



Utah Schools for the Deaf and Blind  
*Parent Infant Program for the Deaf*

*Innovations in Early Intervention:  
Restructuring a Statewide Program*

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## *Parent Infant Program for the Deaf ~ Mission*

*The Parent Infant Program for the Deaf strives to model language intervention strategies which will allow families to become the leaders in their child's educational future. We believe that with intensive language intervention ALL children with hearing loss can develop language that is commensurate with age appropriate peers.*

*This progress will be measured through assessment data, observation and parent feedback. The expectation is always at least one month's progress for one month's time; while continually striving for more to close the language gap between chronological and language age.*





## *Restructuring a Statewide Program*

- Evaluation of the existing program structure in Utah revealed a system that did not provide enough intensity to achieve the expected results of language commensurate with age appropriate peers.
- As a result, a major programmatic revision was implemented.
- This session will address the development of a comprehensive system of early intervention for infants and toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing.





# The Purpose of Early Intervention

- Unidentified hearing loss at birth can adversely affect
  - Speech and Language
  - Academic Achievement
  - Social-emotional Development

(Courtesy of JCIH 2007 Position Statement)





# The Purpose of Early Intervention

- Without appropriate opportunities to learn language children will permanently lag behind their hearing peers in:
  - Communication
  - Cognition
  - Reading
  - Lower educational and employment levels in adulthood

(Courtesy of JCIH 2007 Position Statement)





# Program History

- **General Programming**
- **Parent Counseling Model**
- **Remedial Parent Education**
- **Non-Specific Language Services**
- **Limited Collaboration with Stakeholders, USDB Staff and Parents**
- **Inconsistent Tracking of Longitudinal Progress**
- **Limited Language Orientation**





# Language Focus Programming

It has been said that reading requires two related capabilities, first you must be familiar with a language and second you must understand the mapping between that language and the printed word.  
(Chamberlain & Mayberry, 2000)

If literacy is our focus, *language* acquisition is not optional.





# Language Focus Programming

USDB promotes parent choice through intensive education and the emphasis of language acquisition through language focused instruction.

“...the primary predictor of achievement is English language competence”  
(Geers, Moog 1989)

- Total Communication, Cued Speech and others are tools
- Language First (Tools Second)
- Highly trained staff; Language Specialists
- Parent- Centered Learning
- Teach the Parents to Teach the Child







# Language Focus Programming

## ASL/English (Bilingual Bicultural) Program:

The goal is student proficiency in ASL as the first language, English as a second language and oracy as an optional program component.

## Listening and Spoken Language Program:

The goal is to focus on language acquisition through audition alone.

Mainstreaming early is our goal!

Each program has the focus of language that is commensurate with age appropriate peers.





# Orientation

- Immediately after diagnosis, families begin receiving services through an intensive orientation process.
- During orientation, adults who are deaf or hard of hearing meet with each family to discuss the impact of hearing on language development, the need for intensive early intervention, and the need to implement a language plan as early as possible.

**Families are instructed by two deaf adults:**

**One of ASL/English proficiency**

**One of Listening and Spoken Language proficiency**

***(Orientation Specialists)***





# Orientation

- Choosing a language is the primary goal of the orientation process
- The interview process allows the Orientation Specialists to determine the level of support the family requires to make a language choice
- Families are led through a series of activities that move them toward being comfortable with choosing a language option

Based on their interview responses they are placed  
into one of three categories:

**DECIDED, UNDECIDED OR INQUISITIVE**





# Orientation

- **DECIDED FAMILIES** ~ are familiar with deafness and/or the Deaf community. They have done a fair amount of research and have essentially decided that either ASL/English or LSL is the right option for their family. All families including the Decided Families will be supported while experiencing the following:
  1. **Complete a family interview**
  2. **View a third party video with the Orientation Specialist**
  3. **Observe preschool classes (neighborhood, ASL/English and LSL)**
  4. **Interview with a deaf adult (ASL/English and LSL)**
  5. **Attend a Toddler Group, Playgroup or Parent Support Group**
  6. **Visit the Home Demonstration Center**





# Orientation

- **INQUISITIVE FAMILIES** ~ are families that have a general idea of what language option they would like for their child and family, but need more information before they can make a decision.
  1. **Complete a family Interview**
  2. **View a third party video with the Orientation Specialist**
  3. **Observe preschool classes (neighborhood, ASL/English and LSL) or video when classes are unavailable**
  4. **Interview with a deaf adult (ASL/English and LSL)**
  5. **Attend a Toddler Group, Playgroup or Parent Support Group**
  6. **Visit the Home Demonstration Center**
  7. **Observe school age classes K-5 (neighborhood, ASL/E or view video when classes are unavailable**





# Orientation

- **UNDECIDED FAMILIES** ~ are unfamiliar with deafness and have not begun the process of choosing a language focus for their child and family.
  1. **Complete a family Interview**
  2. **View a third party video**
  3. **Observe preschool classes (neighborhood, ASL/English and LSL)**
  4. **Interview with a deaf adult (ASL/English and LSL)**
  5. **Attend a Toddler Group, Playgroup or Parent Support Group**
  6. **Visit the Home Demonstration Center**
  7. **Observe school age classes K-5 (neighborhood, ASL/English and LSL)**
  8. **Attend a deaf social event with the orientation specialist (ASL/English&LSL)**
  9. **Call and interview parents of deaf children (ASL/English and LSL)**





# Orientation

- The time frame for the process is dependent on the family's needs; the process could happen more quickly if families are willing to take advantage of a robust and experiential educational process or more slowly if a family is grieving and requires more support.

The *approximate* time frame for the orientation process:

**Decided Families:** 2 – 4 visits

**Inquisitive Families:** 4 – 6 visits

**Undecided Families:** 6 – 12 visits





# Orientation Concluded

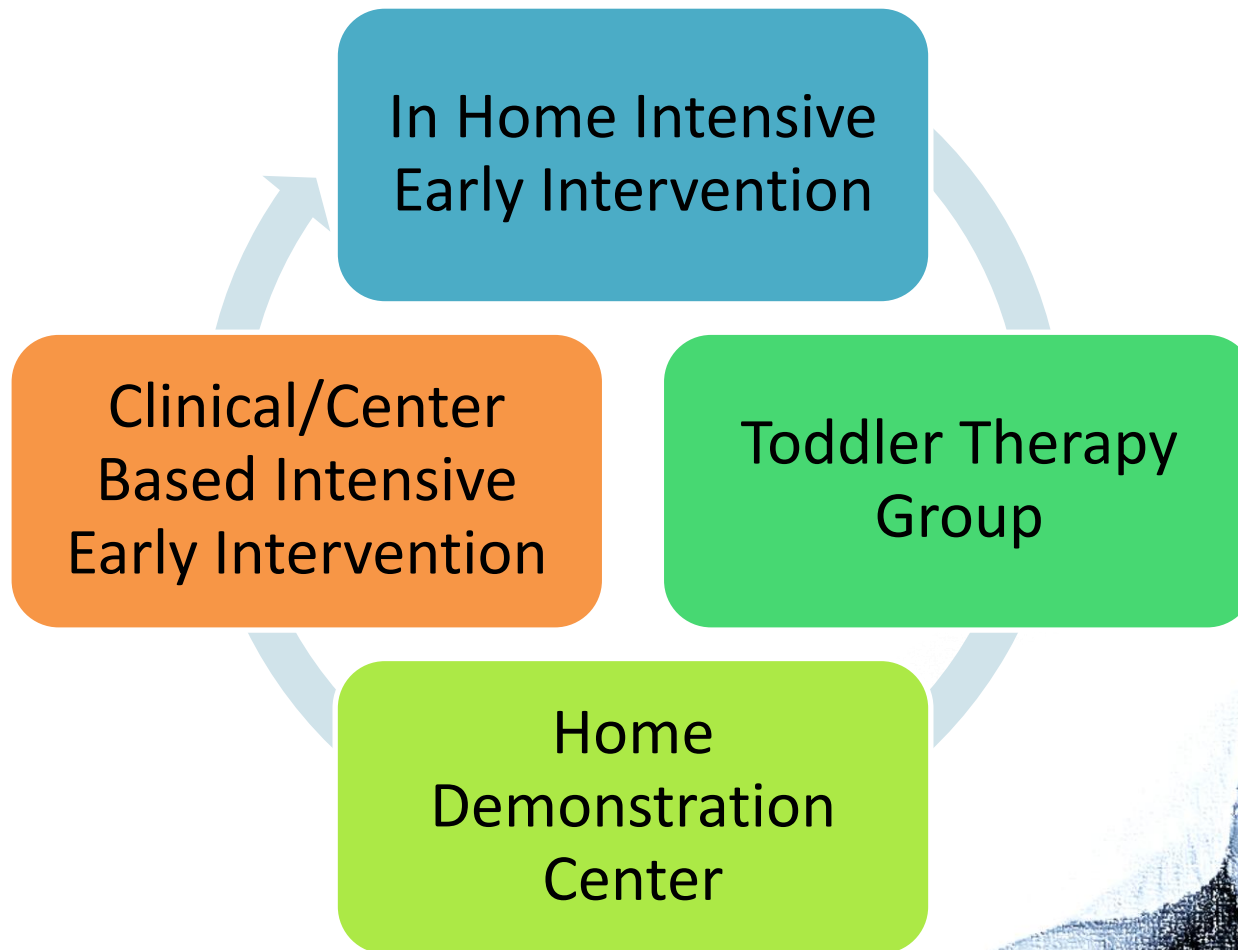
- After a family chooses a language they are assigned to a language specialist; either an ASL/English or a LSL Specialist
- Language intervention can occur in a variety of environments
- Language services can range from providing monitoring/consultation to the family and EI center or direct therapy visits up to twice per week
- All services are delivered with the family's individual language focus in mind





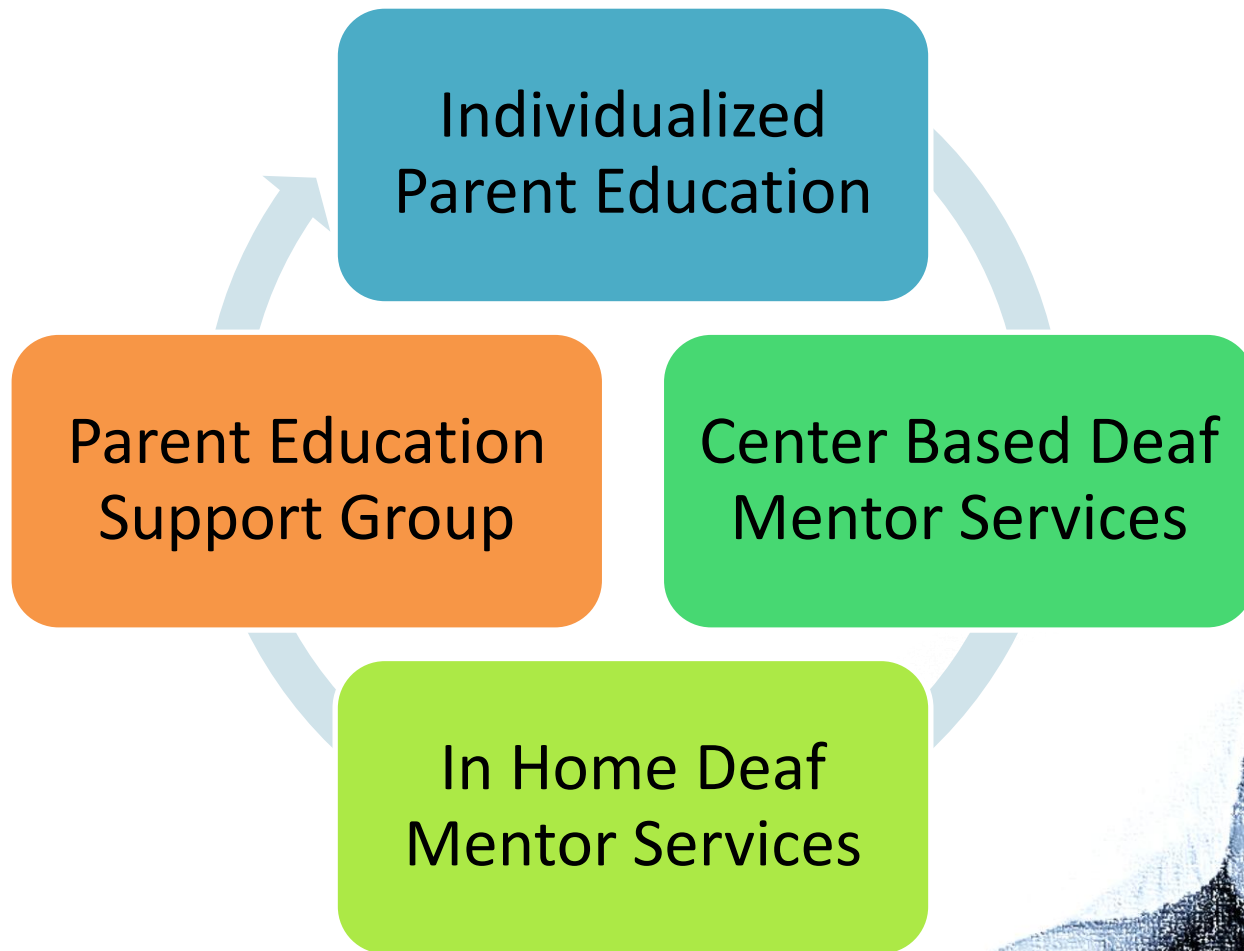


# 12 Program Components



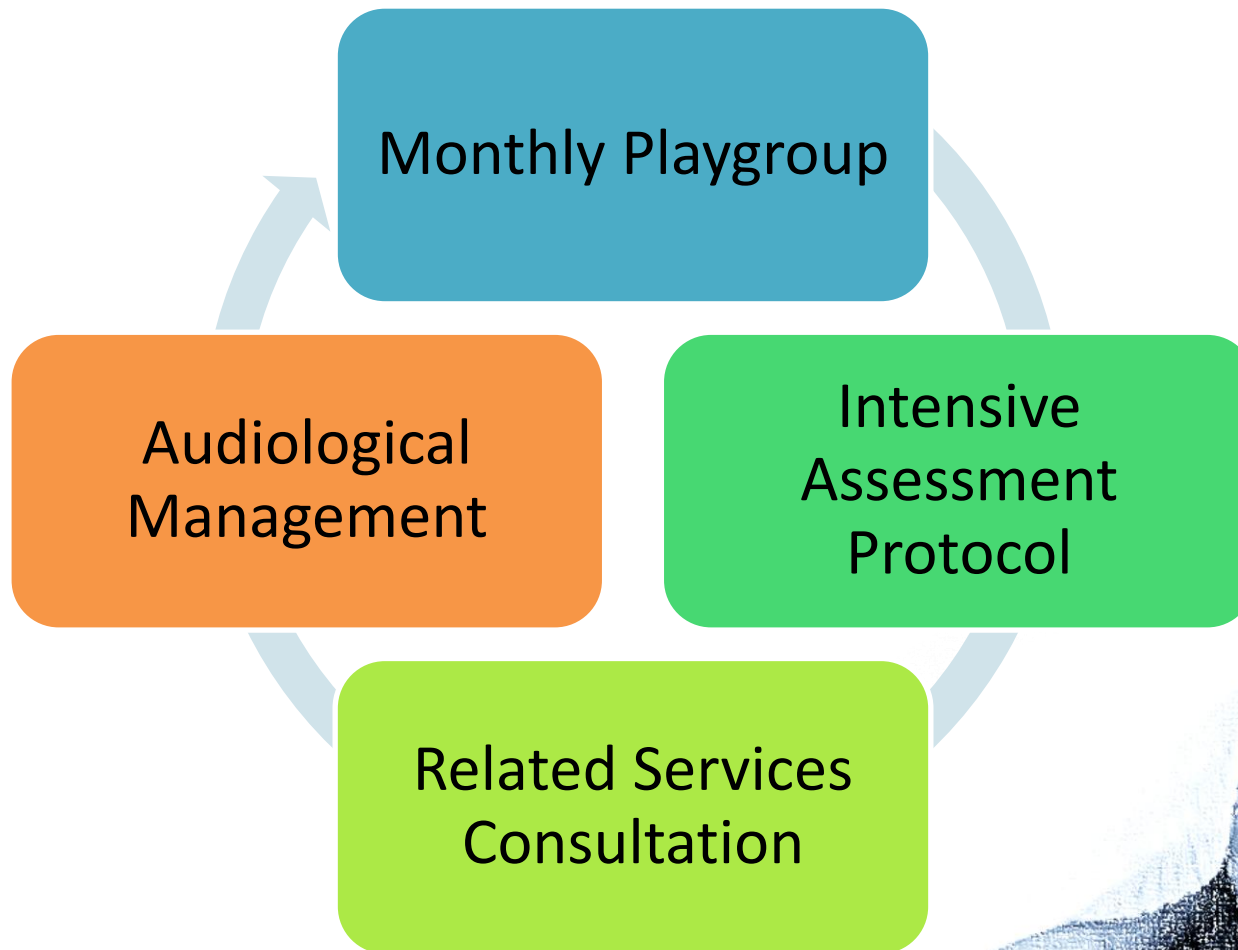


# 12 Program Components





# 12 Program Components





# 4 Professionals



Orientation  
Specialists



ASL/English  
Specialists



Listening &  
Spoken  
Language  
Specialists



Deaf  
Mentors





1 Focus

*Language Commensurate with  
Age Appropriate Hearing Peers*

