

Sweeten the Pot

**Why EHDI Programs & Service Providers Should
Have Parents as Equal Partners on their Team**

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Presentation Overview

- Parental Involvement Needed
- Parent Leadership
- Shared Leadership
- Barriers
- Roles of Parents & Professionals
- Parent/Professional Collaboration
- Examples of Partnerships within MI EHDI
- Guidelines for Reimbursement/Financial Support
- Recruitment
- Outcomes

When is Parent Involvement a Must?

Whenever your program/service/agency/committee has issues relating to deaf & hard of hearing children and/or their families.



Why Do You Need Parent Participation?

Parents Offer:

- ✓ Emotional Commitment
- ✓ Vested Interest
- ✓ Un-Teachable Experience
- ✓ Network of Diversity Among Other Parents
- ✓ Key Partners in the Process to Strengthen Programs and Support Families

What is Parent Leadership?

- Parents acquiring skills and knowledge which allows them to be equal partners
- Parent representation to help shape the direction of communities and programs



What is Shared Leadership?



- Parents, professionals and community members building valuable partnerships
- Share responsibility, expertise and leadership
- Combine knowledge, skills and experience when making decisions that effect families
- Collaborate to improve programs, committees, and systems

Barriers for Parents

- Time
- Self Esteem
- Lack of Trust
- Fear of Negative Outcomes
- Reading Level/Acronyms
- Child Care
- Job Responsibilities



Barriers to Shared Leadership

- Lack of Resources
- Unwilling to Take Risks
- Controlling
- Dominating Discussions
- Irresponsible
- Close Minded



Parent's Role

- Be on Time
- Be Prepared
- Be Committed
- Respect the Experience of Professionals
- Be the “Voice” for other Parents



Professional's Role

- Listen
- Realize that parents bring with them a different perspective
- Be sensitive
- Use language that is appropriate – stay away from acronyms
- Don't monopolize the conversation

How to Create Successful Parent/Professional Collaboration

- Mutual Respect
- Dedication
- High Expectations
- Commitment
- Shared Vision
- Equality



How to Ensure Successful Partnership

- Realize the value of parent's time, skills and efforts
- Recognize the different challenges for parents to be active members
- Compensate equally for parents & professionals
- Respect diversity
- Acknowledge the reason their needs to be a partnership

Success Strategies for Shared Leadership

- Effective communication
- Ensure new members understand their roles/expectations
- Model positive feedback
- Recognize cultural differences
- Provide accommodations
- Develop and enforce procedure & guidelines

Examples of Where Parent Leaders are Needed

- EHDI Programs
- GBYS
- H&V
- Advisory committees
- Stakeholder committee meetings
- Special projects
- Adhoc groups
- Parent/Teacher organization
- School board meetings

Examples of Parent Leadership Within Michigan EHDI Program

- Parent Consultant: paid staff member for EHDI
- Implementing GBYS (Parent Coordinator, Parent mentors working with families and the community)
- Creation of MI Hands & Voices: parent-driven organization, run by parents for parents

Examples of Shared Leadership Within Michigan EHDI

- EHDI team: professionals collaborating with the parent consultant and parent advisors on all levels
- EHDI parent support conference: new year with a new focus
- EHDI Advisory: restructuring to increase parent representation
- Hands & Voices: working with professionals to better serve families
- GBYS: working with the professional community

Special Projects Within Michigan EHDI

- Parent Survey with Cover Letter
- Parent Letter with GBYS/H&V Brochure
- Online Screeners Training Module
- Material Review
- Division Meetings
- Exhibits

Special Projects Outside of EHDI

- D/HH Program Supervisor Committee Meeting
- County/District School Board Meetings
- Deaf Summit
- Parent Support Group

Why Provide Financial Support?

- Concept of equal partners must be actualized
- Parents should be compensated for their time/efforts similar to participating professionals who are compensated for their work



Financial Support for Parents

- Develop procedures & guidelines to support the provision of financial support to parents participating in EHDI and other related programs/services
- When compensating or reimbursing parents for their participation, diversity in needs should be recognized and responded to in an individualized and creative manner

Ask Your Agency...

**“What will it take
for this parent to
fully participate?”**



Examples of Guidelines/Procedures

- Adapted from Michigan Early On
- EHDI explanation of why financial support is provided
- JCIH Guidelines - **Opportunities for Interaction With Other Parents of Children With Hearing Loss**

Intervention professionals should seek to involve parents at every level of the EHDI process and develop true and meaningful partnerships with parents. To reflect the value of the contributions that selected parents make to development and program components, these parents should be paid as contributing staff members. Parent representatives should be included in all advisory board activities. In many states, parents have been integral and often have taken leadership roles in the development of policy, resource material, communication mechanisms, mentoring and advocacy opportunities, dissemination of information, and interaction with the deaf community and other individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Parents, often in partnership with people who are deaf and hard of hearing, have also participated in the training of professionals. They should be participants in the regular assessment of program services to ensure ongoing improvement and quality assurance

Honorarium for Parents

- Honorarium amount outlined
- \$15/hour total time calculated based upon meeting preparation time, actual meeting time, plus travel time to and from the meeting
- Submitting forms
- Processing
- Taxes

Travel Expense Reimbursement

- List of approved rates:
 - Mileage – standard state rate
 - Hotel – up to \$99/night if travel requires more than 60 miles one way.
 - Meals – State Rates (\$7.25 breakfast/lunch, \$16.50 for dinner)
Excludes meals available at meetings, alcohol/entertainment
 - Parking fees – actual cost
 - Other transportation (cabs, train, etc) – actual cost
- Submitting forms
- Processing
- Taxes

Child Care Reimbursement

- Rates – Actual rates up to \$50/day (If some child care costs are higher phone the EHDI program for prior approval)
- Completing forms
- Submitting forms
- Processing – checks are made to the parent and not the child care provider
- Taxes

Prior Approval for Special Meetings/Events

- **Completing Forms**
- **Submitting Forms**
- **Processing**

Steps for Recruiting Parent Leaders

- Agree on number of parent representation needed
- Confirm funds available for honorarium/reimbursement
- Connect with your local H&V chapter for referrals (if possible)
- Seek alternate referrals
- Possibly interview potential parent leaders

Questions You May Want to Ask Potential Parent Leaders

- Why would you like to become involved?
- Have you had any experience mentoring/advising/supporting families?
- When was the last time you showed leadership qualities?
- What are you passionate about?
- Describe a situation when working on a team produced successful results
- What do you feel is the most important quality of a parent leader?
- What are your strengths/areas of need?
- Tell me about your experience working with professionals.

Remember.....



- Recognize that any parent can become a parent leader
- Offer skills and strategies to support parent leaders as they develop their leadership ability
- Respect and pursue diversity

Together We Can....



- Share Resources
- Expand Ideas
- Represent Diversity
- Improve Existing Systems
- Model by Example
- Sweeten the Pot!

Soaring to New Heights & Enhancing Outcomes for all Families...



Questions?



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Resources

- **Parents Anonymous**
www.parentsanonymous.org
- Nancy Peeler
Early On Coordinator for Public Health
Michigan Department of Community Health
Family and Community Health
109 Michigan Ave.
Lansing, MI 48913
Ph: (517) 335-9230
Email: peelern@michigan.gov
- **Joint Commission on Infant Hearing**
www.jcih.org