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CONNECTIONS

A publication of the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education

The Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Mission: To promote positive outcomes for all Deaf and Hard of Hearing children in Indiana through information, services, and education.

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From the Director Join our team!

Many transitions are happening at the Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education – from onboarding a new educational consultant in our deaf education program (see page 2 to learn more about Rebekah!) to changes in roles for Erika Pearson as she moves from our audiology program to Early Intervention (as an EI specialist), while others step away from their roles at the Center.

We have openings to highlight for our stakeholders– please help spread the word about these opportunities:

- **Audiologist** - <https://workforindiana.in.gov/job-invite/269883/>
- **Audiology Administrative Assistant 5** - <https://workforindiana.in.gov/job-invite/335569/>
- **Administrative Assistant 3** - <https://workforindiana.in.gov/job-invite/341482/>





**Center for
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STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Rebekah Cunningham, Ph.D

Rebekah has been a contractor for the Center's Deaf Education program since August 2021.

She is from Indiana but spent more than a decade in Arizona before moving back to the Hoosier State in 2014. She received her doctorate in Audiology from the University of Cincinnati and her bachelor's and master's degrees from Indiana University and Purdue University, respectively.

Cunningham has worked in many different professional settings, including hospitals, industry, and academia. She currently teaches doctor of audiology (Au.D.) students through A.T. Still University in Mesa, Arizona. She was formerly the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention program director for the state of Indiana. Her passions have always been working with children who are deaf or hard of hearing and mentoring the next generation of audiologists.

She is actively involved in the American Academy of Audiology, serving on multiple task forces and committees, as well as chairing the convention and the board of directors.

FUN FACTS

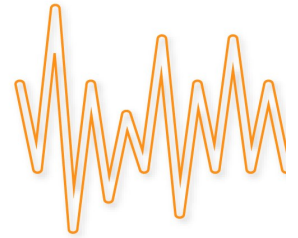
- Rebekah and her husband Bob have four children.
- Rebekah volunteers at the Humane Society of Hamilton County. She has three dogs and four cats (which may constitute an occupational hazard).
- She loves to sew and quilt.
- Her kitchen is cow-themed.
- Rebekah once sang the National Anthem at a Cincinnati Reds game.





SOUND ADVICE

Audiology



The impact of hearing loss

Language

Most language is learned incidentally, or through example. Direct teaching of language is sometimes necessary for children who are deaf or hard of hearing as incidental learning may not be as accessible. For verbal language, consider the child's ability to access the [speech spectrum](#) and different [listening environments](#). For visual language, ensure the child has access to rich examples of language in the environment. Children who are deaf or hard of hearing may require additional support to develop certain skills in spoken English. These include abstract words (before, after, equal to, etc.); understanding words that have more than one meaning; word endings that give information about tense, singular versus plural, etc., and unspoken social "rules" such as turn taking, what to say or not say and when. The [IDEAL](#) (Indiana Deaf Education and Assessments of Language) milestones document is an excellent resource to keep in mind what language skills develop at what ages – in [English and American Sign Language](#) as well as [Spanish \(Español\)](#).

Articulation

Often, children who do not have [sufficient auditory access to certain speech sounds](#) have difficulty producing those sounds. Children who are deaf or hard of hearing may produce speech sounds incorrectly and/or omit certain speech sounds. Often this leads to difficulty understanding what they are saying. For children using listening and spoken language, the ability to speak so that they are able to be understood by others is necessary to communicate and connect with other people. Audibility is key to [natural development of speech sounds](#). Specialized coaching is needed to highlight these speech sounds and teach the child to recognize and produce them properly. This training can help make their speech easier to understand.

Social-Emotional

Communication is needed to build healthy relationships. Adults must ensure that children who are deaf or hard of hearing can communicate with their family and peers. Understanding [social-emotional milestones](#) can help parents and professionals have accurate expectations. Deaf and hard of hearing children benefit from the chance to interact with other adults and children who communicate in the same way. Some children feel alone when they do not see anyone else who knows what it feels like to be deaf or hard of hearing. This can potentially lead to frustration, anger and even acting out. The opportunity to share experiences and learn from one another is helpful.

Cognitive

Missing or misunderstanding what people say can make it hard to learn new information. Children need to be able to learn to improve their reading and thinking skills. Children who are deaf or hard of hearing must have all of the same information as their hearing classmates. They may need extra time or different materials to make sure the information is clear. Sometimes, the cause of a child's hearing loss may also cause cognitive delays. Some children have hearing loss and cognitive delays that are not related. When a child who is deaf or hard of hearing is being tested, it is important to keep their communication needs and challenges in mind.



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Resources:

Central Institute for the Deaf– [Considerations for choosing speech targets](#)
Hands and Voices Parent Tip Sheets– [Language](#) and [Social Development](#)
IDEAL Parent Document– [English](#) and [Spanish](#)
Success for Kids with Hearing Loss – [Impact of Hearing Loss](#) and [Speech Perception and Learning](#)



BRAIN BUILDERS CORNER EARLY INTERVENTION

Joy, play, and language acquisition

The Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Conference took place virtually from March 13 through 15 and offered sessions reflecting on early intervention practice and sharing information with families, among a plethora of other topics for audiologists, interventionists, families and medical providers.

We are sharing some nuggets of information related to brain building in infants and toddlers. Dr. Jack Shonkoff shares, "Building your babies' brain sounds a little intimidating– so step back and take a deep breath. Parenting is much more of an art than it is a science."

Did you know that play builds brains? Play, such as peek-a-boo, patty cake and singing songs with repetition and movement is a way for children to explore and develop a sense of mastery of the world. The baby will want to continue these activities, telling you that their brain is learning. See the mini Parenting

Scientific perspective

Being silly, singing nursery rhymes, playing and having fun are fundamentals that help develop children's cognitive, emotional and speech development.

"Scientists have recently determined that it takes approximately 400 repetitions to create a new synapse in the brain- unless it is done with play, in which case, it takes between 10-20 repetitions."- Dr. Karyn Purvis. from [Therapy at Play](#)

Master Class video on [Harvard's Center on the Developing Child's website](#).

Parents know it is important to celebrate their child. Resources dedicated to fostering joy are available from [Hands & Voices Fostering Joy for Families website](#). Check out their tip sheets ([ASL](#), [English](#), [Spanish](#) as well as many other languages!) Let us know if you would like a copy of the Fostering Joy Journal, available to a limited number of families from the CDHHE Early Intervention Network. There is a separate website dedicated for [Fostering Joy information for professionals](#).

Some of the tips that can be incorporated into our work with families are backed by science and include:

- Encouraging families to take pictures of events and activities that bring the family joy and making a "joy" album
- Encouraging journal writing to document their joy
- Posting or sharing on social media, or joining a group of other families interested in fostering joy. Facebook has a family Fostering Joy group and a Professional Fostering Joy group.



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LANGUAGE AND LITERACY CORNER

New language resources available

Introducing new resources for families and professions related to language topics: **Extraordinarily Committed to Enrichment in Language & Literacy (EXCEL²)**. EXCEL² is a series of flyers within our [IDEAL](#) initiative. These are intended for professionals and families and cover a variety of important topics related to deaf and hard of hearing children's literacy and language development. EXCEL² documents can be downloaded and many have links to additional resources on each topic.

You may also consider printing and sharing with others. Perhaps Grandma and Grandpa want to know more or a school principal would benefit from the information. The flyers can be found under the [IDEAL technical assistance tab](#). EXCEL² will be updated with more topics, so be sure to continue to check for additional language enrichment information. Currently available topics:

- [Background Knowledge](#)
- [Beyond Letters, Colors, and Numbers](#)
- [Emotional Health and Resilience Language](#)
- [Learning Through Play](#)
- [Narrating Your Day](#)
- [Screen Time](#)



Another resource that has been added to our list of IDEAL technical assistance resources is **American Sign Language and English Language Milestones—The Next Steps**. The Next Steps cover milestones middle school through young adulthood and include expectations for language needed for independence and college.

These milestones are perfect for use when developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and determining long-term goals or engaging in Person Centered Planning. The Next Steps milestones are available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).



TEACHERS' DEN Deaf Educator's Network

Professional Development and Educational Interpreters

Educational interpreters often struggle to find applications in interpreter trainings that are designed for a broader educational audience. At times you may wish to engage these professionals in a more enriching professional development experience, but where can you look for resources? Fortunately, today's profession offers a range of topics and delivery methods to meet your team's needs. Here are a few organizations that provide quality training opportunities for educational interpreters:

- [The National Association of Interpreters In Education](#), NAIE, empowers educational interpreters to promote best practices and to enhance the education of deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind students. [Membership](#) is \$60 per year or \$30 per year for student membership. Benefits include networking opportunities, newsletters, resources, and a library of educational training programs that could be viewed during professional development time. For more information, visit naiedu.org.



- Indiana State University offers the [PASS Project](#), Promoting Achievement for Students with Sensory Loss. This project provides statewide support, technical assistance and professional development opportunities to educational interpreters. Some of the resources are live, in-person trainings while others are recorded webinars as well as EIPA-prep cohorts. You can find more information on the PASS Project at indstate.edu/education/Blumberg/PASS.

- Additionally you can consult the [Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education](#) for professional development opportunities and activities. The Center's accommodation specialist, Laura Leffler, is an RID certified interpreter with an educational interpreter permit. She hosts 10 free training opportunities per year. Leffler is also active on the board of the Indiana Chapter of RID and can connect interpreters looking for information to a variety of resources and professional organizations. Reach out at LLeffler@isdh.in.gov/317-232-0896 and check out our [Spring 2019 Newsletter](#) for her original Staff Spotlight article to learn more about Laura Leffler.



[Center documents related to educational interpreting:](#)
[Continuous learning educational interpreter considerations](#)
[Tips for virtual meetings with interpreters](#)
[Virtual meeting tips for interpreters](#)



Family & Community



2022 EHD FAMILY CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY INDIANA HANDS & VOICES



APRIL 23, 2022

FULL **STEAM** AHEAD!
Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Monsters



Keynotes:
Audiology
Vestibular Function
Self Advocacy



Special thanks to
deaf kids CODE

Register at:
inhv.org



June 12
-17
[Register now](#)



June 26 - July 1- [Register now](#)

Don't forget: The [American Society for Deaf Children](#) (ASDC) is offering beginning, intermediate, and advanced [ASL classes](#) in May 2022.



Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education

Online Classes

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