



Center for Family
Involvement

HOW SUPPORTING FAMILY ENGAGEMENT CAN CHANGE THEIR TRAJECTORY

National EHDI Conference 2025

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Community Alliance Chair

National CMV Foundation

Speech - Language Pathologist

Parent to a DHH+ Child



Financial Disclosure: Lisa is employed by The Partnership for People with Disabilities at VCU as the Family Engagement Coordinator and DHH Project Director.



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Learning Objectives

1. Participants will identify barriers to family engagement in EHDl systems of care.
2. Participants will explain workflow for engaging families in family to family support.
3. Participants will propose a meaningful family engagement activity to implement in their state.





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What is Family Engagement?





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What is Family Engagement?

Building relationships with families



Background

CFI is Virginia's state- supported Family Based Organization (FBO). We are Virginia's Parent to Parent USA representative as well.

We have provided family to family support in VA for over 17 years and support to families whose children receive a diagnosis of DHH (at the point of diagnosis) for over 10 years through our DHH Family Navigator program.



Background

CFI has a network of 20 staff and 40+ volunteers in the wider network.

We have 1 part-time staff member and 6 volunteers in the DHH family support program.

We get approximately 150 referrals a year from EHDI team.

Make around 320 contacts from EHDI referrals per year providing 1:1 family support.



Barriers to Family Engagement



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Barriers to Family Engagement



*Time/
Financial*



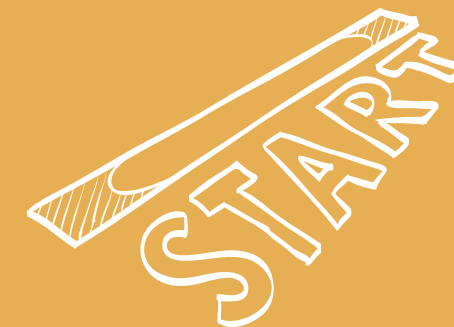
*Innefective
methods for
reaching out*



*Language
Barriers*



*Trust/
Relationships*



*Family
Readiness*



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Our Team

Our goal is for the team to be representative of the constituents that we are supporting. That we would represent diverse backgrounds, languages, communication modalities, etiologies, and diagnosis experiences.



Family Engagement Workflow

1

EHDI team members contact families with children with permanent hearing loss diagnoses and offer family to family support.

2

DHH Project Director receives the referral and reaches out to the family to gain more information to make the best family to family support match.





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Family Engagement Workflow

3

Family Navigators reach out to families and offer 1:1 family to family support. Contacts are made via phone, text, email.

4

Once matches are “complete” Project Director gets updates and can follow up or make additional referrals.





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Family Engagement Workflow

5

The EHDI team gets case updates from the Project Director.

6

Families can contact the Project Director or their Family Navigator for more support as needed!



Why Family Engagement Matters

Parents are their child's first advocate...

Providers change over time, the child's family remains.

Parents are their child's first teacher...

Higher levels of family engagement improve children's developmental and academic outcomes.

Parents that feel empowered and confident...

Have more confident kids and stronger bonds within the family.

Family Engagement

How Do We Get it Right?

Care - genuine empathy

Connect - meet where they are, build a bridge/ share a story

Collaborate with families to build their network

Contribute - they make the decisions for their next step

Cheer them on!





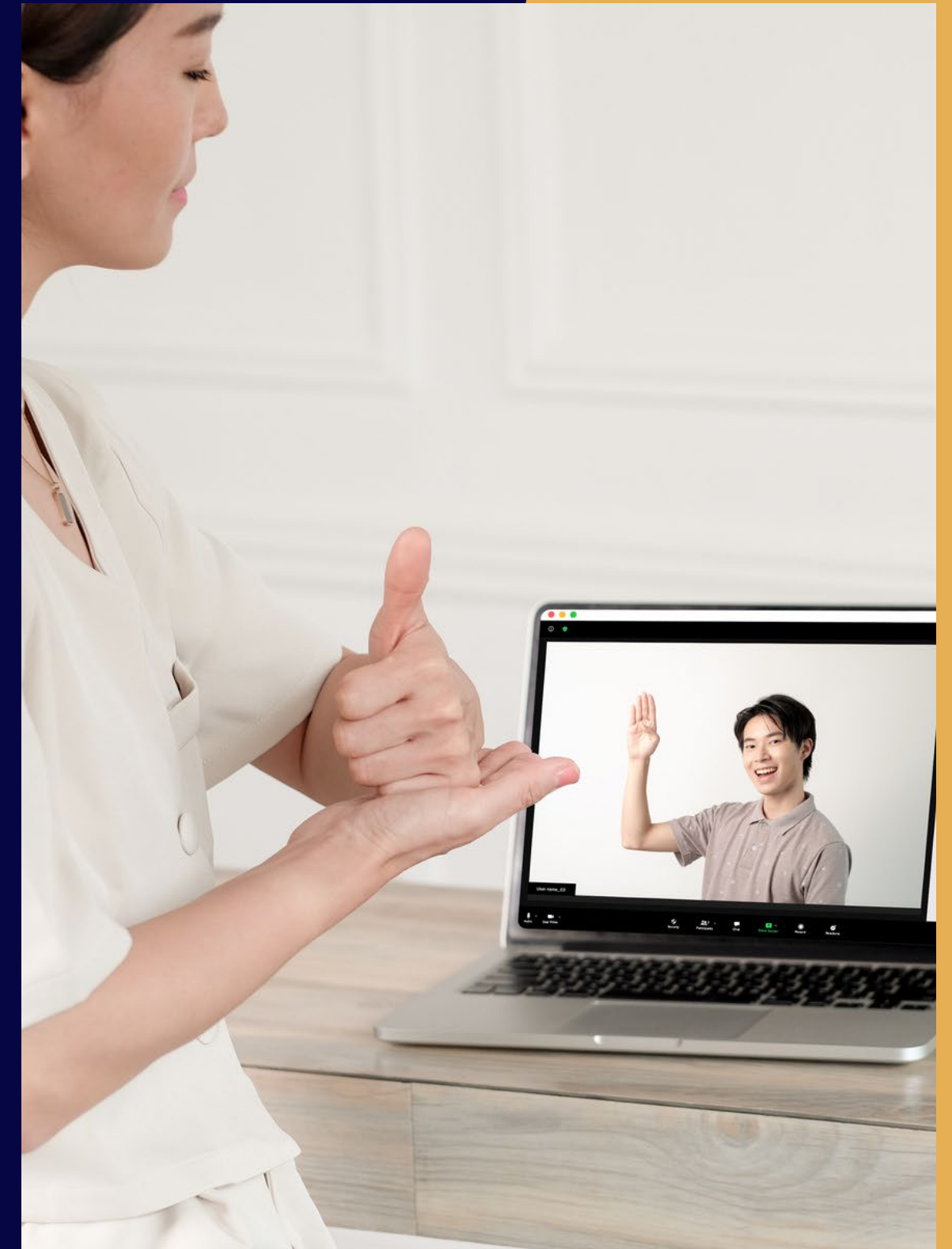
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Support to Families

What we do



- ***now** 1:1 family to family support*
- *Private family facebook page*
- *Monthly virtual support group meetings*
- *Partnering with Early Intervention, state school for the Deaf, and others to raise awareness*
- *Sponsoring events across the state through grant program*
- *State EHDI conference and family engagement event*



Quality Improvements

1. More virtual events
2. More support targeted to our less- reached areas of our state (rural communities, ESL)
3. Widening our partnerships with other stakeholders to reach previously un-reached
4. Triggering follow up calls at later increments (6 months, 1 year most diagnosis)
5. Recruitment and retention of volunteers to serve as Family Navigators

Engagement Activities

01



Local meet ups at libraries or parks in the area- low commitment and low cost. Ask a librarian if you can recommend a title for storytime and coordinate invites.

Sporting event (minor league or major league teams)- free for x number of families or buying tickets directly from the team (in a set section for your group)

02



03



Author events: inviting a local author (if possible) to read their book to the group and do a book signing/ give away.

Engagement Activities



Walk for Hearing or other larger organization meet ups: have a table or a team to participate together so people know where to find you.

04 Seasonal/ holiday- focused events (signing Santa, Spring/ Mother's day gardening event, back to school picnic...



05



06

Parents' night out: paint night, dessert event (sponsored for X number of people to sign up, donated by local business).



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Support to Families

Potential Partners



Diagnosis-specific organizations (Usher Syndrome, CMV...)

State School for the Deaf

Early Intervention localities

Public School Teachers of the Deaf

Audiology offices

Children's Hospitals

State Department of Education

State Department of the Deaf/ Hard of Hearing

University Communication Sciences (SLP + AUD) programs

Private practices

Noteable DHH Adults in your community



Worth the Ask!





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What is Working in Your State?

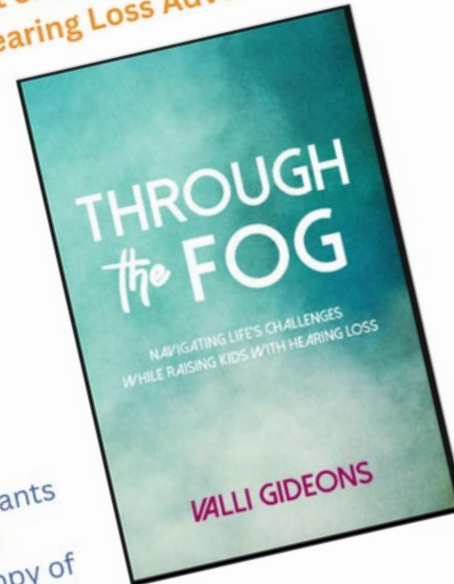




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Join us Thursday, April 10 at 7:30 pm

for an Author Q&A with
Valli Gideons, Author of Through The Fog,
parent of two DHH teens
and Hearing Loss Advocate



**CENTER FOR
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Virtual Support
Group for families
with DHH Children
in Virginia

The first 50 registrants
will receive a
complimentary copy of
Through The Fog!

Registration required!
[Tinyurl.com/DHH-Author-Event](https://tinyurl.com/DHH-Author-Event)



**CENTER FOR
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Virtual Support
Group for families
with DHH Children
in Virginia



Come with your
questions, come to build
community, connect
with other parents,
resources & more!

Registration required!
[Tinyurl.com/DHH-Family-Call](https://tinyurl.com/DHH-Family-Call)

Join us Thursday, March 13 at 7:30 pm

We'll be joined by Melissa Tumblin, Founder
& Executive Director of The Ear Community-
a supportive community for individuals
born with Microtia & Atresia



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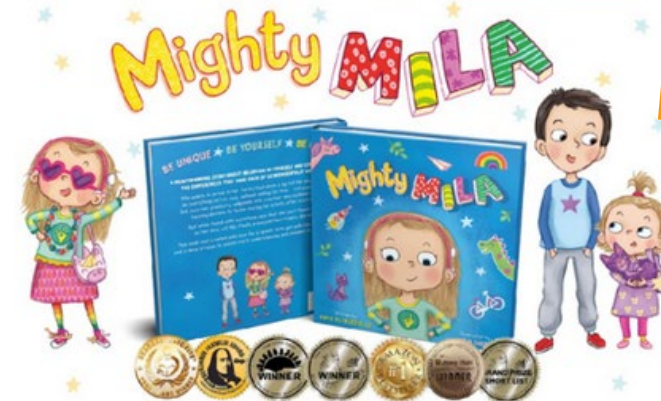
Virtual Support
Group for families
with DHH Children
in Virginia



for a pajama party and
Author reading with
Katie Petruzzello,
Author of Mighty Mila
& Mighty Mila: Dream Job
and parent to two DHH
children!



The first 50 registrants will receive a
complimentary signed copy of Mighty Mila!



Registration required!
[Tinyurl.com/DHH-Author-Event](https://tinyurl.com/DHH-Author-Event)



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Monthly DHH family
support group for
Virginia families

Connect
with other
families,
resources
and more!



Let's Stay Connected



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