

# Colorado EHDl Alliance Meeting

Date: June 16, 2023

**Meeting Called By:** Colorado EHDl  
**Type of Meeting:** Colorado EHDl Alliance  
**Facilitator:** Heather Abraham  
**Notetaker:** Arlene Stredler Brown  
**Zoom Facilitator:** Heather Abraham

**Alliance & Core Team Members:** Sandy Bowen, Allison Cunningham, Maureen Cunningham, Jami Fries, Bryan McDonald, Ashley Renslow, and Christy Scott

**Absent Members:** Emily Augsberger, Marti Bleidt, Stephanie Carson, Leanne Glenn, Hannah Glick, Brian Herrmann, Sarah Honigfeld, Beth Little, Shauna Moden, Cliff Moers, Sara Robinson, and Julie Schlager

**COEHDl Staff Participants:** Heather Abraham and Arlene Stredler Brown

**Accommodations:** ASL/ English Interpreters: Stephanie Cryer & Gwen Walton; and Zoom Live Captioning

<b>Agenda Item 1:</b> April 2023 Meeting Minutes		<b>Presenter:</b> All	
<b>Summary of Discussion:</b> April 2023 meeting minutes were unanimously approved without discussion.			
<b>Conclusion:</b> n/a			
<b>Action Items:</b> n/a		<b>Persons Responsible:</b> n/a	
		<b>Deadline:</b> n/a	

<b>Agenda Item 2:</b> Announcements		<b>Presenter:</b> All	
1. (Heather Abraham) The COEHDl Alliance does not meet in July. During the summer, COEHDl will be submitting annual reports to HRSA. We may solicit input from Alliance members.			

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2. (Arlene) HRSA will issue a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) in the next few months for the next four-year grant cycle. COEHDI will conduct a focus group to solicit input about the next grant application.
3. (Jami Fries) Hands & Voices has hired a new Parent Guide; her name is Taylor Judd. Taylor is hard of hearing herself and two of her three children are hard of hearing.
4. (Ashley Renslow) The Western States Regional Early Intervention Conference (WREIC) was held in Wyoming this week. The next WREIC will be September 15th - 18th, 2024 in New Mexico.
5. (Ashley Renslow) Summers in the Park is an opportunity for families to gather. This activity is for families of children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Blind/Low Vision, and/or Deafblind. Contact Ashley for details.
6. (Ashley Renslow) Tara Spangler has been appointed the interim superintendent at CSDB for another year. The search for a new superintendent is underway; the board hopes to have a decision by January, 2024.

**Conclusion:** n/a

**Action Items:** n/a

**Persons Responsible:** n/a

**Deadline:** n/a

### Agenda Item 3: Colorado Hands & Voices Report

**Presenter:** Jami Fries

COEHDI has a partnership with Colorado Hands & Voices (H&V) and contracts for specific parent support activities to fulfill our grant requirements. Jami reported on the activities funded by COEHDI.

- *Virtual Site Visits (VSVs):* Jami works with Arlene, Lauren Pontis (audiologist), Kirsten Nelson (CO-AAP), the regional CO-Hear Coordinator, and CU-Boulder AuD students for this project. There were 11 VSVs during the past grant year.
- *Biannual Data Collection:* H&V disaggregates activities specific to children birth - 36 months of age for reporting to COEHDI. This data is then reported to our federal funder.
- *Spanish-Speaking Parent Guide:* The H&V Parent Guide connected with eight families who speak Spanish. She also set up two Zoom meetings for Spanish-speaking parents.
- *CO H&V Roadmaps:* The *Roadmaps* are available in print and online. Jami keeps the online version current with quarterly updates.
- *OAE Calibration:* H&V has received seven OAE units; six were able to be calibrated and distributed to six different midwifery practices. One more unit will be distributed in June after the midwife completes the required NCHAM NBHS training. Many of these midwives work in rural areas. H&V sent reminders to the

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midwives that the annual calibration of the equipment will be due in July 2023. H&V also asked midwives for data about their screening activities.

- *Transition to Preschool Postcard*: One of the Parent Guides is focusing on children's transition to preschool services. Postcards were made and distributed to families and to the CO-Hear Coordinators to distribute to families. H&V encourages communication about transition to start when a child turns two years of age. The postcard reminds parents about supports that are offered by H&V. Parents are encouraged to talk with a Parent Guide and/or a CO-Hear Coordinator about their child's transition plans.

Heather acknowledged the benefits of our collaboration with H&V. The activities of the Spanish-Speaking Parent Guide fit into our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) plan that is required by HRSA. Another example of our collaboration is the acknowledgement, during VSVs and in discussions regarding newborn hearing screening script development, that hospitals are using the *Roadmaps*.

**Conclusion:** n/a

**Action Items:** n/a

**Persons Responsible:** n/a

**Deadline:** n/a

### Agenda Item 4: Family-to-Family Support Data Report

**Presenter:** Heather Abraham

Family-to-Family (F2F) support data were shared with Alliance members. All organizations (e.g., parent led, professionally led) that provide F2F support contribute data. We are seeing some trends over time including:

- Number of families with children birth - 36 months of age served each year is climbing
- Number of families with children birth - 6 months of age served each year are separated as this is a HRSA-defined goal. Our numbers are steady; notably, they are not increasing year to year. Jami Fries reported that Colorado meets with fewer families in this age range than other states. H&V is trying to gain name recognition for their organization to address this. Currently, more than 90% of families with children birth - six months of age referred to H&V are received from CHCO. H&V also receives referrals from CO-Hear Coordinators; but these referrals are usually for children older than six months of age.
- H&V has had an increase in the number of referrals for DHH children with additional disabilities (aka; DHH Plus). Jami reported that it is notable that families who feel they are in greater need for support seem to be

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the ones contacting H&V. H&V is happy to see these families, but they are concerned about not receiving an equal number of referrals for DHH children without additional disabilities.

- There was a brief discussion about children with cCMV and these referrals to H&V. As an FYI, Arlene shared that legislation has been introduced at the federal level to support cCMV screening. Here is the link: <https://www.wtnh.com/news/health/blumenthal-introduces-federal-legislation-for-cmv-awareness-universal-screening/>
- Ashley Renslow mentioned that HIDS has a field about referring to H&V. Ashley suggested encouraging clinical audiologists and audiology assistants to input referral data into HIDS. Jami Fries mentioned that H&V does not receive this information; it is merely documented in HIDS. Jami continues to be concerned that documentation in HIDS will not result in any action as H&V does not receive this information.

**Conclusion:** It is concerning that the number of children, birth - six months of age, that are referred to H&V is not changing and continues to be a lower percentage of families than in other states.

**Action Items:** Arlene offered to introduce this topic during strategic planning meetings.

Jami will share data from other states (by July 14) to provide Arlene with some data to support talking points.

**Persons Responsible:** Jami will provide data from other states.  
Arlene will represent this issue at strategic planning meetings.

**Deadline:** July, August and September strategic planning meetings.

### Agenda Item 5: Update on Strategic Planning Process

**Facilitator:** Christy Scott & Arlene Stredler Brown

Christy Scott reported that the first facilitated strategic planning meeting is scheduled for June 16th. The agencies involved in discussions being held this summer were defined during the strategic planning process that CDPHE conducted last summer. The goal is to identify system gaps from the perspective of these agencies: CDPHE, CDHS, CDEC, and CSDB. The intent is to resolve major issues by the time the next EHDI grant is written. There will likely be an MOU among agencies to facilitate sharing of data. Six meetings are scheduled in June - September and will be facilitated by Kim Boyd.

CDPHE has released a document that outlines resources and issues with the system. Arlene highlighted some of the issues on this document:

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1. Number of screening attempts: The recommendation is to perform only two screens during one screening session.
2. Homebirths: There is an active interagency effort among COEHDI, CSDB, and CDPHE for children born at home. An identified gap is that midwives often do not want to enter data into HIDS. COEHDI contracts with two audiologists to support hearing screening activities; their time is limited by funding restraints.
3. Screening Follow-Up: Colorado does not have a "State Audiologist" nor a Follow-Up Coordinator.
4. NBHS Scripts: The COEHDI Screening Task Force has created scripts and intends to distribute these to birthing facilities during the current grant year.
5. Out-of-State (OOS) Births: COEHDI is working with CDPHE on this issue for babies born out of state who move to Colorado and babies born in Colorado who move out of state. It is important to share NBHS data.
6. At-Risk Children: There is an identified need to address ongoing screening for children who are at-risk. COEHDI has been tasked with developing a continuous hearing screening plan by our funder.
7. Diagnostic Data Points in HIDS: In the last two months, CDPHE has changed the number of data points that can be entered into HIDS. It was two; it is now five.
8. UHL Eligibility for Part C: This issue can be addressed during the strategic planning process.
9. Referrals to F2F support: The number of referrals has declined since the launch of the HIDS database. Arlene will represent H&V's concerns during the strategic planning process. The role of the CO-Hear Coordinators was called out because they have access to families.

Please refer to the [strategic planning systems map](#) for additional information.

**Conclusion:** ongoing discussions about issues on the strategic planning map

**Action Items:** see above

**Persons Responsible:** see above

**Deadline:** ongoing

### Agenda Item 6: Screening Task Force Update

**Facilitator:** Arlene Stredler Brown

The Screening Task Force has been working for several months to develop scripts that will be distributed to birthing facilities and midwives. We are currently developing a plan to distribute the scripts statewide.

The next activity of this task force is to create an adapted version of the NBHS brochure for children who were in a NICU. We are working with Children's Hospital staff to develop language for this brochure.

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<b>Conclusion:</b> n/a		
<b>Action Items:</b> n/a	<b>Persons Responsible:</b> n/a	<b>Deadline:</b> ASAP

<b>Agenda Item 7:</b> Diagnostic/Identification Task Force Update	<b>Facilitator:</b> Arlene Stredler Brown	
<p>This task force has met only periodically in 2022 and 2023. When meetings are canceled, Arlene sends an email with updates about relevant projects. We have received feedback from some task force members asking if these meetings should continue to be scheduled. At this time, Arlene is providing quarterly email updates and will schedule a meeting as needed.</p> <p>Jami Fries suggested sending one email update for all task forces, as some people are members of multiple task forces. As we plan for the upcoming grant cycle, we will solicit input from Alliance members about maintaining active engagement of stakeholders while creating an efficient system for participation.</p>		
<b>Conclusion:</b> n/a		
<b>Action Items:</b> Discuss frequency and type of task force meetings with Alliance members	<b>Persons Responsible:</b> Arlene & Heather	<b>Deadline:</b> When writing the next grant.

<b>Agenda Item 8:</b> Early Intervention Task Force Update	<b>Facilitator:</b> Heather Abraham	
<p>This task force has not met for a couple months; nor is it scheduled to meet. Rather, a subcommittee has been formed with all agencies/programs that distribute resources to families. The agencies/programs on this subcommittee include: COEHDI, H&amp;V, CSDB, CHCO, Listen Foundation, AG Bell, and CDEC. The subcommittee members will analyze the resources that are currently being shared and consolidate/revise them to reduce duplication, purposely determine how much information is shared, assure balanced information is shared, and also discuss how resources are shared (e.g., electronic and/or print). This information will be brought to the Early Intervention Task Force and shared with the Alliance.</p>		

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<p>Jami asked if we need to solicit information from the Cued Speech Association and/or CAD. Heather shared that members of the DHH Task Force include people associated with Cued Speech. She suggested we talk about how to secure this information to be sure it is included in any new product.</p>		
<p><b>Conclusion:</b> n/a</p>		
<p><b>Action Items:</b> Subcommittee meetings throughout the summer</p>	<p><b>Persons Responsible:</b> Heather</p>	<p><b>Deadline:</b> ongoing</p>

<p><b>Agenda Item 9: HRSA Supplemental Grant</b></p>	<p><b>Facilitator:</b> Arlene Stredler Brown</p>
<p>At the March National EHDl Meeting, HRSA announced a supplemental grant opportunity focusing on child outcomes. This is a competitive grant that will award \$75,000 to 20 states. HRSA identified these criteria for all applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Develop a plan to build state EHDl system capacity to track and assess developmental milestones for DHH children</li> <li>○ Develop strategic partnerships with local and/or state early childhood providers</li> <li>○ Develop a plan to assess and evaluate existing data and identify disparities and tools to monitor developmental milestones for DHH children</li> </ul> <p>Colorado's plan will include activities for these two areas that are considered gaps in our current system:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Making a plan to address increase utilization of the progress monitoring tool (an abbreviated form of The FAMILY Assessment) available to our UHL population</li> <li>○ Creating a QI project that increases CO-Hear Coordinator time to encourage more families' participation in the UHL progress monitoring tool.</li> <li>○ Analyzing disparities in child language outcomes based on dependent variables such as: age of identification, where families live in the state, etc. Many of these data points are reported to the CDC each year.</li> <li>○ Making a plan to utilize data to impact professional development for early interventionists.</li> </ul>	

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We have been assured that the HRSA “will meet states where they are at” as they review submitted applications. Arlene expressed a concern that our ability to analyze data, rather than only create a plan for doing so, makes us seem less needy of grant funds.		
<b>Conclusion:</b> Write and submit supplemental grant		
<b>Action Items:</b> Submit supplemental grant to HRSA	<b>Persons Responsible:</b> Arlene & Heather	<b>Deadline:</b> July 11, 2023

<b>Agenda Item 10:</b> Closing		<b>Facilitator:</b> HA
One-word checkout included these descriptors: progress, busy (times 2), processing, opportunities, activity.		
<b>Conclusion:</b> n/a		
<b>Action Items:</b> n/a	<b>Persons Responsible:</b> n/a	<b>Deadline:</b> n/a

COEHDI Alliance meetings are currently held on the third Friday of each month.

**The next meeting date is Friday, August 18th**

*Accommodations: All Alliance meeting and task force meeting accommodations (e.g., American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, Cued Language Transliteration, and/or Spanish translators) must be requested at least 72 business hours/3 business days in advance. **Requests may be made via your task force facilitator and/or at [info@coehdi.org](mailto:info@coehdi.org)**. ASL interpreters will continue to be provided for all Alliance meetings. We will also enable Zoom's Live Transcription feature for all meetings. (Note, Live Transcription utilizes automatic voice-recognition and computer-generated captioning. As such, the accuracy cannot be guaranteed. It is not a substitute for the full functionality of Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART)).*