



# North Dakota EHDI

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention

Quarterly Newsletter FALL 2024

## GOOD NEWS!

ND EHDI just received notification that we received a second year of supplemental funding from HRSA to support “program efforts to assess and build capacity to address language acquisition and other developmental milestones at age 3 for children identified as deaf or hard of hearing (DHH).” This is some exciting news, and we look forward to working with our partners to develop a plan for North Dakota.

Starting in January, we will launch a weekly ECHO webinar series focusing on Language Acquisition that will run through February. These webinars aim to promote education and awareness through peer-to-peer learning. We are excited to collaborate with our partners and share our progress!

*Jerusha Olthoff, MSM - ND EHDI Program Director*

*Shelby Clark, MS, CCC-SLP-ND EDHI Language Acquisition Coordinator*

*Christine Brigden, LBSW-ND EHDI Follow-up & EDHI Language Acquisition Coordinator*

## Registration for the National EHDI Conference 2025 will open around November 1, 2024.

It is almost time to start preparing for the 24th annual Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI) conference held March 9-11, 2025, in Pittsburgh, PA. The annual EHDI conference provides an opportunity to go beyond our focus and understand the breadth of what hearing health is as a system of care. You will have the chance to hear how other states’ EHDI systems are progressing, what is happening federally, and how the work you do affects families and individuals. The annual EHDI conferences are not only educational but also inspirational experiences! We hope you make every effort to attend the conference!



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If you have questions, visit the conference website at <https://ehdiconference.org/>, or you may contact Jerusha Olthoff, MSM, ND EHDI Program Director, at 1-800-233-1737. We hope to see you there!

*Every one of us is different in some way, but for those of us who are more different, we have to put more effort into convincing the less different that we can do the same thing they can, just differently.*

*- Marlee Matlin*

- \* All infants are screened for hearing loss no later than **1 MONTH** of age, preferably before hospital discharge.
- \* All infants who do not pass the screening will have a diagnostic hearing evaluation no later than **3 MONTHS** of age.
- \* All infants with hearing loss are enrolled in early intervention services no later than **6 MONTHS** of age.

North Dakota EHDI collaborates with parents and healthcare providers to ensure that all babies receive their hearing screenings. It is crucial to identify a baby's hearing level as early as possible so that families can determine the best way to communicate with them. Hearing screening is the first step in identifying if a child has hearing loss. North Dakota EHDI adheres to the 2019 Joint Committee on Infant Hearing's Position Statement and national benchmarks for hearing screening, which includes screening no later than one month, diagnosis no later than three months, and enrolling infants with hearing loss in early intervention services no later than 6 months of age.

**1-3-6 Benchmarks**

**1<sup>st</sup> Month Hearing Screening**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Month Hearing Evaluation**

**6<sup>th</sup> Month Early Intervention**

**Early identification of Hearing Loss**

### **It Takes a Village**

The North Dakota Health and Human Services Newborn Screening program is visiting Sanford Fargo to provide annual education on the importance of newborn screening, including hearing screening. Since we switched to the snap probe on our Maico hearing screen device around 9 months ago, we have noticed a significant decrease in referrals and the need for ABAER. Every little bit of information can truly make a difference.

*Amanda Fehrenbach BSN RNC-OB  
Patient Care Manager of Family Birth Center  
Sanford Medical Center Fargo*

*Children are not things to be molded,  
but are people to be unfolded.  
- Jess Lair*

# Join the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) and Be a Voice for Children and Families

Are you a parent who has experienced the journey of early intervention with your child? Is your child 12 years of age or under? If so, we invite you to use your experience to make a difference by joining the **Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)**.

The ICC works alongside the Department of Human Services to advise and assist in the creation and improvement of services for children at-risk or with disabilities, ages birth to five. As a parent, your firsthand knowledge is valuable in shaping a statewide system that ensures every child gets the support they need during their critical early years.

## Why Your Voice Matters:

Parents know better than anyone what it's like to navigate the early intervention system. Your experiences, challenges, and successes can help guide policies and practices that impact countless families across the state. By joining the ICC, you'll have the opportunity to:

- **Advocate for Stronger Services:** Help ensure that early intervention services meet the real-world needs of children and families.
- **Shape Statewide Policies:** Participate in discussions about best practices and help develop a system that is equitable, inclusive, and accessible to all.
- **Collaborate with Experts:** Work alongside professionals, service providers, and other parents to share insights and offer practical solutions.

## Who Can Join?

We are looking for parents like you who:

- Have a child who received early intervention services (birth to 3).
- Are passionate about advocating for high-quality services for all children.
- Want to ensure that the early intervention system works for every family, regardless of their background or location.
- Have a child aged 12 or under.

Your voice and lived experience are critical in shaping the future for families navigating early intervention services. Whether you're passionate about improving access to services, refining eligibility processes, or ensuring a family-centered approach, your contribution will make a lasting impact.

## What's Involved?

As an ICC member, you will:

- Attend regular meetings (in person or virtual) to discuss key issues and initiatives.
- Collaborate with other council members, including professionals, service providers, and parents.
- Share your experiences, perspectives, and insights to inform decisions that affect early intervention programs across the state.
- Help the Department of Human Services ensure that children receive the services they need to succeed in school and life.

## Ready to Make a Difference?

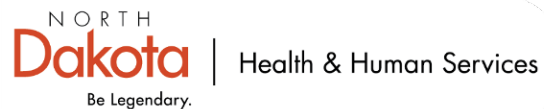
If you're ready to use your experience to help improve the early intervention system for all children and families, we encourage you to apply for a position on the ICC. Together, we can build a stronger, more effective system that provides every child with the opportunity to thrive.

To apply or learn more, please contact [insert contact information] or visit [insert website link].

Join the Interagency Coordinating Council today and help shape the future of early intervention services in our state! Reach out to Jackie below!

### Contact:

Jacqueline (Jackie) Adusumilli, Part C Coordinator  
[jadusumilli@nd.gov](mailto:jadusumilli@nd.gov)



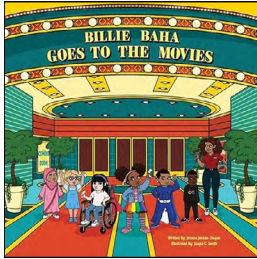




## North Dakota School for the Deaf/ Resource Center Parent-Infant Program and School Age Outreach Specialists

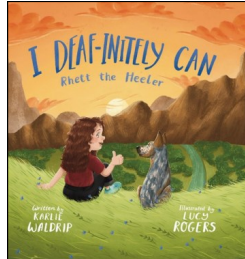
For more information, contact Nicole Swartwout at (701) 857-8681 or [nicole.swartwout@k12.nd.us](mailto:nicole.swartwout@k12.nd.us)

# Children's books with deaf character or focus



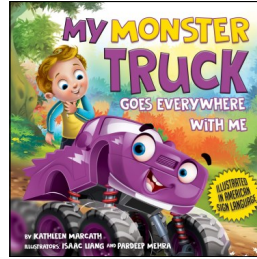
By Jessica Jordan-Hogan  
Illustrated by Jacqui Smith

Billie Baha is a four-year-old with bilateral hearing loss due to Microtia. This second book has the class going to the movie theater and they learn about ADA rights and how to practice self-advocacy skills.



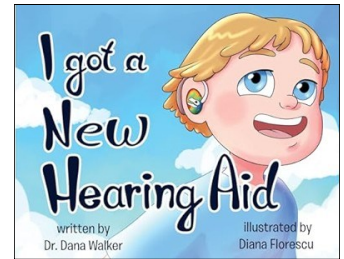
By Karlie Waldrip  
Illustrated by Lucy Rogers

Written in Rhett's perspective as a dog who is deaf about his journey of being adopted by a deaf girl and learning sign language.



by Kathleen Marcath  
Illustrated by Isaac Liang & Pardeep Mehra

Dylan is learning American Sign Language and knows how to sign the words for colors and sounds of his favorite trucks. Shows 32 signs throughout the book.



By Dr. Dana Walker  
Illustrated by Diana Florescu

Meet Elliot. He was born with a profound hearing loss. After many appointments with a special doctor called an audiologist, he was fitted with a hearing aid. Now he can hear all sorts of things.  
*(Geared for elementary students and Total Communication)*

Two resources for children's books that have deaf characters or focus:

**Success for Children with Hearing Loss website** has a list of children's books.

Go to <https://successforkidswithhearingloss.com/product-category/childrens-books/> or use the QR Code to check it out.

**The National Deaf Children's Society website** (British) asked families to review books with a deaf character or focus.

Go to <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/parenting-and-family-life/families-magazine/reviews/books/> or use the QR Code to check it out. The books are divided by age then click on the book you are interested in reading parent's review.

**NOTE:** *British Sign Language (BSL) and American Sign Language (ASL) are different so be sure if the book contains sign language, it is ASL.*



Success for Children with  
Hearing Loss



National Deaf Children's  
Society (British)





## Joint Dear Colleague Letter on Early Hearing Detection and Intervention and Part C Programs

Dear Colleagues:

This letter was jointly developed by offices within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to support increased collaboration between State Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) programs and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part C early intervention programs.

Data show that despite these longstanding newborn hearing screening and early intervention programs, there are critical gaps in services for deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) infants and toddlers. Therefore, within HHS, the Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (HRSA/MCHB) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (CDC/NCBDDD) join with ED's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to encourage State EHDI programs and IDEA Part C early intervention programs within States[a] to develop coordinated systems of care that include data sharing, tracking, and surveillance to support timely early identification of hearing loss and access to early intervention services to foster optimal outcomes for DHH children and their families.

To ensure that DHH children and their families receive the services and supports that they need to thrive, this correspondence:

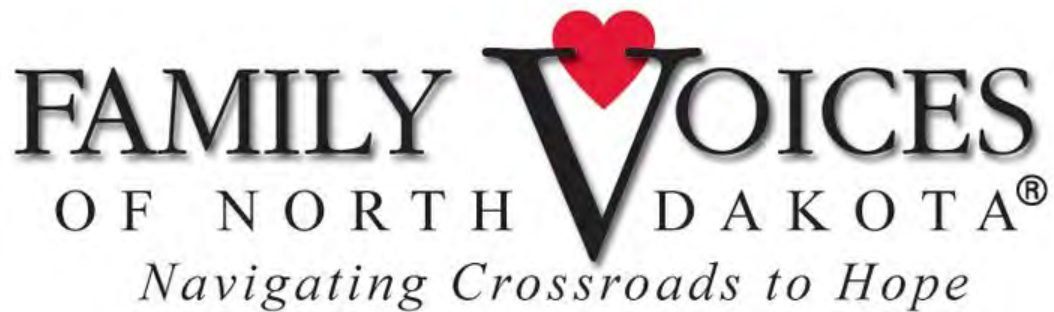
- Highlights the requirements and expectations in federal law that support collaboration between EHDI and IDEA Part C programs.
- Emphasizes the importance of data-sharing to support ongoing collaboration between EHDI and IDEA Part C programs to coordinate child find activities, refer children from EHDI to IDEA Part C programs, support timely service delivery, and monitor children's outcomes.
- Provides technical assistance resources to support States in this collaborative work.

[To read the whole article visit Early Hearing Detection, Intervention and Part C Programs \(ed.gov\)](#)



*Whatever we plant in our subconscious mind and nourish with repetition and emotion will one day become a reality.*

*- Earl Nightingale*



## **Join us for the 2024 Parent Leadership Institute**

### **Greetings families!**

Through grant funding from the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau and personal donations, Family Voices of North Dakota is able to offer the Parent Leadership Institute and we are inviting you to attend! We are very excited about this opportunity to join other families from across the state! This will be the 17th year this has been offered.

Is this for you?

Well, first of all let us say ....YES! Yes, because as families, we need to be able to first speak on behalf of our own children, and second because there are many issues we as families face on behalf of our children. So in our opinion, yes....YOUR VOICE COUNTS AND IS MEANINGFUL.

The Parent Leadership Institute will bring together 25 to 30 family members of individuals with chronic health conditions, developmental disabilities and medically complex children from across the state of North Dakota for a weekend retreat.

Family Voices of North Dakota and events partners will offer:

1. Information and education pertaining to services offered for your child/youth by both the public and private sector of services and how those services are currently funded from the federal, state and local level.
2. We will also provide tools for personal leadership growth.
3. Discuss the importance of family-centered care and care coordination.
4. Provide specific training related to the legislative process. Participants will have the opportunity to meet with a legislator and others on the legislative process.

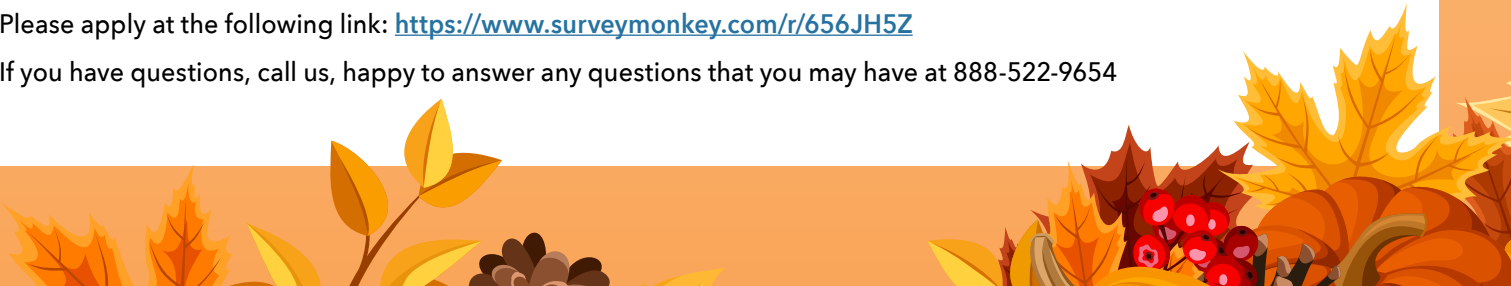
The weekend retreat is an opportunity for networking and mentoring by other family advocates. The weekend retreat will be held October 4 through the 6th, 2024 in Verona ND at the Verona Bear Creek Lodge. It will start at 12p on the 4th and end at noon on the 6th to allow time for participants to travel home. All applicants must commit to the full weekend in order to be selected for the Institute. Applicants will receive recognition of graduating from the Parent Leadership Institute, plus the cost of motel, food and travel will be covered for the two day retreat! Unfortunately, we cannot offer childcare at this time.

Join the now over 375 families who have attended and started their advocacy journey. Over the years, we know and understand that it may feel a bit uncomfortable to meet new people, and try something new. Please put your mind at ease! By the end of the weekend, you will have made new friends and have a ton of information in raising your child/youth with a chronic health illness and disability. Mostly that you do not have to travel this journey alone.

**\*Important\*** You can apply individually, or if you plan to attend with your spouse or significant other, please indicate this on your application. This will help us plan for the meals and the lodge.

Please apply at the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/656JH5Z>

If you have questions, call us, happy to answer any questions that you may have at 888-522-9654



## Baseball Clinic with the Minnesota Twins

*By Danielle Landreville, Parent Board Member of North Dakota Hand & Voices*

This summer, Deaf Equity and the Minnesota Twins partnered up for the second year to offer a baseball clinic specifically for Deaf/hard of hearing children. This meant picking up my son, Hunter, from one camp in Garrison, North Dakota, and driving all the way to St. Paul, Minnesota so we could be ready for this fun event the next morning. We pretty much spent all of Friday driving to make attending this possible. When there is a Deaf event that Hunter can participate in, we try to make it happen.

This awesome event made the drive worth it. The Twins trainers were there to teach the kids, and Deaf Equity provided tons of interpreters and Deaf/Hard of hearing and Deafblind adult role models. At the baseball clinic, children ages 6-18, learned how to bat, throw and field.

I especially loved how the staff and volunteers met everyone where they were and fully respected and included any mode of communication. Some parents and kids didn't sign, some did, and some didn't sign fluently. Regardless, there was no judgment, just friendly interaction. Everyone wanted to teach the kids the fundamental skills of baseball and ensure that they had fun together.

I was glad to learn that I could register a hearing sibling, which the staff welcomed. Both brothers enjoyed the clinic day together and it was a good experience for them. We left with some fun Twins swag and my oldest son even scored a new Twins mitt just for lefties. I know he won't forget the experience. When I asked about what he liked best, Hunter said it was special to him that everyone could sign with him and that real people from the Twins were teaching him how to play.

Many thanks to Deaf Equity and the Minnesota Twins for creating this wonderful event for kids. They were able to get instruction in a lifetime sport that can be so hard to access with a lack of interpreting for coaches in our rural areas. We hope it is held again next year.



## Meet Sierra Bennion, the newest addition to the Sanford Health team.

I am the newest audiologist at Sanford Health in the Broadway clinic in Fargo and I serve all ages. I was born and raised in North Dakota and attended NDSU for my undergraduate degree where I was on the women's golf team. I then moved to Salt Lake City, UT to get my doctorate in audiology from the University of Utah and completed my resident year in Boise, ID. I am super happy to be back in ND and closer to family; although, I do miss the mountains. I'm excited to have joined Sanford and look forward to serving the community that I grew up in!

*Sierra Bennion, Au.D.*

*Audiologist*

*Sierra.Bennion@sanfordhealth.org*

*Sanford Health*

*737 Broadway N*

*Fargo, ND 58102*

**SANFORD**  
HEALTH





# North Dakota Fast Facts

## Live Births

9,639

Every day in North Dakota, there were an average of Births

26

## Largest Baby

13 lbs. 8 oz.

## Day most births occurred

August 3<sup>rd</sup>  
(46 births)

## Day fewest births occurred

October 15<sup>th</sup>  
(9 births)

[Source](#)

## Most Popular Baby Names

### - Boy -

Oliver  
Hudson  
Theodore  
Henry

### - Girl -

Charlotte  
Evelyn  
Olivia  
Ivy

## Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Resources, Upcoming Events, and Webinars

### ND EHDI Advisory Meetings

- October 8, 2024 10 am - Noon
- April 8, 2025 10 am - Noon
- October 7, 2025 10 am - Noon

If you have any questions, please contact:

Jerusha Olthoff, MSM

ND EHDI Program Director

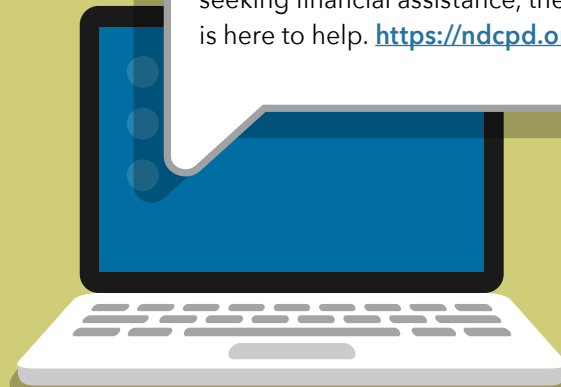
The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities

1-701-858-4360, toll free, 1-800-233-1737,

[jerusha.olthoff@minotstateu.edu](mailto:jerusha.olthoff@minotstateu.edu)



The **ND EHDI website** is a valuable resource that offers help, guidance, and support for families, financial assistance, and professionals. Whether you are a parent seeking support for your child with hearing loss, a professional seeking training and guidelines, or someone seeking financial assistance, the ND EHDI website is here to help. <https://ndcpd.org/ndehdi/>



# NCHAM's Continued Support of EHDI and highlights New National Learning EHDI National Network

The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM) at Utah State University has been a champion for EHDI programs for over 40 years. From 1988-1993 NCHAM conducted the first large-scale systematic evaluation of universal newborn hearing screening (the Rhode Island Hearing Assessment Program). Since then, NCHAM staff have worked continuously with individual hospitals, state EHDI programs, policy makers, advocates, and many government and private entities to expand and improve services for infants and young children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH).

For the past 25 years NCHAM has received funding from the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) to provide resources and technical assistance to state EHDI programs. Beginning April 1 2024 MCHB decided to restructure how technical assistance would be provided to EHDI programs by funding an EHDI National Network consisting of the following three entities who will work together to "advance EHDI systems of services so that deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants and young children up to age 3 receive appropriate supports and timely services to improve language acquisition outcomes."

1. **The Implementation and Change Center (ICC)** housed at Gallaudet University's Beacon Center (<https://gallaudet.edu/national-beacon-center>) is funded to support state EHDI programs using implementation science and change management methods.
2. **The Family Leadership in Language and Learning Center (FL3)**, housed at Hands & Voices (<https://handsandvoices.org/fl3>), is funded to enhance family-to-family support, develop family leadership skills, and engage DHH adults in EHDI programs.
3. **The Provider Education Center (PEC)**, housed at American Academy of Pediatrics (<https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/early-hearing-detection-and-intervention>), is funded to provide resources and training for health care and allied health professionals so they can interact more effectively with the EHDI programs.

You can expect to hear from members of this network with information about the ways in which they will be supporting the expansion and improvement of EHDI programs.

NCHAM remains as committed and actively involved in supporting EHDI programs as we have ever been. For example:

- **24<sup>th</sup> Annual EHDI Conference:** NCHAM will organize and host this event in Pittsburgh PA on March 9-12, 2025. We are expecting over 1,200 people to participate. There will be excellent plenary sessions, over 250 podium and poster presentations, Instructional sessions, and the outstanding exhibit hall. You can submit proposals for presentations by September 30th and instructional sessions by September 11th at <https://ehdiconference.org/>. We hope to see you there!
- **NCHAM's website-[infanthearing.org](https://infanthearing.org):** As the "go-to-source" for everything related to EHDI the website continues to provide easy access to materials developed over the 25 years that NCHAM served as the EHDI National Technical Resource Center. For example, you can still find contact information for the EHDI Coordinator in every state, copies of each state's EHDI legislation, and recordings of past webinars and instructional modules such the Core of EHDI. New material is continually posted. For example, check out the new **Fast Facts** page and the recordings of a recent webinar about a learning community to help **EHDI and Dried Bloodspot programs** work together more effectively, and another about **Evidence-based Hearing Screening Practices for Children 0-5**.
- **HiTrack Data Management and Tracking software:** This widely used software continues to be available. New features, such as the ability to generate CDC HSFS reports, are added on a regular basis.
- **Journal of Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (JEHDI):** An open-source journal (i.e., no cost for authors or for readers), JEHDI publishes articles relevant to EHDI programs. Since its inception there

*continued...*

have been more than 159,000 downloads of JEHDl articles. This is a great place to stay informed about what's happening with EHDl.

- [EHDl-PALS \(Pediatric Audiology Links to Services\)](#): This free web-based searchable national directory remains available to help families, healthcare professionals, and state public health organizations find pediatric audiology expertise for children ages birth to five.
- [The Newborn Hearing Screening Training Curriculum \(NHSTC\)](#): This competency-based, self-paced, on-line course provides learners the skills and knowledge needed for conducting effective newborn hearing screening. During the last 12 months, almost 5,000 people completed the course and received a certificate of competency.

- [LearnToScreen.org](#): This NCHAM website offers two courses in evidence-based hearing screening targeting community-based early care and educators serving children 0-5 and older.

Learning is a lifelong journey that empowers individuals to expand their knowledge, develop new skills, and adapt to an ever-changing world. It is through continuous learning that we gain a deeper understanding of the world around us and cultivate the expertise needed to tackle new challenges.

## Open enrollment on Healthcare.gov starts November 1

If you don't have health insurance, you may be able to get a plan on the Health Insurance Marketplace. Open enrollment starts November 1 for coverage that starts Jan 1, 2025. If you already have Marketplace coverage, this time also allows you to review and change plans.

### QUESTIONS?

Contact North Dakota Navigators  
We offer free and unbiased help

1-800-233-1737

[NDnavigators@MinotStateU.edu](mailto:NDnavigators@MinotStateU.edu)

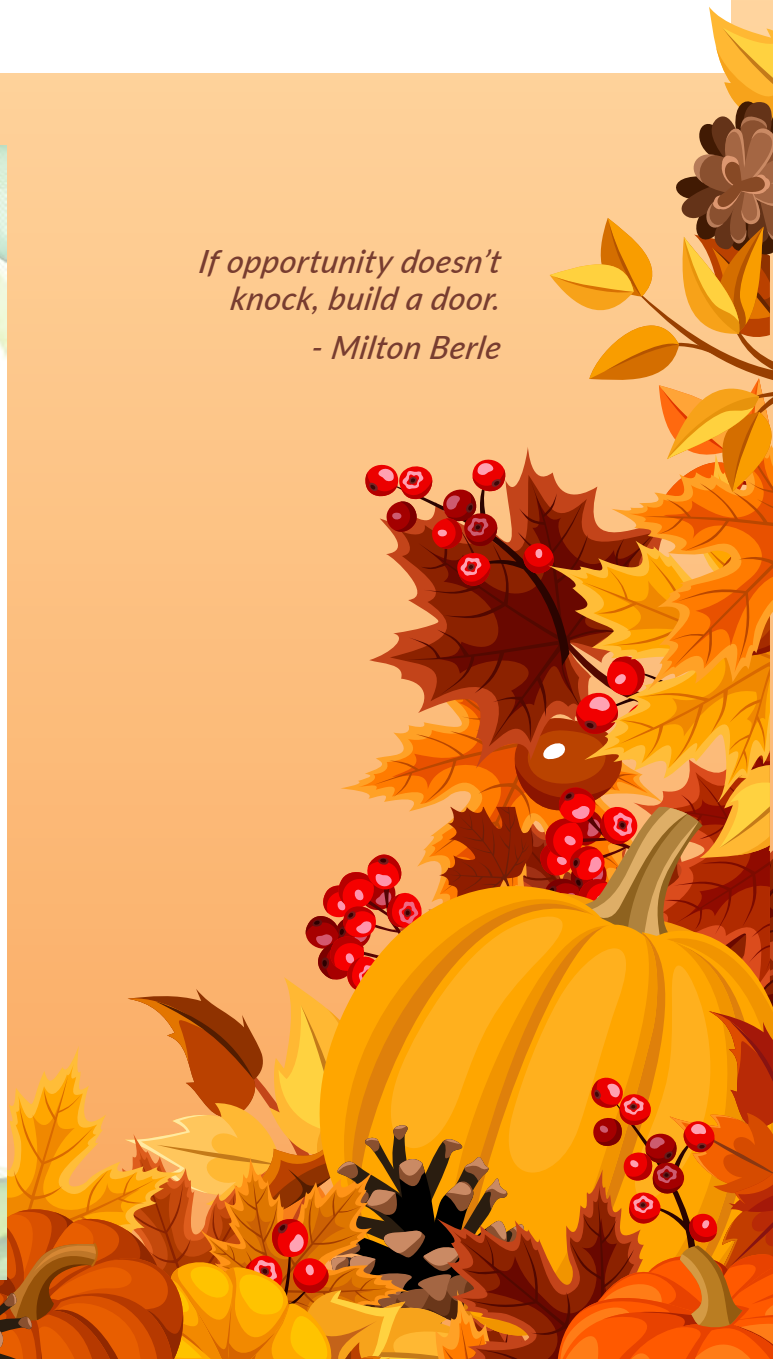
[www.NDCPD.org/NDnavigator](http://www.NDCPD.org/NDnavigator)

## ND Navigators

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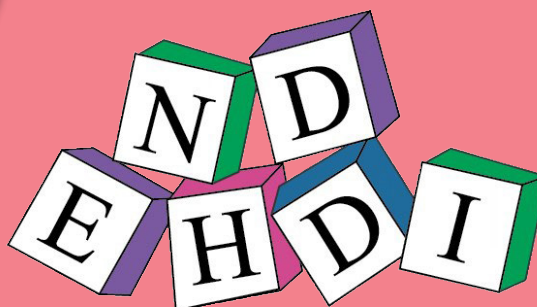
*If opportunity doesn't  
knock, build a door.*

*- Milton Berle*





**SAVE THE DATE!**



North Dakota Early Hearing Detection and Intervention

# Early Hearing Detection Intervention ECHO




**January 14 - February 25, 2025**  
at Noon

<https://ndcpd.org/echo/>



## Collaboration For Change *Webinar Series*

**Thursdays,**  
**Noon – 1:00 pm, CST**  
January 23, 2025 – February 20, 2025

 **800-233-1737**

 **[NDCPD.org/webinar-series](https://ndcpd.org/webinar-series)**

**SAVE THE DATE**

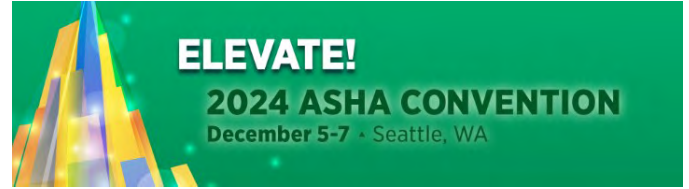
January 23 - February 20, 2025 at Noon - [Collaboration For Change Webinar Series 2025 - North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities \(ndcpd.org\)](https://ndcpd.org/webinar-series)

# Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Resources, Upcoming Events, and Webinars

Make plans to join us at the

**24th Annual Conference:  
March 9-11, 2025, in Pittsburgh, PA**

For more information, visit [EHD Annual Conference \(ehdiconference.org\)](https://ehdiconference.org)



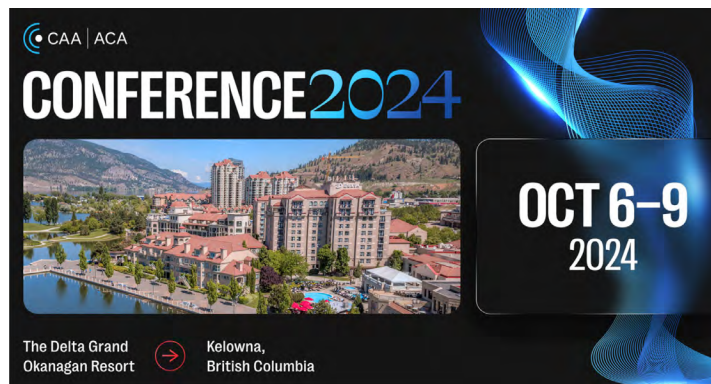
The ASHA Convention is the premier annual professional development and networking event for speech-language pathologists, audiologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists. Plan to join your peers for the **2024 ASHA Convention, December 5-7, in Seattle, WA.** For more information, visit <https://convention.asha.org/>



AAA 2025+HearTECH Expo, March 26-29, 2025, in New Orleans, Louisiana, offers top-notch education igniting your passion for your profession, exciting and fun networking opportunities where you'll meet new people, hands-on activities, and much more. To Learn more and to register visit <https://buff.ly/45MbVYX>



**American Cochlear Implant Alliance**  
- CI2025: Boston, MA | April 30 - May 3, 2025.  
For more information visit <https://www.acialliance.org/page/CI2025>



CAA (Canadian Academy of Audiology) Conference 2024. Register today for Canada's largest live event dedicated to the science & practice of audiology at <https://tinyurl.com/2p96tr2e>

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housed at Gallaudet University's Beacon Center (<https://gallaudet.edu/national-beacon-center>) is funded to support state EHD programs using implementation science and change management methods.

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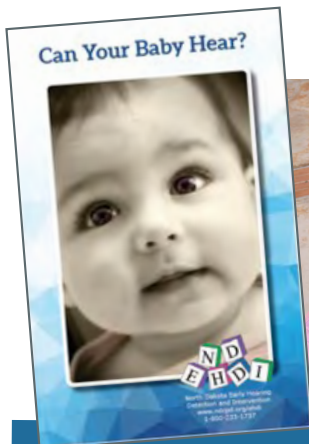
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# Free Material About Hearing Loss in Children

CDC has FREE brochures, posters, fact sheets, and more for parents, health care providers, and public health professionals. You can view, download, and print the materials at <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/freematerials.html>.



## HOSPITALS: Do you need more brochures?

Please email [vickie.brabandt@MinotStateU.edu](mailto:vickie.brabandt@MinotStateU.edu)

### ARE YOU FOLLOWING US?

 [www.facebook.com/NDEHDI](https://www.facebook.com/NDEHDI)

 [@NDEHDI\\_NDCPD](https://twitter.com/NDEHDI_NDCPD)



### CHIME IN!

Check out the ND EHD website at [www.ndcpd.org/ndehti](http://www.ndcpd.org/ndehti) for information or meet the staff. Also, if you have questions, find broken links or typos, or have suggestions, please let us know.

We hope you will find the newsletter provides a broad picture of hearing healthcare in North Dakota. Through collaborative efforts, streamlined processes and consistent communication, ND can assure a strong system of hearing health care for every child birthed and/or residing in North Dakota.

We look forward to being a resource for quality improvement and working with you!

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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