# September 1, 2020

# Newsletter #4

[**From the EHDI Coordinator**](https://youtu.be/jGEbcsFIqMQ)

It’s the end of August and your EHDI team is still working remotely. We’ve accommodated well, I think, to this virtual platform for our task force and Alliance meetings. It will be wonderful to meet in person one day. However, we are getting a lot of work done in the meantime.

I was energized by the first meeting of our Colorado EHDI Alliance (more about that below). Here is a smattering of the words chosen by Alliance members to describe our investment in system change: opportunity, innovative, supportive, transparent, possibilities, intentional, inspired, and comprehensive.

While we have yet to convene our Audiology Task Force, we have been working with NCHAM to update our EHDI PALS (EHDI - Pediatric Audiology Links to Services) database of all pediatric audiology providers in Colorado. This will undoubtedly become a very valuable resource for families whose children need an appointment with an audiologist. To access this list, just type [www.EHDIPALS.org](http://www.ehdipals.org) into your browser and you can find the names of pediatric audiologists in Colorado who meet the EHDI-PALS criteria.

As you will notice below, we have convened four task forces to date, each of which is working on an element of our EHDI system. We are planning to convene our fifth task force - the Data Task Force - in September. As always, we will communicate any and all opportunities to join this, or any of our other, task force(s) via our communication channels (email, Facebook, and website). Stay tuned, or, contact Heather Abraham (habraham@coehdi.org) to share your interest. Task force membership is open to all.

[**Spotlight on Heather:**](https://youtu.be/CI4cR9HvFAE)

This month’s spotlight highlights Heather Abraham, the EHDI Family Support and Engagement Coordinator.

Hello! I am so excited to be working with the Colorado EHDI system! I have worked in the field of education for twenty years. I am a Colorado native with a bachelor’s degree from the University of Colorado at Boulder in communication disorders and master’s degrees from the University of Northern Colorado in deaf education, early childhood special education and administration. I began my career as a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing in Broomfield until the mountains came calling. I then worked as a teacher in the Roaring Fork valley for several years while also working as a CO-Hear Coordinator and CHIP Facilitator. At one point, I was a CO-Hear Coordinator for eighteen counties on the western slope, so I’m passionate about families having equitable access to services throughout the state. Somewhere along the line, I decided to give educational administration a try and I transitioned into a Director of Outreach position for the Washington School for the Deaf. However, once again the mountains came calling and I moved back to Colorado to become the Executive Director of Student Services for the Aspen School District for twelve years. I currently live in Snowmass Village with my husband, daughter, and our goofy great dane mix. When I’m not working, you can find me hiking with my friends and family.

[**Announcements/Upcoming Meetings.**](https://youtu.be/co7JeRcPbFg)

We are pleased to announce our two DHH adults who are representatives to the Colorado EHDI Alliance: Sara Robinson and Sarah Honigfeld. Additionally, we misspelled the name of the representative and President of the Colorado Chapter of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Our apologies to Marti Bleidt.

Sub-grant applications closed on August 31st. Award announcements will be made in September and will be shared in the October newsletter.

Beginning with the September newsletter, the Colorado Association of the Deaf (CAD) has graciously agreed to perform all ASL translations for EHDI materials.

All Colorado EHDI Alliance and Task Force meetings will be announced here as will other Colorado EHDI system stakeholder meetings. If you would like your meetings included in our monthly newsletter, contact: info@coehdi.org.

[**Task Force Updates**](https://youtu.be/jOe5TmvFQiY)

COVID-19: On August 18th, HRSA notified us that our supplemental grant application was approved. Now the work can begin! Hannah Glick, Ph.D,, Au.D., CCC-A will be assuming the lead role in all related activities. You can expect to hear more from her in subsequent newsletters. Hannah will be contacting the members of the COVID Task Force soon to arrange our next meeting. The first order of business will be to prioritize the activities outlined in our grant.

DHH Adults: The task force did not meet this month. Monthly meetings will begin in September, 2020.

Families of DHH Children: This month, this task force provided input on the development of a survey that is being sent to parents statewide. The survey asks parents to describe what they would like to experience when they are given an opportunity to meet with DHH adults. HRSA, the federal agency funding our EHDI grant, wants documentation that families are offered access to DHH adults by the time their child is 9 months of age. Monthly meetings of this task force will begin in September, 2020. There’s a lot of work to be done.

Screening Task Force: This task force met for the first time on August 13th. Eight topics were discussed including: (1) Integrating EHDI work with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and their Colorado Infant Hearing Advisory Council (CIHAC) after the launch of the Health Information Data System (HIDS); (2) establishing communication among diagnostic centers, birthing facilities, and each child’s medical home; (3) providing equitable services in rural areas; (4) fulfilling the role once performed by Audiology Regional Coordinators; (5) considering the state’s cCMV initiative; (6) investigating the role of educational audiologists in screening and rescreening; (7) considering the role of the the child’s medical home/Primary Care Provider (PCP); and (8) monitoring the impact of COVID on screening, rescreening, and documentation. A second meeting was held in August to discuss additional topical issues that were submitted by stakeholders in Colorado. Our next meeting will give the task force members an opportunity to develop an action plan along with specific activities.

**[Alliance Meeting Brief](https://youtu.be/d6wzhiiJvnA)**

The first COEHDI Alliance meeting was held on August 14, 2020. The team reviewed norms of collaboration and its general governance structure. Representatives from each of the four already-established task forces provided updates regarding their work to the Alliance. The core team proposed the subgrant process. An Alliance subcommittee will review subgrant applications during the first two weeks of September as well as announce awards. There will be monthly meetings of The Alliance. Future meetings will be open to the public. Public meetings of the Alliance will provide another communication channel to provide input and feedback to COEHDI stakeholders. Monthly meeting minutes will also be posted on our website and August’s meeting minutes can be found <https://www.coehdi.org/alliance-meeting-minutes/>.

[**Gratitude/Acknowledgements** -](https://youtu.be/TAcOLNmwztc)

A special thank you to those who helped with Spanish and ASL translations with this month’s newsletter: Dr. Gloshanda Lawyer (Spanish) and the Colorado Association of the Deaf (CAD; ASL).