

Virginia EHDI Program Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes

Friday, December 4, 2020

Attendees: Valerie Abbott, Ashleigh Greenwood, Judi Alonzi, Nancy Bond, Wanda Council, Ira Padhye, Patty Eitemiller, Christien Eubanks, Mona Iskander, Alison King, Debi Leekoff, Irene Schmalz, Terri Nelligan, Teri Urban, Lisa Powley, Eric Raff, Craig Derkay, Marcus Allen, Julie Durando

Interested Parties: Tracey Yurechko, Karen Brimm, Alicia Rodriguez, Deana Buck, Tom Dowling, Hillary Hodes, Lori Bobsin, Emily McGee, Britta Schwall, Jenniffer Witteborg., Valeri Luther, Jodi Crace.

VDH EHDI Staff: Daphne Miller, Deepali Sanghani, Rafeal Randolph, Antoinette Vaughan, John Rogan, Jessica Nelson.

The meeting was called to order by Ashleigh Greenwood at 10:03am. All members provided brief introductions and a review of the agenda was presented and approved. Minutes from the March 6th, 2020 meeting were approved. This was a virtual meeting using the Zoom platform and no travel or travel documents were necessary.

Standing Updates:

The VA Network of Consultants (VNOC)/ Partnership for People w/ Disabilities:

Technical Assistance: From September 1 to November 24, 2020: More than 40 calls/email requests for technical assistance were received and addressed/processed; 4 were directly from parents. Several requests become direct consultations through the Virginia Network of Consultants (VNOC) described under VNOC. In addition, 93 announcements were disseminated during this quarter; 34 of these announcements went to parents. There are currently 221 parents on the TAC-DHH database.

Virginia Network of Consultants for Professionals Who Work with Children Who are D/HH (VNOC): VNOC service requests are reported following the school year calendar, August 1 to July 3. For the 2019-20 school year, VNOC addressed 19 service requests. Consultation

requests came from school divisions across the Commonwealth. We continue to receive VNOC requests for the 2020-2021 school year.

Regional Trainings: See-the-Sound Visual Phonics: For the 22019-2020 school year, 4 trainings were completed in this decoding strategy for early reading skill development. From 2006-present, more than 1,777 people have received training in See the Sound Visual Phonics through TAC-DHH/VNOC sponsored trainings. We continue to receive requests for See the Sound Visual Phonics trainings for the 2020-2021 school year.

Statewide Professional Development: Opening Doors-Unlocking Potential 2020: The fourteenth annual professional development institute designed for teachers of the deaf/hard of hearing, related service providers, and all who work with students who are d/hh, Opening Doors-Unlocking Potential 2020: Instruction for Successful Transition, Preparing All Learners for the Future was scheduled to be held on June 23-24, 2020. However due to mandated closures of all gatherings based upon Governor's orders Opening Doors-Unlocking Potential was canceled.

Explicit Contextualized Vocabulary Instruction-DHH Webinar: Explicit Contextualized Vocabulary Instruction - DHH (ECV-DHH) is an approach to content area vocabulary instruction for use with young Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) students. This online opportunity was attended by 38 professionals who directly work with students who are deaf and hard of hearing on August 26, 2020. The recording of this webinar was placed on ttaonline and Virginia Family Special Education Connection where it can be accessed.

Life Beyond High School: Early Planning=Early Success Webinar: Life Beyond High School: Early Planning = Early Success provided its participants with knowledge of the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) services, review of transition continuum, and provided useful transition resources. This online opportunity was attended by approximately 20 professionals and parents on November 18, 2020.

Additional Activity: Virginia Early Intervention eLearning Center: Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children in Early Intervention: Tracey Yurechko edited the content and created the final assessment for this online module.

Language Acquisition Barriers of D/HH Children During COVID-19: Tracey Yurechko presented to 3 out of 5 professional learning communities regarding this topic. These web-based learning opportunities provided families and professionals with hands-on solutions to current issues in language acquisition during the pandemic.

Program Support: The TAC-DHH continues to provide assistance to Virginia Hands & Voices, the

Parent-Child-Advocate Program, Hearing Journey, and Families to Families to disseminate specific deaf and hard of hearing related event announcements.

Upcoming: Virginia Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community of Practice: Explicit Contextualized Vocabulary Instruction - Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Cohort I: January 13 and 20, 2021

Early Intervention:

The Infant & Toddler Connection of Virginia (ITCVA) action report series focuses on efforts underway to improve the long-term sustainability of Virginia's Part C early intervention system. You've told us about the fiscal challenges and provider shortages you are facing on the local level. We hear you, we understand you, we appreciate your hard work, and we are working on your behalf every day to address these challenges. These are challenges we have faced and successfully addressed before in the ITCVA, and we can do it again by working together and focusing on actionable strategies to make improvements.

Actions to address Medicaid managed care challenges:

The EI-MCO Workgroup convened by the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards (VACSB) met most recently in June and August. During these meetings, the group worked to finalize process charts for each MCO that cover all of the process topics discussed through the VACSB workgroup and detail the specific procedures used by each MCO. Once completed, the local Part C systems will receive a copy of this process document. Procedures for securing interpreters from the MCOs continue to be challenging for Part C providers, and conversations are ongoing to identify potential process improvements in this area.

Actions to address provider shortages:

The ability to use telehealth for service delivery during the COVID-19 public health emergency has had a significant and positive impact on provider availability. Local systems with previous non-compliance on timeline requirements due to provider shortages have been able to correct noncompliance. DBHDS continues to advocate with DMAS to permanently allow this service delivery option.

In an effort to continue growing the early intervention workforce, collaboration is underway for a new EI/Preservice Consortium consisting of James Madison University, George Mason University, Old Dominion University and Virginia Commonwealth University. The focus is on sharing resources, supporting preservice development for future early interventionists, and assisting with field placements.

Actions to address broader fiscal picture:

In addition to helping local systems make the most efficient use of available providers, telehealth offers a cost-effective way of delivering services. As mentioned above, DBHDS continues to advocate with DMAS to permanently allow this service delivery option.

In the spring, the General Assembly allocated to Part C, \$1.2 million in caboose bill funding for SFY-20, \$2.5 million in additional funding for SFY-21, and \$3.8 million for SFY-22. Unlike most new funding, these new state general funds for Part C remained in the budget despite COVID-19. What an amazing show of support for the work you all do to support some of our most vulnerable infants and toddlers and their families! The caboose bill funding allowed us to meet about 75% of the local need for additional funds at the end of the last fiscal year. The increases for SFY-21 and SFY-22 provide critical funding to sustain our service delivery system.

After being on hiatus for several months for members to address COVID-related priorities, the Infrastructure Work Group resumed its work this month. During the August meeting, the group used data and experience to complete a SWOT analysis of where our system is today and brainstormed where we want to be in 5 years. Meeting notes and materials are or soon will be posted to the SSIP section of our website (<http://infantva.org/SupervisionMonitoring.htm>).

Working with local systems for ASL and Cued speech. Working with VNOC to get into pool. Looking at telehealth for statewide opportunities. Once contracts are in place, will start providing services statewide.

Newborn Screening (Dried Blood-Spot and CCHD):

The Fall NBS-DBS Advisory Committee was held on November 12, 2020. In addition to providing programmatic updates, the advisory committee board members received a presentation on a series of workgroup sessions held over the summer to consider recommending adding the Lysosomal Storage Disorder, Krabbe Disease, to Virginia's core newborn screening panel. The board members did not recommend adding Krabbe disease at this time. The program is in the process of hiring a long term follow-up nurse to support initiatives with expanding follow-up for the program.

Virginia Hearing Aid Loan Bank:

Currently updating VAHALB loan application.

Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN):

We have been working hard on keeping things stable during COVID. A priority has been keeping operations going for all of our programs because the partnerships we have with major medical centers in our state are integral to the health and development of children. All of our contracts have been drafted and sent out from VDH and we have been working on two Requests for Proposals for two of our Care Connection for Children centers. One of the biggest areas of focus this year will be on health equity and responding to our needs assessment. Work has already begun on identifying gaps in service with our Child Development Clinic partners across the Commonwealth. We have also been in discussion with DMAS to strengthen relationships between our care coordinators and Medicaid care coordinators. Last, we plan to fully operationalize our proposed partnerships with medical centers across the state to implement a Comprehensive Adult Sickle Cell Clinic Network.

DMAS to hold virtual statewide meeting.

Center For Family Involvement @ VCU-Family to Family

F2F of Hampton roads, drive by Santa experience. Outside in parking lot of church. 12/12/20 at 12pm.

For the period March 4, 2020 to December 4, 2020: Family to Family support: 36 families were referred by the EHDI program to the 1-3-6 Family Educators. 22 were under a year old; 10 were between one and two years old; and 4 were older than two years old. 20 infants were males and 16 were females. 2 were in NICU (greater than 5 days), one was exposed to opioids, and another had ototoxic medication. 5 babies were identified with one of the following: auditory neuropathy, multiple disabilities, and genetic syndromes. Information/data collection from the 1-3-6 FE contacts with referred families are now being directly entered by CFI staff into VISITS in the Shared Plan of Care.

Joined the Access and Functional Needs Officer (AFNO) to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) in March 2020. Participated in almost all of the calls - they have been weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, and now once every other month.

Staff attended the following NCHAM and Hands & Voices (national and state) webinars: March 26, 2020 Hands & Voices Special Office Hours. April 2, 2020 Hands & Voices Special Office Hours. April 9, 2020 Hands & Voices Special Office Hours. May 28, 2020 Hands & Voices "Fostering Joy". July 13, 2020 Hands & Voices "Creating an EHDI System that Partners with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Adults". August 8, 2020 NCHAM "The Evolution of Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Programs for Infants and Young Children: Past, Present, and Future". August 6, 2020 Hands & Voices Office Hours Follow-Up. August 27, 2020 Hands & Voices "Building Collaborative Relationships for Families".

October 15, 2020 Virginia Network of Consultants. October 15, 2020 NCHAM “Intergenerational Engagement in Early Intervention”. October 29, 2020 Hands & Voices “Supporting Families During the time of COVID-19”. November 19, 2020 Hands & Voices “Raising up Diverse Leaders”

1-3-6 Family Educator meetings and trainings were held: March 30, 2020, April 27, 2020, July 22, 2020, October 26, 2020.

Collaboration with family-led groups and organizations in Virginia: In November 2020, the CFI reached out to four (4) family support organizations to provide funding for programming geared towards families of infants and young children. Staff at CFI are currently in the process of working with Virginia Hands & Voices, Virginia Hearing Journey, Families to Families (Hampton Roads) and the Parent Child Advocate (PCA) program to distribute these EHDI funds - which must be used by March 31, 2021 for the benefit of families with children 0-36 months of age.

Video Library: In collaboration with VEHDIP, the 1-3-6 FE and other parents are creating a library of short videos for parents of children with newly diagnosed hearing loss. The videos will be accessible on both the CFI and the EHDI websites. Putting together 2 minute videos of themselves.

Publications: Two fotonovelas for Spanish Speaking Families were created (one for a baby just identified and the second one for the baby diagnosed with hearing loss). They are at the printer and will be shipped to hospital screening teams and audiology clinics in January 2021. The American Sign Language Resources in Virginia brochure is in the process of being updated. A new version will be available in late January 2021

Learning Communities Updates: As of February 2020, all 5 EHDI Learning Communities transitioned over to local leadership. While the sudden and extended closing of schools, government offices and businesses in March paused the groups for several months, nearly all of them have begun meeting again (virtually). The statewide learning community group kicked off on November 19. This new group, with representatives from across the state, includes leaders and active members from each of the five communities and a wide variety of infant and early childhood professionals connected to the EHDI process as well as several engaged parents.

COVID Grant: Through a 7-month mini grant from HRSA/CDC, the VEHDIP and CFI are partnering to conduct a needs assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on 1-3-6 processes and on families. Information will be collected through surveys to learning community members, families (supported by CFI and family-led groups), and during a February 2021 parent-professional event. Findings from the needs assessment will be shared with both the state learning community and EHDI advisory group for discussion and planning.

VA School for the Deaf & Blind (VSDB):

No new updates.

Department of Education:

Early Childhood Unification: Governor Northam signed legislation that formally requires the unification of Early Childhood in Virginia. In July, 2020 the Director of the Head Start Collaboration Office as well as the Quality Improvement and Professional Development team transitioned to the VDOE from the VA Department of Social Services. Additional steps will occur in the future. This includes moving oversight of child care to the VDOE as of July 1, 2021. Transitioning all the policies and programs that support early care and education—including Head Start, the Child Care Subsidy program, licensing and monitoring, and quality improvement and professional development—to VDOE establishes a single point of accountability for school readiness in the Commonwealth.

COVID-19 Updates: School divisions are responsible for the free appropriate public education (FAPE) of its students eligible for special education services with an IEP. School divisions across Virginia continue to evaluate health and safety considerations as COVID-19 continues to escalate. School divisions are providing instruction using a variety of means including in-person instruction, virtual, or a hybrid approach. Approximately 75% of our school divisions are providing some level of inperson instruction to children in early childhood special education who have an individualized education program (IEP).

FAQs: The Office of Early Childhood at VDOE has developed an Office of Early Childhood FAQ and a Transition from Part C to Part B FAQ.

http://doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/office/covid-19-faq.shtml#ec

Now Accepting Applications for: the NEW Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC) - Due December 18. The Board of Education (BOE) is now accepting applications for the Early Childhood Advisory Committee (ECAC). The ECAC's role will be to review and advise the BOE on all programs, systems, and regulations related to Virginia's new unified early childhood system in the Commonwealth. Members will serve a three-year term beginning on March 1, 2021. Early childhood educators, systems leaders, parents, and advocates are encouraged to apply. The Board seeks diverse representation in terms of race, ethnicity, home language, and geographic location among the appointees. Information about the specific categories of membership and application instructions are included in Superintendent's Memo #296-20 posted on November 6, 2020. The application is available in Attachment A. Applications must be received by Friday, December 18, 2020. Please contact Rebecca Ullrich by email at Rebecca.Ullrich@doe.virginia.gov or Emily Webb at Emily.Webb@doe.virginia.gov with questions.

Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards Presented to the Board of Education The Office of Early Childhood has worked closely with early childhood experts and stakeholders over a two year period to update the current Foundation Blocks for Learning and produce a comprehensive, birth-to-five guidance document that will support more children to enter kindergarten ready. Virginia's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), Birth-Five

Learning Guidelines were presented to the Board of Education on November 19 for initial review. The final Board review of the ELDS will occur in January 2021.

The ELDS will be the early learning guidelines for birth-to-five programs beginning with the 2021-2022 school year. VDOE will support appropriate use of the learning through ongoing training and information for the full diversity of programs and educators. Please look for updates on how to access the final version of the new ELDS and introductory training materials in subsequent editions of Readiness Connections or other Office of Early Childhood communications.

Quality Matters: Virginia's Vision for a Unified Quality Measurement & Improvement System (Recorded Webinar and Survey) Legislation passed by the Virginia General Assembly requires the establishment of a unified measurement and improvement system, which will be required of all publicly-funded early learning programs, including school-based preK (VPI, ECSE, Title I), Head Start/Early Head Start and childcare centers and family day homes that participate in the child care subsidy program. This effort will begin with two learning years, the first of which will begin in 2021-2022. By fall 2023-2024, all publicly-funded programs in the state will participate in the unified measurement system, with ratings published by fall 2024. On October 28th, information was shared related to the legislation, timeline and process for developing Virginia's new unified system. For anyone who was unable to attend the live session, a recording is now available. A survey will be open through December 15th for colleagues to provide feedback during development. Participation is encouraged as an opportunity to share thoughts, perspectives, and questions. If your organization would like to have a follow-up conversation or if you'd like to schedule an overview presentation for the programs you work with, please contact Kris Meyers at Kris.Meyers@doe.virginia.gov

Resources from the October 28th webinar: Recording, Survey to provide feedback, PowerPoint.

Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction: To ensure more children enter school prepared for success, Virginia is measuring and strengthening teacher-child interactions and instruction across birth-to-five classrooms in family day homes, childcare, Head Start and school-based preschool classrooms. Starting in the 2020-21 school year, this will include ECSE classrooms. The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) is a widely-used and rigorously-validated observational tool that will be used to complete classroom observations twice a year. Results of the observations will be used to inform professional development and improve quality across all classrooms.

Working Together: A Framework for Effective Transitions from Part C to Part B Webinar - New Resource Available. The Virginia Department of Education in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services recorded a webinar titled Working Together: A Framework for Effective Transitions from Part C to Part B. The webinar is

designed to facilitate a work session between Part C and Part B for the purpose of 1) enhancing a collaborative working relationship, 2) implementing strategies and processes to support a successful transition for families and children, and 3) updating and maintaining local interagency agreements. The webinar is intended to be viewed jointly with participants from the Part C and Part B systems. A presentation guide accompanies the webinar to guide discussion, document responses, and use as a reference for editing interagency agreements. Access to the webinar recording, and materials are available on the LEADS website.

Deaf-Blind Project:

VA Deaf-Blind Child Count: December 1, 2019 Update: 5 students under the age of 3 reported. Integrated Training Collaborative released a EI Module on Deaf-Blindness in September.

VA Dept. for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH):

Note – VDDHH did not release a FY20 Q4 report due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Executive Management: Statewide Interagency Team (SIT) comprises of four agencies, the VDDHH, the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) and the Valley Community Service Board. The SIT has been reviewing and coding comments from all of the town hall meetings and categorizing them into different priorities. The ultimate goal is to release an updated ‘needs assessment’ report. SIT monthly meetings are now virtual meetings via Zoom platform.

VDDHH Advisory Board: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was no May or August meeting of the 9-member advisory board. Kathi Mestayer of Williamsburg, VA representation on the Advisory Board has expired on June 30, serving two terms (eight years). On September 11, Governor Northam appointed Karen Englehardt of Fairfax, VA as a Deaf or Hard of Hearing representative and reappointed Susi Wilbur (deaf representative) as well as Timothy Patterson (parent representative) to second terms. The November meeting will be held as a virtual meeting via Zoom platform

Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association (VHHA) “Patients Come First” Podcast: The VHHA requested VDDHH to participate in a podcast session. The 20 minute podcast interview with the Director focused generally on deaf and hard of hearing patients’ access to the healthcare system and the challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. The episode is available on www.vhha.com and VDDHH Facebook page.

Virginia Relay: Manager - For the interim, Director Raff continue to perform the duties of the Virginia Relay manager. Last August, the annual Consumer Complaint log has been filed with

the Federal Communication Commission and posted on its website. COVID Impact - Due to COVID-19, many of the Hamilton Relay communication assistants has transitioned working from call centers to home. The relay call volume has increased since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and initially, many communication assistants were not coming to the call centers which impacted the speed of answer. The Federal Communication Commission has waived the requirement to answer 85% of incoming calls within 10 seconds for captioned telephone calls and extended this waiver through the fall. National Association of State Relay Administrators (NASRA) and Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program Administrators (TEDPA) Virtual Conferences – The annual conferences scheduled to be held in Indianapolis was changed to a virtual conference via Zoom. Director Raff and a staff attended the NASRA conference whereas Director Raff and the two Technology Assistance Program (TAP) staff attended the TEDPA conference. Majority of the agenda dealt with the business meeting of the two organizations however there were some discussions about the trends in the relay and equipment distribution industry as well as Federal Communication Commission (FCC) activities.

Technology Assistance Program: Contracts with Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Regional Specialists Last Spring, VDDHH suspended the contracts due to COVID-19 pandemic. Director Raff was working with DARS procurement to finalize a contract modification to make some changes to service delivery due to the COVID19. Such changes include the suspension of exhibits at events, transition of training from classrooms to online webinars, and an emphasis on appointments at offices including other COVID-19 best practices were incorporated. All service providers signed the contract modification and services resumed on August 1st.

Preparing for resumption of services: VDDHH ordered Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) items including face shields, table plexiglass partition, and alcohol wipes and researched on what products to be used for sanitizing TAP equipment. VDDHH ordered and received protective covering for all current telecommunication equipment phones and Personal FM Systems and tested for a proper fit. This will mitigate risks for COVID-19 contamination during client assessment and training when using the equipment.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Regional Specialists Updates: Completed three day training of the new Deaf /Hard of Hearing Specialist for Region 3 (Staunton area) and for Region 1 (Southwest Virginia). There is no longer group training as training is now individualized and keeping with the social distance guidelines. The contracted specialist for Region 6, South Central Virginia, has resigned. The specialist was an employee of the nonprofit Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Center, Inc. (DHHSC) and had worked with VDDHH since 2007 for thirteen (13) years. DHHSC has been advertising two job vacancies to ensure service continuity.

Interpreter Services Program (ISP): Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS) Assessments Resume - The VQAS resumed administration of the Performance Assessment on a

phased-in basis last August (three phases). To do this, the test rooms were reconfigured to ensure social distancing and brought the candidates immediately to the test room upon arrival to limit their time in the public spaces. The test administrator (a contractor) disinfects each test room between candidates. We have also requested that candidates cancel if they have been experiencing any symptoms of COVID19 or have been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed. The full plan and protocols for the return to testing were posted on the VDDHH website and sent to candidates. Phase 1 candidates are those who had registered or been scheduled prior to the suspension of testing on March 13, 2020. Phase 2 candidates are those whose current VQAS Levels expired or would expire between May 1, 2020 and August 31, 2020. Phase 3 candidates are those whose current VQAS levels would expire before January 31, 2021. Any Candidate will have that level extended until 90 working days after they test if they register and complete the assessment within the Resumption Plan guidelines. The plan to return to Written Assessment registration and administration is underway as well.

Shift from DVD to YouTube Rating: Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS) rating has historically been handled via DVDs sent to raters through UPS and returned the same way. In an effort to handle the increased volume of testing over several months while improving the completion rates of results, VDDHH is using a non-searchable private YouTube Channel to submit materials to raters. This format was implemented when assessments began in August. Streamlining these processes saved postage costs and enabled a faster turnaround time.

Department of Education (DOE) Grant Budget Submitted: The ISP Manager and VQAS Coordinator reviewed the current DOE grant to identify those activities which will not be completed by October 1 due to COVID-19 and developed a baseline proposal for the FFY20-21 grant funding. The ISP Manager worked with DOE to amend the current grant to use funds intended for onsite training and materials development (both activities affected by COVID-19). Those funds were used for a contractor to administer the VQAS Performance Assessment.

Spanish Translation Services: VDDHH is striving to be more accessible to Spanish-speaking populations who may be deaf or hard of hearing. Virginia Relay and Technology Assistance Program promotional materials are being translated whereas some applications and forms are under review. Some of the Information & Referral information packets are also being translated and also under review. In anticipation of incoming Spanish speaking contacts, we have opened an account with a state vendor to provide written and telephone translation services.

I-CAN! Virginia Project: VDDHH is a collaborative partner with VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities who have been promoting domestic violence awareness. The Ensuring Accessibility to All Survivors project released the video "Resources for Survivors who are d/Deaf or Hard of Hearing in Virginia" about abuse and the resources available for support in American Sign Language and captioning. Click on the link to view -

<https://youtu.be/OM4LxKmziIg>. VDDHH provided the backend support to edit the video clips, added captioning, and made corrections requested by the I-CAN! Virginia per their feedback.

VA Hands & Voices:

While this year has certainly looked different for Virginia Hands & Voices, we were able to shift focus and sharpen our tech skills to provide events and unbiased support in a safe way. It is hard to believe we are entering our fourth year as an active chapter! We continue to cautiously navigate through the pandemic while being mindful of the many stressors' places upon families during this time.

Our accomplishments in 2020 are summarized below: Hosted two in-person events (prior to COVID-19). Luncheon in Richmond and Coffee Social in Sterling. Hosted two fundraisers at Five Guys in Roanoke. Conducted 15 virtual events via Zoom. Hosted nine virtual social events geared towards specific audiences such as parents of newly identified children ages 0-3, DHH+ children, middle and high schoolers, etc. Hosted six Virtual Learning Opportunities offering unbiased support and resources such as an Introduction to Deaf Blindness, Educational Advocacy 101 for Families, a workshop focusing on Advocating for Your Child and The Versatility of Cued Speech. Five board members attended the 2020 Hands & Voices Virtual Leadership Conference and three registrations were raffled to current 2020 members. Exhibitor at Celebrate Communication 2020 (virtual event). Participated as an Alliance Group at the virtual Walk4Hearing sponsored by Hearing Loss of Association of America (HLAA), Washington D.C. Offered special discounts to current members. We have begun our 2021 membership renewal drive and welcome new members! Members will receive a national, quarterly publication of The Communicator and discounts on various events throughout the year. \$25/year for Parents//DHH Adults/Students, \$40/year for Professionals, \$50/year for Organizations/Agencies. We are excited to announce our board has approved implementing the H&V ASTra program (Advocacy, Support and Training) here in Virginia. We will be seeking partnerships with stakeholders along with funding from private sources and grants. Currently, six of our board members are willing to be trained as an ASTra advocate and to ensure our DHH children are receiving equal access to their education. Actively seeking funding. Support families transitioning from (missed the acronym).

Telehealth

No new updates.

Learning the Signs. Act Early

Deana Buck continues to serve as the CDC's Act Early Ambassador to Virginia. She can be reached at deanabuck@gmail.com or by phone/text at (804) 405-9064. Can also be reached at VCU account email as well.

Public awareness campaign: If you have ANY questions about the campaign's resources or how they can be used in your agency or program, please let me know!

A new project is working to improve early identification efforts in Virginia, as a collaborative effort with the CDC's Act Early Ambassador. Virginia's team has been working for a few months and started by conducting a needs assessment to learn more about the impact of COVID-19. Work groups are now being formed to carry out specific project activities.

In light of COVID-19 realities, it is vitally important for families and providers have access to information about resources about developmental milestones and the steps to take when concerns are identified, and that digital formats be used as much as possible. Check out free materials for developmental monitoring in the following content areas (Tools for Tracking Milestones, Children's Books, Tips for When there's a Developmental Concern, Promoting Developmental Monitoring, Engaging Families in Monitoring, Tools to Support Monitoring and Screening, Training Resources, Customization, Translations, and Ordering Online) at

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/resources.html>. Milestone Tracker App:

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones-app.html>. Information for Families:

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/parents/index.html>

Children's Books are available, too!



ASL Connect

Updates: Presentation given by Jodee Crace and Britta Schwall.

ASL connect has 3 units, education, business, and family. Family: project philosophy is language mentoring online. Goal to inspire parents who might be new or have little to no knowledge or experience with ASL. Favorite part of job making families comfy in home, comfy learning style, making life easier for them. Training congruent with families beliefs and styles. Teaching method everything is research based. Gallaudet huge partner. Provide short 101 video clips to show how they teach ASL. Small steps towards language acquisition. A lot of physical methods to be able to use ASL. Customizing parental learning needs. 8 week program and list of

curriculum. Education: 3 different fields for educators; free lessons; ASL courses that are accredited (ASL 1-6); programs (2 weeks complete immersion), and events for socializing. Business: working with deaf clients, employees, other deaf businesses; do's and don'ts of deaf cultures, basically a crash course. Works closely with sky high deaf mentorship program. Focus on family centered around home life.

EHDI Updates

Team Updates: John Rogan filled the full time admin assistant position; Jessica Nelson filled HRSA Project Specialist; MBS Epi position vacant as of August 2020; fall interns are Claudia Bryant and Dejamonie Thurman; 2 Spring interns will start January 2021.

Grant Updates: HRSA - Progress report due December 16, 2020; CDC - 2019 follow up data due December 11, 2020; Title V - Grant announcement of award received September 2020.

Programmatic Updates: VAHALB we are updating the application; we are accepting parent nominations for the EHDI annual meeting 2021 - March 1-5, 2021 virtual; EHDI website reorganization is in progress; working on collaboration to provide ASL support to families in Virginia; training video library; texting updates; 12 OAE equipment secured, implementation tentatively planned for February 1, 2021; HRSA needs assessment is due March, 2021 regarding impacts of COVID-19; parent professional collaborative tentatively scheduled for February 5, 2021 and panel of stakeholders discussing impact of COVID-19 on EHDI systems.

JCIH Updates: met on June 15, 17, and 30, 2020 with JCIH workgroup; All infants with or without risk factors should receive ongoing surveillance of communicative development beginning at 2 months -Recommendation to add to PCP protocols. Preterm infants in NICU at 3 months identified as being deaf or hard of hearing could then be referred directly for early Intervention and audiological follow-up services at the time of discharge- Recommendation to add to Hospital Protocols. Hospitals provide families with an appointment for outpatient rescreening at the time of discharge- Recommendation to add to Hospital Protocols.

EHDI Learning Community Updates: All under local leadership; southwest and Roanoke regions are merged into one community; statewide learning community center - November 19, 2020.

cCMV Updates: Effective September 1, 2020, any child who fails their FINAL initial hearing screen will be screened for cCMV (congenital cytomegalovirus). VDH responsible for communicating with parent or guardian for children who are tested for cCMV and who test positive. Contact PCP to inform of results and discuss next steps. PCP responsible for reviewing cCMV saliva PCR. Detected - child urine has cCMV PCR within 21 days of life; inconclusive - child has cCMV PCR within 21 days of life; missed - swab or urine for cCMV PCR within 21 days of life. Since September 1, ~480 babies tested w/ ~16 children as detected, ~390 not detected, ~34 samples rejected, ~40 children missed (many screened at hospital).

Next Steps

Workgroups: email Ashleigh, Valerie, and/or EHDI program if interested in joining workgroups. Statewide learning community evaluation, parent perspectives/quality improvement, JCIH, ENT Guidelines. Will send out reminder notice. Nominations for Chair/Co-Chair after June meeting.

Next 4 dates AC Meeting 2021

March 19 (EHDI AC Meeting), 2021, June 4, 2021, September 10, 2021, December 3, 2021