



**Students & Parents: Creating Space
for Collaboration and Learning**

Agenda

- Welcome!
- Introduction to the EHDI Student Committee
- Background – Student & Parent Collaboration
- Defining Family Centered Care
- Parent Perspectives
- Discussion & Collaboration
- Session Survey

Introduction to EHDI Student Committee

The EHDI Student Committee is composed of individuals who are involved in planning activities for student attendees during the conference. The 2026 Student Committee is excited to offer events that provide opportunities for students to learn more about EHDI, professionals and their roles, and to network with outstanding parents, advocates, professionals, and peers!

Connect with us online!



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Students Of EHDI Group

Meet the 2026 Student Planning Committee!



**Professional
Advisor**



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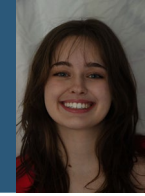
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Monica Zmudzinski
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Background

- Why student & parent collaboration?
 - Students do not have enough opportunities to connect with families in the EHDI system, especially in clinical programs.
 - Evaluations from prior student events, paired with the personal experiences of student committee members, motivated the development of a session where future EHDI providers and parents with lived experience could come together to discuss the future of EHDI.
- Purpose
 - Through this session, we hope to create a space for students and parents to learn from one another about what family-centered care means to them.
 - We are also hopeful that this opportunity will create meaningful relationships between future providers and communities with lived experience to enrich the future of EHDI.

Learning Objectives

- Upon completion of this activity, attendees will be able to...
 - **Describe family-centered EHDI care.**
 - **Identify one barrier of family-centered EHDI care from the perspective of a family.**
 - **Identify one barrier of family-centered EHDI care from the perspective of a student or service provider.**

What is family-centered care?

- The 2025 revised CAA statement in coordination with the American Speech, Language Hearing Association (ASHA) defines patient- and family-centered care as...

Person- and Family-Centered Care

For the purposes of programmatic accreditation, the CAA defines "person- and family-centered care" as the following:

Audiologists and speech-language pathologists provide services to a wide population of individuals that could include those with cultural and linguistic expectations, differences, and histories with which the service provider may not be familiar.

Effective clinical relationships require service providers to understand and respect values, attitudes, beliefs, circumstances, experiences, modes of communication, and mores that differ from their own. It also requires service providers to consider and respond with respect to these differences in planning, implementing, and evaluating individualized health education programs, assessments, and interventions.

Person- and family-centered care as it is referenced in these standards refers to, "integrated ... services delivered in a setting and manner that is responsive to individuals and their goals, values, and preferences, in a system that supports good provider-patient communication and empowers individuals receiving care and providers to make effective care plans together."²

What is family-centered care?

- While the Institute for Patient and Family Centered Care (IPFCC) defines these care approaches as...
 - "Patient- and family-centered care is an approach to the planning, delivery, and evaluation of health care that is grounded in mutually beneficial partnerships among health care professionals, patients, and families. It redefines the relationships in health care by placing an emphasis on collaborating with people of all ages, at all levels of care, and in all health care settings. This collaboration assures that health care is responsive to priorities, preferences, and values of patients and their families. In patient- and family-centered care, patients and families define their “family” and determine how they will participate in care and decision-making. This perspective is based on the recognition that patients and families are essential allies for health care quality and safety—not only in direct care encounters but also in efforts to improve health care for all, including in research."

What is family-centered care?

- In 2024, Moeller and colleagues introduced *Family Centered Early Intervention Deaf/Hard of Hearing of Hearing Guiding Concepts*
 - Five Guiding Values are essential for the implementation of the ten FCEI-DHH guidelines:
 1. being family-centered
 2. responding to diversity
 3. involving invested parties, especially families and individuals who are DHH
 4. fostering holistic child development
 5. ensuring fundamental human rights

Family-Centered Early Intervention Deaf/Hard of Hearing (FCEI-DHH)

PRINCIPLES

FOUNDATION

- | | | |
|----------|--|--|
| 1 | Early intervention following identification | Early identification that an infant or child is DHH should be linked to provision of early, timely and equitable access to supports and interventions as soon as possible in the child's life. |
| 2 | Family-EI Provider relationships | Family-EI Provider partnerships are important for empowering families. In FCEI-DHH, EI Providers aim to collaborate with families, with both sides bringing knowledge and expertise. |

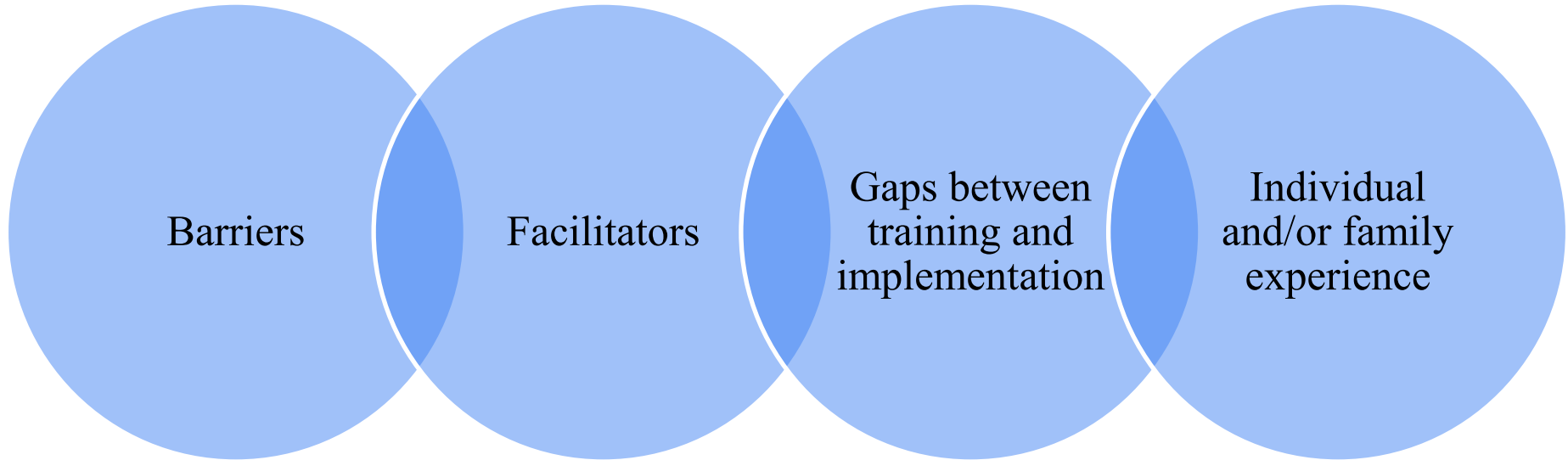
SUPPORT

- | | | |
|----------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 3 | Family support | Families with DHH children are all different. It is important to recognize each families' unique strengths, concerns, and needs, each of which will change over time. Family support should also adapt to meet families where they are. |
| 4 | Child well-being | Child well-being can be accomplished when early intervention focuses on the whole child in the context of their family, including infant/child development, positive social-emotional functioning, child welfare, and safeguarding. |
| 5 | Language and communication | Families should be supported to promote their children's language and communication development in natural, daily routines. Early and consistent access access to language and communication is important. |
| 6 | Family decisions | It is vital to involve family members in early intervention. FCEI-DHH provides support, information, and experiences that strengthen families to make informed decisions for themselves and their children. |

STRUCTURE

- | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 7 | Trained FCEI-DHH Providers | EI Providers need to have certain competencies (general, EI-, and DHH-specific). Trained EI Providers offer effective, professional, equitable, and inclusive FCEI-DHH supports to promote children and family outcomes |
| 8 | Teamwork among professionals | FCEI-DHH team members come from various backgrounds and experiences. Communication and collaboration across all members of the team is essential and will support positive outcomes for DHH children and their families. |
| 9 | Developmental assessment | Meaningful continuous assessment will inform the amount and type of support provided. Professionals need skills to do assessments, manage language(s), and interpret results for planning interventions. |
| 10 | Progress monitoring | Progress monitoring is a necessary component of ensuring that the support provided to families is effective across families and across FCEI-DHH programs/services and systems. |

What does family-centered care mean to you?



**Please Welcome our Panel
Members!**



Panel Members



Heather Dirks



Aubri Ogden



Ashleigh Sorenson

Ashleigh Sorenson



Ashleigh Sorenson



Ashleigh Sorenson, BA, is one of Utah's EHDI Parent Consultants. She contacts families after diagnosis to provide parent to parent support and resources. Ashleigh is a parent to 3 incredible children. Her middle child, Rori, was diagnosed with severe/profound high-frequency hearing loss and fit with bilateral hearing aids at age 2 1/2 years. Ashleigh obtained her BA in Education from Pepperdine University. She previously worked with preschool-age families at the Utah School For the Deaf and Blind and is now grateful to be a part of the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Team. She loves sharing with families from a parent's perspective because she strongly believes that the first step in empowering children with hearing loss is helping their families obtain information and resources.

Aubri Ogden



Aubri Ogden



Aubri Ogden, BS, is one of Utah's EHDI Parent Consultants. She works with Utah's EHDI team and the Utah Parent Center to provide family and parent-to-parent support for the D/HH families in Utah. Aubri and her husband are parents to 3 young fun children and one on the way. Aubri's oldest daughter has severe/profound hearing loss on the left side. Aubri received a BS in Marriage and Family Studies with the Emphasis in Advocacy and Policy from Brigham Young University-Idaho hoping one day to be a voice for children. Once Aubri's daughter was diagnosed in 2020 she decided she wanted to become an advocate for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community to help build a better future for her daughter and other children like her. In 2021 Aubri started her EHDI journey by volunteering with the Parent Volunteer Network in Utah. She loves sharing her family's story to help others in similar situations.

Heather Dirks



Heather Dirks



Heather Dirks is a dedicated wife and mother of four, including a 16-year-old daughter who is deafblind. She serves as the Family Support Coordinator for both Iowa EHDI and the Iowa Deafblind Project. Drawing from both professional expertise and lived experience, Heather is committed to strengthening support systems for families navigating hearing differences and deafblindness. She works to ensure families feel connected, informed and empowered, and advocates for resources that create meaningful, lasting impact in their lives.

Panel Members



Heather Dirks



Aubri Ogden



Ashleigh Sorenson



Discussion Activity



Additional Student Events at the 25th Annual EHDI Conference

- **Visit our NEW Students of EHDI Booth (#8) in the Exhibit Hall!**
 - Collect resources from nationwide programs, research teams, and advocacy networks.
 - Create custom badge ribbons.
 - Participate in "What EHDI Means to Me" to win a Students of EHDI sticker!
 - Network and collaborate with fellow student attendees.



References

- Council on Academic Accreditation. (2025). *Guidance statement: Demonstrating compliance with Standard 3.4 A/B* (Standards-3.4-AB-Guidance-Updates-0825.pdf). American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. <https://caa.asha.org/siteassets/files/standards-3.4-ab-guidance-updates-0825.pdf>
- Institute for Patient- and Family-Centered Care. (n.d.). *Patient- and family-centered care defined*. <https://www.ipfcc.org/bestpractices/sustainable-partnerships/background/pfcc-defined.html>
- Mary Pat Moeller, Amy Szarkowski, Elaine Gale, Trudy Smith, Bianca C Birdsey, Sheila T F Moodie, Gwen Carr, Arlene Stredler-Brown, Christine Yoshinaga-Itano, FCEI-DHH International Consensus Panel , Daniel Holzinger, Family-Centered Early Intervention Deaf/Hard of Hearing (FCEI-DHH): Guiding Values, *The Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, Volume 29, Issue S1, February 2024, Pages S18–S126, <https://doi.org/10.1093/deafed/enad038>
- Wojahn Small, E., Clark, J., Hutchinson, N., Szarkowski, A. (March, 2025). *FCEI-DHH Support Principles: A “how to” presentation for EI Providers & Systems Leaders* [Conference Presentation]. Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, PA.

Thank you for coming!

Let us know your thoughts on today's session!



Stay connected with us online throughout the conference!



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Students Of EHDl Group

Join us at the **NEW Students of EHDl Booth (#8)!**

