



Embedding Parent to Parent Support, Deaf Guides and Mentors Into The Early Intervention Process in Maine

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**"Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much."**

-Helen Keller

Maine collaborations

- Maine EHDI
- Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (HRSA funders)
- Hands & Voices – Guide By Your Side Parent and Deaf/HH Guide Program
- Early Intervention



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Maine Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side – Parent to Parent Support Program

As a parent of a D/HH child, I can offer unbiased advice from personal experiences with my child and things my family has encountered on our journey.





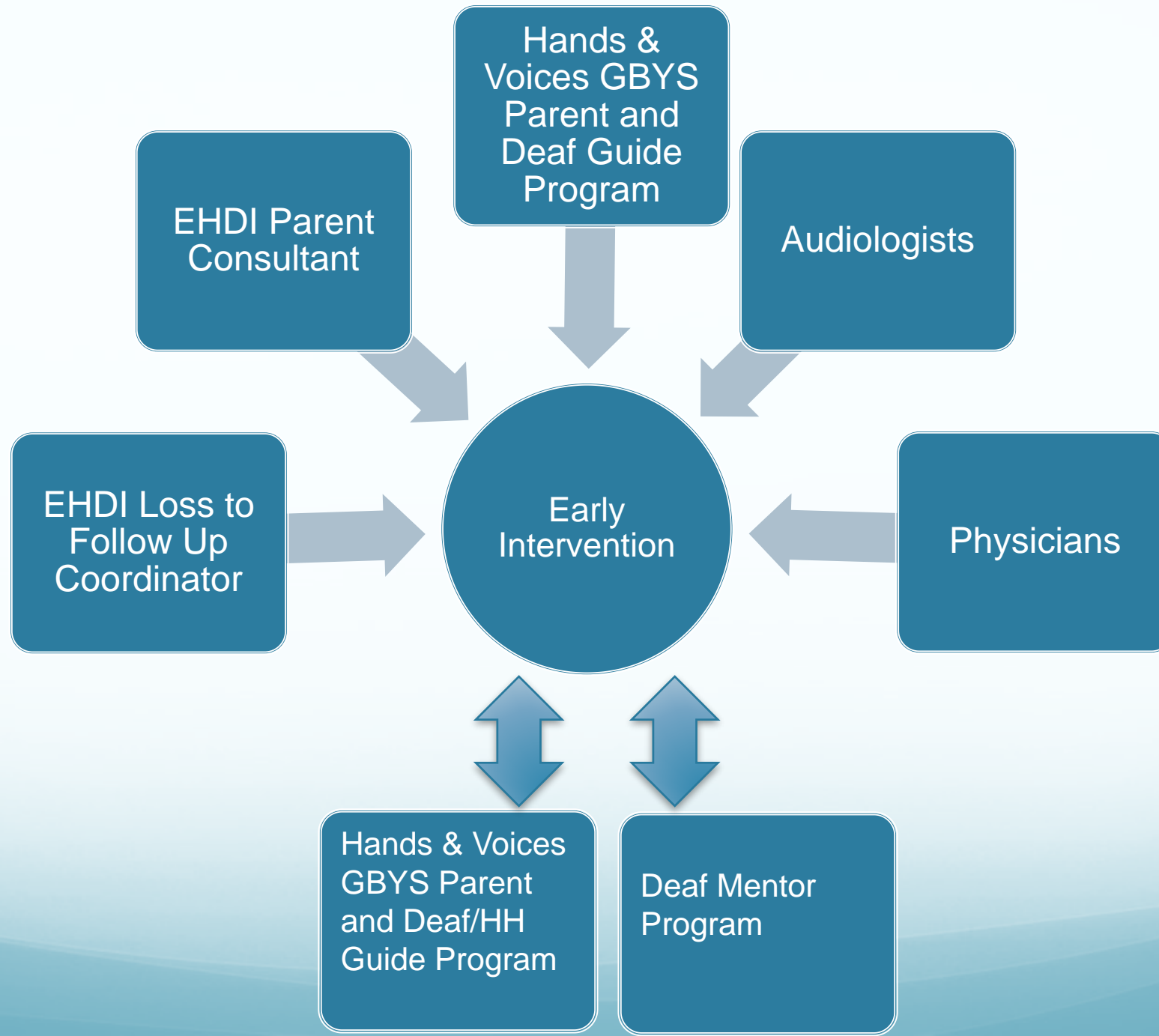
- **Maine Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side – Deaf /HH Guide Program**

Diverse group of deaf and hard of hearing individuals

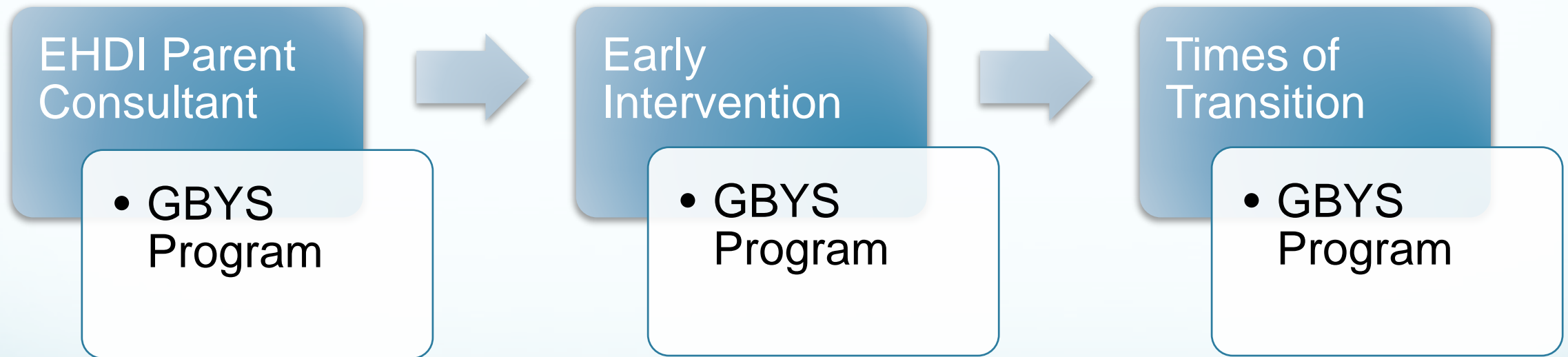
Unbiased support

Sharing our perspective and life experiences with families who have Deaf and hard of hearing children





Windows of Opportunity for Referrals for Parent and Deaf/HH Guide Support



Early Intervention in Maine Part C



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Maine's programs for Deaf/HH Infusion

Maine Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side –Parent- Deaf/HH Guide Program

Bringing support to families

- **Maine's Early Intervention System – Joint visits with early interventionists**
- **Maine's Guide by Your Side Program - Joint visits with Parent Guides**

Family Visit with Early Intervention

Six Visit Process

Maine has a formal process of initial support for families that focuses on:

- Attachment and bonding
- Information sharing
- Communication opportunities exploration
- Meeting parents and Deaf/HH adults



What is our role on a joint visit?

Goals:

- × To create a safe place in which parents can ask questions
- × To offer unbiased support
- × To share experiences in conversation

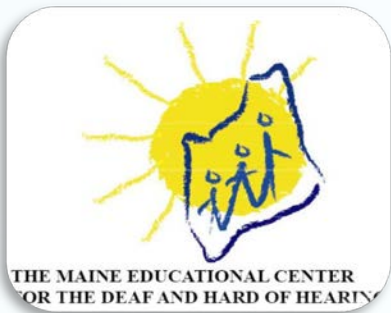
Deaf Guide

- × GBYS Training (H&V affiliation)
- × Deaf adults from various backgrounds
- × Funding from state HRSA Grant

Deaf Mentor

- × SKI HI program
- × Requires SKI HI Deaf Mentor training and certification
- × Formal IFSP service in Maine – ASL Family Training
- × Funding from Part C – Early Intervention

Both Deaf Guides and Deaf Mentors provide families and children who are Deaf and hard of hearing invaluable perspectives that come from their own personal experiences.



Maine's programs for Deaf/HI Infusion



Maine's Ski Hi Deaf Mentor Program

- All Mentors Certified by National SKI HI Trainers
- Formal service on IFSP (Family Training) or IEP (Parent Training and Counseling)
- Degree required
- Cued Speech services available
- Distance learning available



Other early intervention opportunities for interacting with Deaf Adults in Maine



- **ASL for Families Program**
 - ASL Classes taught by a certified Deaf Mentor or ASLTA
 - Distance learning available

- **Discovering Language Opportunities Program**
 - Monthly themes – with ASL instruction, Deaf Culture
 - Facilitated by Certified Deaf Mentors
 - Distance learning available

- **Parent Infant Toddler Program**
 - Deaf Mentor
 - Deaf/HH Guides



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Maine Hands &

Voices Events



Reflecting Together

It is important to allow time for families to explore...reflect...change...question...



A final thought from a parent...



“What we really want, really need as parents, is opportunities to contact other families with deaf children, help in making regular contact with adults who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, information that is accurate, honest, unbiased and fair, and then the emotional support to make decisions.....”