

# Using the 12 Key Rights to Support Family Conversations: A PDSA Evaluation by WA State Hands & Voices

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## BACKGROUND

The 12 Key Principles for Early Intervention from the Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH) 2007 Supplement provide a foundational framework to guide family-centered early intervention for children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH).

Often buried in extensive documents, these principles are rarely accessible at identification or Early Intervention (EI) enrollment. Gaps in provider awareness and limited access to DHH EI specialists and unbiased DHH family-to-family support can lead to limited resource navigation, inconsistent messaging, and delays in services for families statewide.

Families frequently ask, **“How will I know my child will be successful?”**

To address this gap, we developed **12 Key Rights: A Parent’s Overview to Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH) Early Intervention** — a family-friendly resource grounded in JCIH best practices, designed to promote clarity and consistency for families and providers. Created by parents and professionals and approved by the WA State EHDDI Advisory Board, we set out to evaluate its effectiveness.

## STUDY FOCUS

- Support families in understanding and owning their journey
- Explore how this tool can complement what providers are already doing
- Enhance consistency and shared language across teams
- Partner in developing tools that truly work for families and providers

## INNOVATION

## THE 12 KEY RIGHTS

**12 KEY RIGHTS** A Parent's Overview to Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH) Early Intervention

This is a resource tool to help new families work with someone experienced in the field.

- 1** **Timely & Coordinated**  
My child enters Early Intervention as soon as possible after hearing loss is confirmed. Our team has service providers that are communicating with each other.
- 2** **Service Coordinators with Specialized Knowledge**  
Make sure that the person in charge of our individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is trained to coordinate services for children who are DHH.
- 3** **Qualified E.I. Providers**  
Make sure that our family and our child have qualified providers with extensive experience, no matter what communication approach is used.
- 4** **Children with Additional Disabilities**  
Make sure communication and language development are included from the start in my family's services.
- 5** **Culturally Diverse Backgrounds**  
Providers are sensitive to the diverse needs of our family and experienced in meeting those needs.
- 6** **Progress Monitoring Every 6 Months**  
Designed to make sure that the intervention is working for my child. Developmental skills must be measured by a DHH professional.
- 7** **Audiology Monitoring**  
Consistent and frequent. Making sure my deaf or hard of hearing child doesn't "fall through the cracks."
- 8** **Families encouraged to participate at the local or state level.**  
My experience as a parent is valuable and important in shaping services delivery for other families.
- 9** **Access to Community**  
Structured and casual opportunities for our family to connect with other DHH families and support each other.
- 10** **Meaningful Roles for DHH Individuals**  
Adults who are DHH play an important role in shaping services for families and making systems better.
- 11** **Support, Mentorship, & Guidance**  
Access to support and encouragement from DHH individuals for our DHH child and our family.
- 12** **Best Practices applied to Intervention**  
Our DHH child deserves the highest quality services and resources so they can reach their fullest potential.

Scan Here  
READ THE FULL FAMILY FRIENDLY DOCUMENT

Connect with a Parent Guide Today to Learn More

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**80,932**  
Number of Babies Born in 2023

**~170**  
Number of Babies Born with Hearing Differences

**95%**  
Of Families Have No Prior Knowledge of Deafness

**“This is all new. I'm unsure.”**  
We are here to help. Allow a Parent Guide to come alongside you.

**Who are we?**  
WASHINGTON STATE  
**HANDS & VOICES™**

We are Washington State Hands & Voices. As a parent-driven organization we understand first-hand the value that comes with learning up to date information, having guidance by experienced parents, and making connections with other families and community members regardless of communication mode. Our Guide By Your Side (GBYS) program matches new families with one-on-one trained parents called Parent Guides.

**What is Guide By Your Side?**

Guide By Your Side provides unbiased emotional support and resources by trained Parent Guides to families of children with hearing loss.

Guide By Your Side Program Provides:

- A Parent Guide to listen and share resources.
- Validation and empowerment.
- Compassion and knowledge from parents who have a child that is Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- Information, support, and tools to navigate challenging systems.

Scan Here TO CONNECT WITH A PARENT GUIDE

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## METHODS: PLAN - DO - STUDY - ACT

### PLAN

**Problem:** Existing JCIH materials are overwhelming or not shared by providers.

**Aim:** Develop and test a plain-language tool to support meaningful family-provider dialogue.

**Participants:** Audiologists, EI providers, DHH specialists, and parents. Providers registered to participate; parents provided consent.

### DO

- During a **3 month period** (Oct-Jan), providers conducted visits with established families across multiple stages of the EI process.
- **Equipped with a structured support packet**, providers led confident, tool-based conversations with parents. Technical assistance was provided.
- Providers and parents **completed a brief confidential post-intervention survey**.

### STUDY

- **91% engagement**
- **100% increase in confidence**

Emerging themes:

- **High engagement** during conversations
- Families identified **multiple rights** as relatively important
- **Increased clarity** on emerging advocacy
- **Reduced overwhelm** compared to traditional JCIH
- **High provider support**; easy to use, impactful, and practice-aligned

### ACT

#### Statewide dissemination

Systems alignment phase

- Share findings with Washington EHDDI Advisory board and stakeholders
- Expand distribution across early intervention teams
- Offer Technical Assistance in use of tool
- Integrate into WA State Guide By Your Side™

**91%**

Families engaged in discussion  
(n = 11)

- Plain language
- Conversational tool
- English & Spanish
- Launches advocacy

**100%**

Confidence

100% families reported increased confidence  
(n = 2)

**11**

Interactions

11 professional piloted conversations with families statewide

## SUMMARY

The 12 Key Rights tool improved family-provider dialogue, increased provider confidence, and clarified rights for families, showing promise for statewide adoption. Limitations include a small participant pool and inclusion of only English-speaking families, as the study occurred during holidays and flu season. Our state will support dissemination and use of the tool through partnerships and by offering technical assistance to early intervention teams.

*We want this information in the hands of families - early, clearly, and in language that affirms their role as decision-makers in their child's journey.*

**-Christine Griffin**  
Washington State Hands & Voices



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