

Technical Assistance Bulletin

Early Intervention Services for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Their Families

March 2018

Overall Emphasis and Purpose:

The Technical Assistance Bulletin for Early Intervention Services for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Their Families provides guidance for early intervention educators and related service providers serving children who are deaf or hard of hearing birth to 4. The overall purpose is to outline specific considerations and strategies to support early access to language and communication for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and to identify resources available for their families.

What this means for you as a Special Educator/Special Service Provider:

- Children who are deaf or hard of hearing are eligible for early intervention services based on their high risk for language delay.
- Early Intervention Services are needed during a “critical window” of time for the development of language.
- Early Intervention Services are “based on the child’s present levels of functional development in all areas and an assessment of the family’s resources, priorities and concerns in order to develop measureable child and family outcomes”
- Help families understand the impact of their child’s “hearing status” (the state of an individual’s ability to perceive sound based on audiological assessment)
- Should provide families with ongoing unbiased and objective comprehensive information regarding various strategies and approaches to support early access to language.
- Incorporate strategies and approaches to access language appropriate for the individual child and preferred by his/her family.
 - Visual access: American Sign Language, Cued Speech or Sign English
 - Auditory access with the use of hearing aids or a cochlear implant
 - Access to spoken language and listening
- Resources for Families
 - Access to the Maryland Hearing Aid Loan Bank
 - Provide family to family Support
 - Provide opportunities for children who are deaf or hard of hearing to meet other children,
 - Provide opportunities to meet adults who are deaf or hard of hearing

- Maryland School for the Deaf
 - The Local Infants and Toddlers Program(LITP)is required to inform parents or guardians about early intervention services available at Maryland School for the Deaf.(MSD)
 - Families may choose to receive services from both the LITP and MSD
 - The LITP will collaborate with MSD to develop the IFSP
 - MSD services reflect a bilingual/bicultural philosophy

What the Special Educator/Service Provider needs to do if not already doing:

It is imperative that early intervention teams include trained professionals for children who are deaf or hard of hearing to participate in the determination of appropriate services and supports for these children and their families from the time of referral.