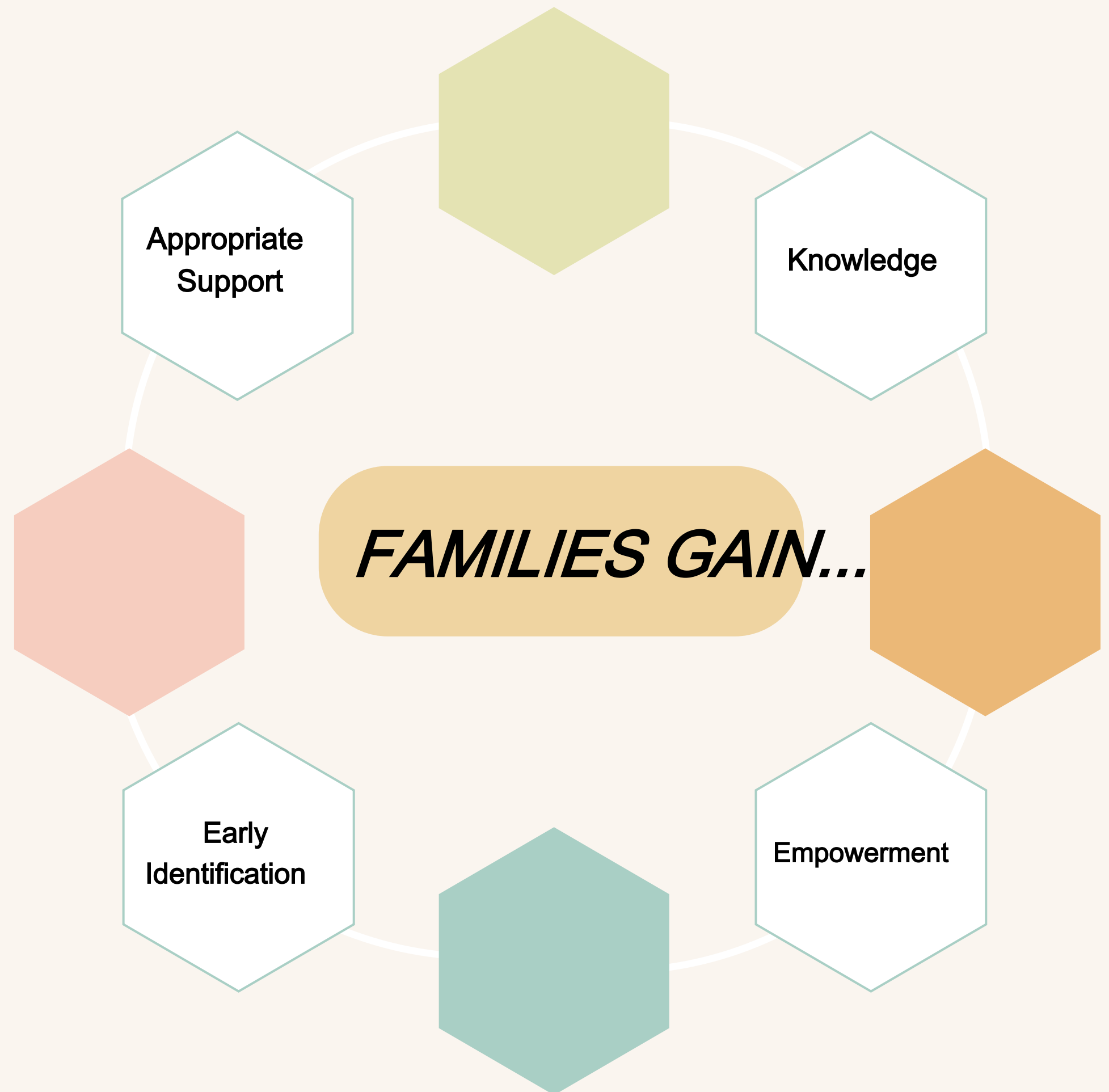
Benefits

WHAT PARENTS SAID...

“The material I watched and read was very knowledgeable and helped me to understand how important the eyes and ears are in our children’s lives!”

“The handouts look very nice. They were all easy to read and follow. I really enjoyed the "did you know" sections.”

“Early Intervention is key to your child's success.”



Benefits

WHAT PROVIDERS SAID....

“This information was easy to share with my family. They liked the look of the information and said it was easy to understand.”

“These materials are perfect for parents entering the Early Intervention system! It breaks down milestones in an easy -to -understand manner.”

“The simulation of how a child's vision develops in the first year was extremely eye-opening!”





Monitoring Development

1

ALL ABOUT DEVELOPMENT

90% of brain development occurs before age 5.

- **Hearing:** provides feedback to interact with & understand surroundings.
- **Vision:** guides milestones such as: gross/fine motor & social emotional interaction.
- **Communication:** Foundational skills develop in the first year of life.
- **Language:** Between age 1 & 2 a child's vocabulary doubles.

2

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Refers to a child's development in various areas, such as:

- Structure
- Expectations
- Social dynamics

A state's definition: Child has basic language, literacy, & math skills, along with physical, social, & emotional readiness. They show curiosity, take turns, express feelings, & persist in tasks.

3

ONGOING MONITORING

Be mindful of late onset/progressive.

- Monitoring hearing, vision, communication & language.
 - For school age children the incidence of hearing loss is 5 in 100.
- Continue to monitor skills regularly and follow up if concerns arise.

The Early Years



WHAT IS IT?

Free online toolkit with easy-to-follow videos, activities, and resources to foster sensory development, for children ages birth-6, in the 4 domains:

- Hearing
- Vision
- Communication
- Language



WHO CAN USE IT?

Anyone! It was designed for:

- Parents
- Caregivers
- Early Childhood Professionals
- Other Professionals

Providers can access these materials and activities to inform and engage families during or in between sessions.



WHAT'S NEXT

Create and add more in -depth educational videos on all domains. Continue to add resources to the resources section.

The Early Years

- Introduction
- Developmental Milestones
- Fostering Development
- Key Milestones
- External Resources
- Introduction Videos
- Surveys

The image shows two overlapping brochures for 'The Early Years Project'. The top brochure is titled 'Parent Introduction to The Early Years Project' and features a row of six diverse baby icons at the top. It includes a QR code in the top right corner. The bottom brochure is titled 'Provider Introduction to The Early Years Project' and features a row of four diverse baby icons at the top. Both brochures have a similar layout with sections for Introduction, Implementation, Learning, Resources, and Activities. The bottom brochure also includes a 'Don't forget the survey!' section with a QR code and a logo for 'HANDS & VOICES ILLINOIS GUIDE BY YOUR SIDE ILLINOIS'. At the bottom of both brochures, there is a logo for the 'Illinois Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Program' and a disclaimer about funding and content responsibility.

Parent Introduction to The Early Years Project

Introduction

The Early Years Project is a free, online toolkit packed with simple videos, fun activities, and helpful resources to support your child's sensory development in hearing, vision, communication, and language. Tailored for children ages 0-6, it's designed to seamlessly fit into your daily routine and enhance your home and early education experiences. Perfect for parents who want to give their little ones a strong start!

These self-guided materials are designed with parents in mind, offering easy ways to learn about your child's development and address any concerns. You can explore these activities at your own pace, helping you feel more confident and informed about supporting your child's growth.

Implementation

In this section is general information about The Early Years, along with the introduction and conclusion videos. There is a survey for both parents and providers after using the materials.

Learning

The Early Years Project has 4 domains:

- Hearing
- Vision
- Communication
- Language

Each domain has an introduction video and an in-depth video (coming soon) under the learning tab.

Resources

The resources section provides handouts and website links to relevant content.

Activities

This section offers simulation activities to help caregivers and professionals gain a deeper understanding of what it might be like for a child facing challenges in the four key developmental domains. Additionally, it includes practical activities that caregivers can use to support growth in each area. While the activities are organized by domain, many can benefit multiple areas of development. Icons are included for easy identification of the domains each activity supports.

Don't forget the survey!

Illinois Early Hearing Detection & Intervention Program

Illinois Hands & Voices is funded in part by the support of Illinois EHD. This project was supported by the Illinois Department of Public Health Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program made possible by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) and Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA). Contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the collaborating sponsors.

Provider Introduction to The Early Years Project

Introduction

The Early Years Project is a free online toolkit with easy-to-follow videos, activities, and resources to foster sensory development in the 4 developmental domains (Hearing, Vision, Communication, Language) for children ages 0-6. The Early Years Project is designed to supplement home visiting & early education programs.

Implementation

In this section is general information with the introduction and conclusion both parents and providers after using the materials.

Learning

The Early Years Project has 4 domains:

- Hearing
- Vision
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- Language

Each domain has an introduction video and an in-depth video (coming soon) under the learning tab.

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The Early Years

- Introduction
- **Developmental Milestones**
- Fostering Development
- Key Milestones
- External Resources
- Introduction Videos
- Surveys



Vision milestones refer to changes in a child's visual abilities as they grow and mature.



Babies have a strong preference for faces and can recognize their parents within days.



Communication milestones are a specific developmental stage in a child's ability to understand and produce language.



Babies learn to understand language by copying facial expressions and sounds.

Birth- 2 Months:

- Looks at your face
- Reacts to loud sounds



Page 1

Hearing: Developmental Milestones

Hearing milestones refer to changes in the behavioral response to sound as the child grows and matures.



Babies and toddlers show a natural inclination towards music. They can detect changes in tempo, rhythm, and melody.



Page 1

Language: Developmental Milestones

Language milestones are specific developmental stage in a child's ability to understand and use language, marked by a new skill.



Babies can start to "learn" any language they are exposed to right from birth.

Birth-9 Months:

- Makes sounds other than crying
- Cooing
- Makes sounds back when you talk to them
- Makes different sounds like "mamama" and "bababa"

9-12 Months:

- Calls a parent "mama" or "dada" or another special name
- Understands "no" (pauses briefly when you say it)



1-2 years:

- Tries to say one or two words besides "mama" or "dada", like "ba" for ball or "da" for dog

The Early Years

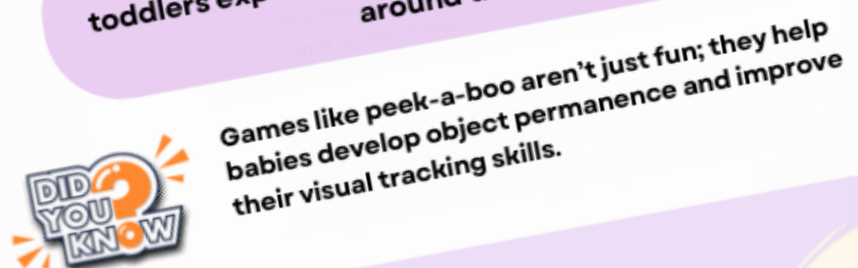
- Introduction
- Developmental Milestones
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Providing sensory experiences for babies and toddlers expands their understanding of the world around them.



Providing sensory experiences for babies and toddlers expands their understanding of the world around them.



Games like peek-a-boo aren't just fun; they help babies develop object permanence and improve their visual tracking skills.

Any Age:

- Talk, talk, talk to children: during daily activities, about tasks, and the environment. Ask and answer questions!
- Model good speech using clear and correct sounds
- Take turns throughout routines, labeling "it's your turn" or "it's my turn"
- Work on joint attention at all different ages, as this is a critical skill for language development

Toddlers love to watch how things work, often staring intently at moving objects, like animals, cars, or even a rolling ball, to understand cause and effect.



Hearing: Fostering Development

Page 1

Providing sensory experiences for babies and toddlers expands their understanding of the world around them.



Language: Fostering Development

Page 1

Providing sensory experiences for babies and toddlers expands their understanding of the world around them.



Games like peek-a-boo aren't just fun; they help babies develop object permanence and improve their visual tracking skills.

Any Age:

- Talking during daily routines: model language
 - Example: "You just woke up. You are taking your pajamas off. We are going to the park. You are eating your lunch. You are getting ready for bed."
- Providing responses directly related to a child's communication attempts
- Providing models of non-verbal communication behaviors (example: gestures and eye gaze)
- Imitating or expanding on a child's words
- Reinforcing a child's communication attempts



Toddlers love to watch how things work, often staring intently at moving objects, like animals, cars, or even a rolling ball, to understand cause and effect.



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The Early Years

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

Resources

Search for tools, help, and more (Option + Q)

File Home Insert Share Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Help Draw

Undo Paste Cut Copy Format Painter Clipboard Font Alignment Number Styles Cells

C34 X ✓ fx Babyhearing.org is an online resource that provides information and support to families and professionals that care for infants and children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

| | A | B | C | D | E |
|----|---|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| 1 | | Developmental Area | Description | Link | SP. Link |
| 48 |  | Hearing/Vision | The National Center on Deafblindness exists to improve the quality of life for children who are deafblind. They provide resources, training, research, and collaboration to support individuals. | https://www.nationaldb.org/ | |
| 49 | | Hearing/Vision | Access your state's DeafBlind project | https://www.nationaldb.org/state-deaf-blind-projects/ | |
| 50 | | Hearing/Vision | Family's guide to Interveners for the DeafBlind. Explanations of how learning is different for this population and other considerations. | https://www.nfadb.org/resources/Documents/A%20Family's%20Guide%20to%20Interveners.pdf | |
| 51 |  | Language/Communication | 25 ASL signs for beginners with explicit instruction. | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FcwzMq4iWg | |
| 52 | | Language/Communication | Family Activity Planner, can be used along with the Parent Tip Sheets from H&V or on it's own for Language, Literacy, and Social Emotional Skills | https://handsandvoices.org/fi3/fi3-docs/parent-take-aways/activity-plan.pdf | https://www.handsandvoices.org/fi3/fi3-docs/parent-take-aways/activity-plan2022spanish.pdf |
| 53 | | Language/Communication | One page handout for parents with examples of activities to work on language development. Provides brief, yet effective descriptions of each strategy. | https://il01904869.schoolwires.net/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=4834&dataid=7027&FileName=Copy%20of%20Parent%20Strategies%202.pdf | |
| 54 | | Language/Communication | Read the following article from Understood on how to build the foundations for self-advocacy in young children | https://www.understood.org/en/articles/how-to-build-the-foundation-for-self-advocacy-in-young-children | https://www.understood.org/es-mx/articles/how-to-build-the-foundation-for-self-advocacy-in-young-children |
| 55 | | Vision | Easy to follow video on how the eye works. | https://youtu.be/TY1qiZgddAs | |

Workbook Statistics End Mode

The Early Years

Vision & the Early Years: An Overview of Sensory

- Introduction
- Developmental Milestones
- Fostering Development
- Key Milestones
- External Resources
- **Introduction Videos**
- Surveys



The Early Years

- Introduction
- Developmental Milestones
- Fostering Development
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- Introduction Videos
- Surveys



Looking For Parent Feedback

What we need:

We have created four learning modules based on education of the topics of: hearing, vision, communication and language for families with children ages birth - six.

We are looking for ten parents to help review materials from one of the modules and provide feedback. We will provide these materials for all to access and use.

You will be paid!

For approximately 3 hours of your time you will be sent a check for \$75 to thank you for your time!

The Early Years - Parent Survey

B I U  

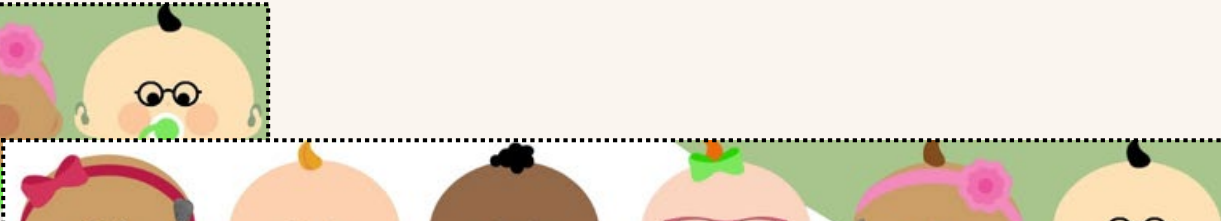
Form description

For QI Only: What is your name? *

Short answer text

Which video did you watch? *

☐ Hearing & the Early Years: An Overview of Sensory Development



Looking For Provider Feedback!

What we need:



We have created four learning modules based on education of the topics of: hearing, vision, communication and language for families with children ages birth - six.

We are looking for ten providers to help review materials from one of the modules and provide feedback before we provide these materials for all to access and use.

You will be paid!

For approximately 3 hours of your time you will be sent a check for \$75 to thank you for your time!

The Early Years -Professional Survey

B I U  

Form description

For QI Only: What is your name? *

Short answer text

Which video did you watch? *

☐ Hearing & the Early Years: An Overview of Sensory Development

☐ Vision & the Early Years: An Overview of Sensory Development

The Early Years



WHERE TO FIND IT?

The screenshot shows the Illinois Sound Beginnings website. The navigation bar includes links for HOME, FAMILIES, PROVIDERS, BIRTHING FACILITIES, RESOURCES/TRAINING, and CMV. A dropdown menu is open under the PROVIDERS link, listing various services. The 'The Early Years' link is circled in orange. Below the dropdown, there are two links: 'Are you an audiologist? Start HERE' and 'Are you looking to enroll in Early Intervention? Start HERE'. The main content area features a banner for 'Illinois EHDI' (Early Hearing Detection & Intervention) and a section titled 'Have you see our SNIPPET's?' which describes Simple and Informative Parent to Parent Education Tools. A link 'Goto the SNIPPET page' is provided at the bottom.



illinoisoundbeginnings.com/the-early-years

Conclusions

Strengths

- Easy to access
- Available 24/7, flexible
- Simple, easy to understand
- Meets all learning styles

Weaknesses

- Not available in multiple languages
- Only available online
- Material is self taught
- Limited providers

Conclusions

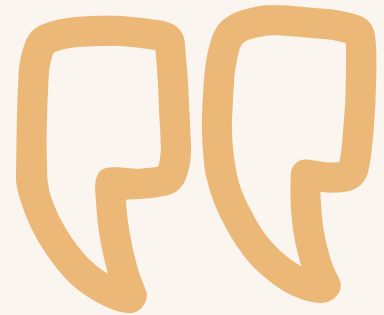
Opportunities

- Partner with other providers
- Spread of project
- Increase awareness of organizations

Threats

- Other materials that are similar already out there
- Getting data back from parents and providers
- Reimbursement rate

Parent Survey



Did you find the information presented in the video clear and easy to understand?

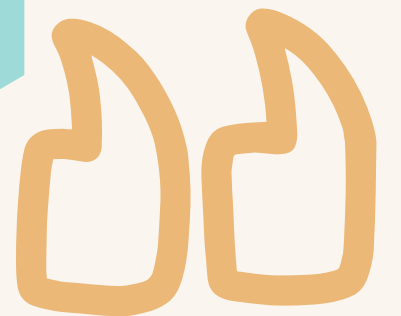
How much prior knowledge do you have on this subject?

How did watching this video affect your understanding of this topic?

How many children under age 6 do you have?

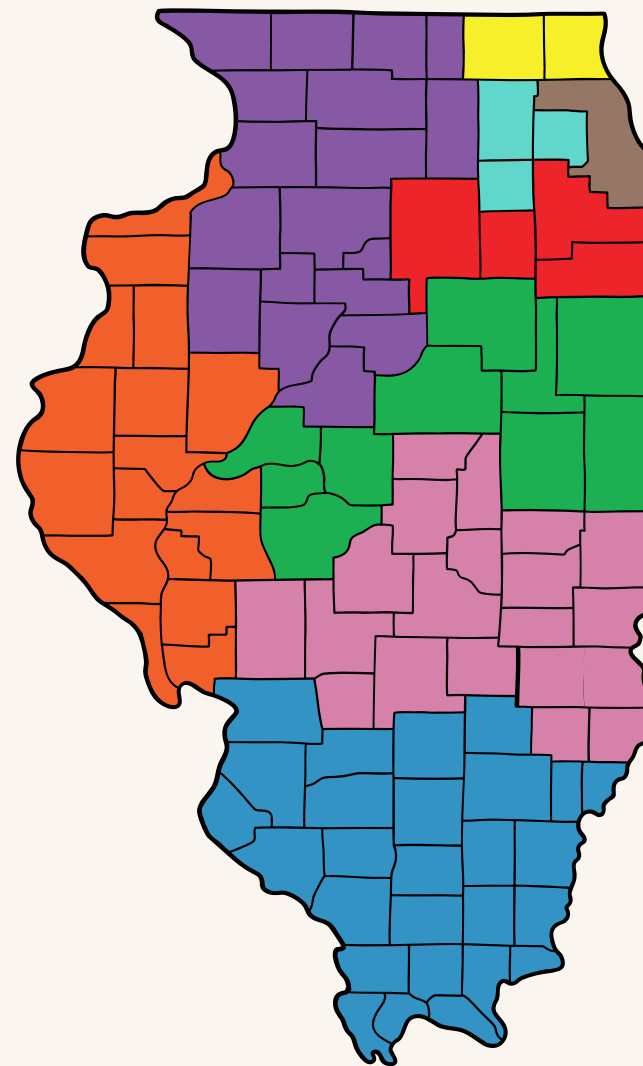
How likely are you to access the other resources on The Early Years website?

Questions, comments, recommendations?



Parent QI Group

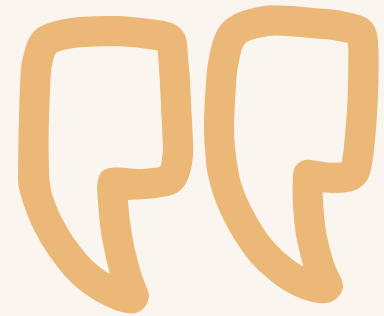
- Total of 8 parents
- ADIs of 9 and 10, a couple 4s
- 2 identified having kids with medical needs
- Covered blue, purple, and yellow regions
- All had kids 6 years old or younger



Top Takeaways

- All very supportive of the materials
- Youngest parent had most to share

Provider Survey



Did you find the information presented in the video clear and easy to understand?

Was your client engaged during the video?

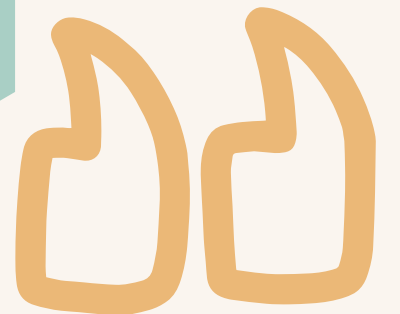
Was the length of the video appropriate for your session with this client?

How likely are you to use the information from this video in your work with families?

How easy is this video to incorporate into your sessions?

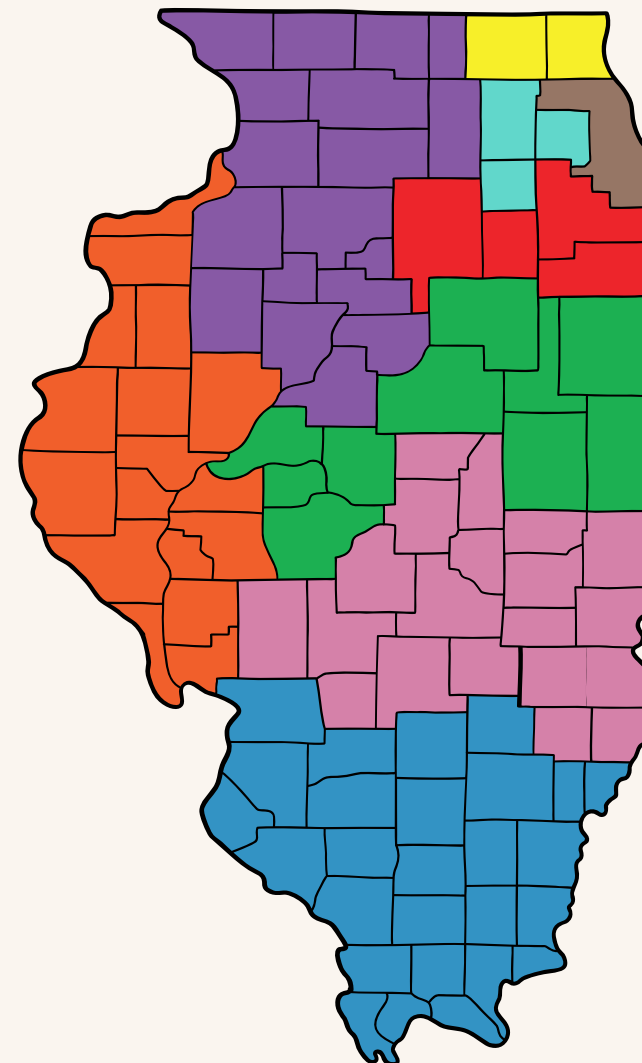
What is your job title?

How long have you been serving families in this role?



Provider QI Group

- Total of 10 Providers
- Parents as Teachers
- Itinerants
- Developmental Therapist/Hearing
- Covered all regions (except for orange)
- All serve kids under 6



Top Takeaways

- Great engagement between the providers
- Their survey feedback was very neutral, but the 1 hour zoom went very quick
- Their milestone markers were different than the ones we used, however they are excited to use materials.

Project Timeline

April:
Voiceover and
record for intro
videos, outlines for
first set of videos.

May:
Review outlines for
2 full length module
videos

June:
Begin outlines for
second set of full
length module
videos

July:
Assign and hold QI
for first set

August:
Adjust 2nd set of
module videos
based on
recommendations
Hold QI

September:
Complete final
edits. Translate to
Spanish. Modules
added to Illinois
Sound Beginnings.



QUESTIONS?

Thank you!



Hanna Swearingner
hswearingner.gbys@gmail.com



Carrie Balian
ilhvgbys@gmail.com



Kate Jordan
kathleen.jordan@illinois.gov



Ginger Mullin
Ginger.Mullin@illinois.gov

