



Eight Reasons to say YES to Early Intervention: Supporting Families During the time of COVID-19

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Date: Thursday, October 29, 2020

Time: 11:00am – 12:00pm MT

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The Family Leadership in Language and Learning Center (FL3) has developed a new resource for families on the topic of early intervention directed towards parents that can be used by professionals and family-to-family support programs. This resource was developed as a result of insights from providers who engage with families who may not or do not choose to enroll in early intervention services and to explore further understanding of these families compared to families in the past. Results from a 2019 Roundtable discussion at the Western Regional Early Intervention Conference with almost 30 representatives from eight states provided input on this unique population. In addition, the FL3 Center has been collecting parent and professional input during stay-at-home orders. As a result of this information, a new resource has been developed for families to show the positives of early intervention. The “8 Reasons” infographic can serve as an important tool, now more than ever in supporting families understanding the importance of Early Intervention. In considering some of the barriers that have been a result of the pandemic, the presenters will highlight important messages that can be conveyed to families.

Learning objectives:

- The participants will understand the strategies/activities covered under the federally funded cooperative agreement – **The Family Leadership in Language and Learning (FL3)** to provide support for families who may not or do not choose to enroll in early intervention services.

- The participants will glean useful knowledge from a report derived from a roundtable discussion with early intervention providers at the 2019 Western Regional Early Intervention Conference to help inform the development of resources for parent-to-parent communication and support.
- Participants will have access to a new product developed for the population addressed in the presentation and ties to the present COVID-19 impacts on early intervention deliver that families face.

Presenters:



Janet DesGeorges

Janet is a mom of three now-grown children, including a daughter who is hard of hearing. Janet lives in Boulder, Colorado and is Executive Director of Hands & Voices Headquarters. Janet has presented to groups worldwide about the experiences of families as they journey through life with a child with deafness or hearing loss. Ms.

DesGeorges received a program certificate from the MCH Public Health Leadership Institute in 2011 at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill. As an EHDI Systems advocate, Janet believes in the principles and guiding philosophies of Hands & Voices towards a parent-driven, professionally-collaborative approach when supporting families in the early years. Her areas of interest include Leadership Development for parents who participate in systemic improvement; Deaf Education Reform and Improvement; Children’s Safety and Success (preventing child abuse and neglect); Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Systems; and Parent/Professional partnerships in Quality Improvement processes.



Sara Kennedy

Sara is a mom of four children, including a daughter who was born at home and later identified with a profound hearing loss. An occupational therapist by training, Sara has worked for Hands & Voices since 2001, currently serving as the Colorado chapter director and the editor for the quarterly newspaper, *The Communicator* for Hands & Voices. Sara has a special interest in advocating for hearing screening in the homebirth community. She chairs the Colorado Infant Hearing Advisory Committee, and was a coauthor for the handbook *Bridge to Preschool: Navigating a Successful Transition* as well as articles and presentations on telehealth, promoting self-advocacy, progressive hearing loss, and the decision process regarding cochlear implants. She finds parenting young adults and teens to be an even bigger challenge.

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