

Deaf Mentor Pilot Project



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Project Implementation Overview:

- Families are invited to participate if their child meets the eligibility criteria established by the YCOE team.
- Referrals to NorCal are generated for interested families and they are matched with a mentor.
- The child's teacher coordinates with the Deaf mentor to schedule an introductory visit with the family.
- Further sessions are scheduled directly between the mentor and the family.
- Mentors send after visit reports to the child's teacher to allow the teacher to follow up with any needs and to support learning.
- Three family nights are hosted to allow opportunities for families who are a part of the project, as well as any other D/HH families, to meet with each other, YCOE staff, and Deaf mentors.

08-29-19 YCOE Las. Mtg.
Project Start-up Overview: Pkt. # 3 Handout # 2

- Partner with NorCal Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to use their existing Deaf mentor program, establish an MOU for services. NorCal hires local mentors.
- Consult with Placer County Office of Education D/HH infant program, which has an established mentor program, for guidance on program implementation.
- Work with YCOE infant team, D/HH team and administrators to determine guidelines and parameters for establishing the Deaf mentor program for YCOE families.
- Meet with YCOE teams and administrators, as well as NorCal to finalize plans for implementing Deaf mentor program.

What do Deaf mentors do to help families?

Deaf mentors receive training on how to work with families. Their function is to be both a role model and a guide to families of young deaf and hard of hearing children. Mentors share about their lives and experiences to give parents hope for their child's future. Mentors also work with parents to develop sign language skills and demonstrate for parents the importance of establishing visual communication strategies with deaf and hard of hearing children at an early age.

Why are Deaf mentors important?

While teachers can tell parents about outcomes, and provide them with sign language and visual communication resources, teachers are often approaching the discussion from an outsider's perspective, as well as from a position of authority. Deaf mentors are uniquely qualified to come alongside the parents as a community partner, and help them understand what it means to be deaf and to be the parent of a deaf child. Mentors have personal experience with understanding the developmental needs specific to deaf and hard of hearing children, and can give parents suggestions and advice on how to maximize their child's language acquisition and social and emotional development.

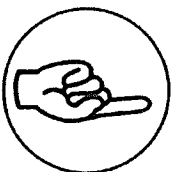
D/HH Family Nights:

With the intention of maximizing opportunities for parents to receive support from both the YCOE program and the Deaf mentors, three family nights were scheduled. Families with a child served by the deaf and hard of hearing program, regardless of whether the family was participating in the pilot project, were invited to attend and have an opportunity to interact with and learn from the mentors. The events were scheduled to be held in the three major population centers for students served by the program, with the goal of making the opportunity to attend a family night accessible to as many families as possible.

Love and Literacy
Wednesday, April 10th
6:00pm-7:00pm

YCOE Conference Center
1280 Santa Anita Court
Woodland, CA 95776

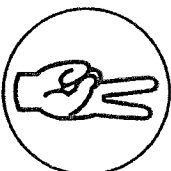
Come join us to learn more about ways to enjoy books and bond over reading with your child! We will also be sharing resources for American Sign Language stories and strategies for promoting literacy and a love of reading in Deaf and Hard of Hearing children.



Have Questions? We Have Answers!
Wednesday, April 17th
6:00pm-7:00pm

Mary L. Stevens Library-Davis
Blanchard Community Room
315 E. 14th Street
Davis, CA 95616

Have you wondered about what your child's school experience might be like? Or how your child will make friends? Or maybe what kind of life your child will have when they are an adult? Bring your curiosity and questions and hear from our panel of experts, including Deaf Coaches, professionals and parents.



Fun and Games
Wednesday, May 1st
6:00pm - 7:00pm

Arthur F. Turner Library - West Sacramento
Arthur F. Turner Meeting Room
1212 Merkle Avenue
West Sacramento, CA 95691



Games are a great way to enjoy time with your children, and a fun way to support language learning and social development. Join us to learn tips for making the most out of game time, and an opportunity to practice playing some popular family games using sign language.

Staff Outcomes:

Program staff and administrators who met with families in the pilot project regularly reported noticing positive outcomes related to the Deaf mentors in their interactions and discussions with families. Families demonstrated greater levels of engagement with the language acquisition and visual communication process. Teachers were able to provide additional support for families through having access to the after visit reports from the Deaf mentors. Families showed increased social interaction skills with their deaf and hard of hearing child.

Family Outcomes:

As one measure of program effectiveness, parents were given surveys before starting and after participating in the Deaf mentor project. In initial surveys, most parents reported concerns about their child's language and social development and future educational achievement. After only a few sessions with a Deaf mentor, parent attitudes and confidence levels had already begun to shift. Many parents reported feeling a more positive outlook for their child and an increased level of confidence in their ability to communicate with their child. All parents who responded felt that the Deaf mentor project was a valuable resource.

Facts and Figures:

Initial grant budget: **\$3006.30**

Breakdown of budget:

50 hours of Deaf mentor services =	\$2500.00
Mileage allowance =	\$250.00
Indirect costs (9.32%) =	\$256.30

Families invited to participate in the project: **10**

Families who were referred for Deaf mentor services: **8**

Number of individual family visits completed: **29**

Number of family nights held: **3**

Total actual expenditures of the pilot project: **\$1858,44**

Why does this matter?

There is a high correlation between hearing loss in children and delayed language acquisition or language deprivation. This is a serious educational and developmental crisis that has been affecting deaf and hard of hearing children across the country, and has gone largely unchanged for decades. These children frequently arrive at kindergarten without the necessary language foundation to allow for age appropriate social, emotional and academic growth and cognitive development. This has substantial impacts not only on the child and the family, but on the educational system tasked with meeting their needs.

What's next?

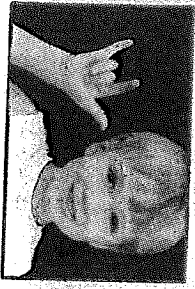
Because the Deaf mentor project, offered in collaboration with our community partner NorCal Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, has proven to be an effective model for supporting language acquisition in families with young deaf and hard of hearing children in Yolo County, the project has received the support of the former and current Special Education Directors to continue serving as a vital resource for our families. Families who would benefit from receiving additional mentoring will be able to do so, and new families with eligible children will be given the opportunity to receive support from a Deaf mentor, as well.

New California Law SB 210:

As part of a national push to change outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children, states have been passing laws to create accountability for the educational agencies responsible for working with children with hearing loss ages 0-5. Given the right supports, and access to visual language, D/HH children are able to reach the same developmental language acquisition milestones as their hearing peers. SB 210 requires that the language development of D/HH children ages 0-5 be documented regularly, and that remediation steps must be taken for any child who is not meeting those milestones. Deaf mentors play a key role in supporting parents and educational teams in ensuring children meet those milestones.

Deaf mentors will help build YCOE's Deaf and Hard of Hearing program into a regional leader in best practices for deaf and hard of hearing children.

We can go from good ...



... to GREAT!!!