

PEOPLE YOU WILL MEET ALONG YOUR JOURNEY

You will meet many new people as a result of your child's hearing loss. These people could be audiologists, early intervention specialists, medical professionals, and parents and caregivers of children with a hearing loss. Here is a brief description of ways in which each of these groups may be of help to you.

AUDIOLOGIST

The audiologist may help by:

- Having the skills and equipment for infant hearing testing.
- Recommending amplification (hearing aids, FM systems), or cochlear implants to meet the needs of your child.
- Providing audiological follow-up, monitoring and maintaining your child's amplification system including well-fitting earmolds.
- Testing your child with and without amplification and discussing your child's responses to sounds.
- Providing information about early intervention program options and working with you and early intervention specialists.

EARLY INTERVENTION SPECIALIST

(May be a Speech-Language Pathologist, Teacher of the Deaf, Audiologist, Early Childhood Special Educator, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, etc.).

The Early Intervention Specialist may help by:

- Describing the supports and available services through early intervention programs and your family's participation.
- Discussing your observations and concerns about your child.
- Answering your questions about the effects of your child's hearing loss on communication, and participate in family activities and learning.
- Helping to assess both your child's and family's strengths and needs.
- Providing a comprehensive family centered early intervention program that will help your child with listening and communication skills.
- Working with you and the audiologist to help your child learn to use amplification and make sure it functions properly.
- Documenting records of your child's progress in communication and developmental areas.
- Working with you to plan your child's educational needs when at age 3, your child is ready to transition from the early intervention program.
- Providing opportunities for networking with adults and children with hearing loss.

PEDIATRICIAN/FAMILY PRACTITIONER

Your child's primary care physician may help by:

- Coordinating care as well as address other medical conditions that may be associated with hearing problems.
- Working with an audiologist experienced in infant hearing testing.
- Providing information about medical and/or surgical treatment for the various types of hearing loss.
- Referring promptly for amplification and early intervention upon confirmation of a hearing loss.
- Referring to early intervention programs and specialist counseling (*i.e.* ENTs, Geneticist).
- Treating your child – or referring to an ear specialist – when your child has a middle ear

infection that may increase the degree of hearing loss.

- Referring for specialist counseling (i.e., ENTs, Geneticist).

OTOLARYNGOLOGIST or EAR, NOSE, THROAT (ENT) PHYSICIAN

The ENT may help by:

- Confirming the nature of the hearing loss.
- Answering your questions about medical or surgical treatment for different types of hearing loss.
- Authorizing the use of hearing aids for your child.
- Evaluating your child's need for ventilation tubes.

GENETICS TEAM

Consists of a clinical geneticist and a genetic counselor

The Geneticist may help by:

- Performing a test or examination to find out the cause of your baby's hearing loss.
- Determining if the hearing loss is genetic or inherited.
- Informing you of the chance of having another child with hearing loss.
- Working together to offer the best advice and care for you and your child.

COCHLEAR IMPANT TEAM/SURGEON

The cochlear implant team may help by:

- Determining if your baby is a candidate for an implant.

PARENTS OF CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING (D/HH)

Parents (hearing/deaf) may help by:

- Sharing experiences they have had with professionals and early intervention programs.
- Telling you about people and resources they have found useful.
- Listening to you.
- Sharing their initial feelings related to parenting a child with hearing loss and how feelings change over time.
- Telling you about their child's achievements.
- Getting your children together for playtimes.

ADULTS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

Adults who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing may help by:

- Sharing life experiences.
- Serving as a role model.
- Serving as a language model.