

# ACDHH & EHDI Committee In-Person Meeting Minutes-October 9, 2025

**Date:** Wednesday, October 9, 2025

**Time:** 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Location:** ACDHH Board Room

## I. Call to Order

- Co-Chair: Latrina Harris-Lewis
- Time: 10:07 AM

## II. Roll Call

- Attendance of members, guests, and support staff

First Name	Last Name
Fran	Altmaier
Bibi	Ashley
Annie	Converse
Katie	Rawlings
Germaine	Graham
Amber	Hansen
Latrina	Harris-Lewis
Heidi	Klomhaus
Dani	Merrill
Kelly	Randall
Wendy	Steuerwaldt
<u>Guests</u>	<u>And Support Staff</u>
Rob	Voreck (ACDHH Community Services Program Manager)
Carmen	Green Smith (ACDHH Deputy)
Reena	Banerjee (ACDHH Community Engagement Coordinator)
Parent	Annie Finney - Hard of Hearing mother of 7-month-old Sawyer (invited by Bibi Ashley)

- Absent Members
- Present Members
- Guest Members

**Introductions for our visitor:**

- **Latrina Harris-Lewis:** Family Services Specialist, ACDHH
- **Dani Merrill:** Parent of a 7-year-old Deaf child and 5-year-old child; works at Desert Voices (listening and spoken language school)
- **Wendy Steuerwald:** Audiologist providing newborn hearing screenings
- **Kelly Randall:** Works with Encircle Families, supporting families of children with special healthcare needs
- **Germaine Graham:** Speech-Language Pathologist, private practice
- **Rob Voreck:** Committee Member, ACDHH Community Services Manager
- **Heidi Klohmaus:** Program Coordinator, Arizona Hands & Voices

### III. Approval of Minutes

- Review and approval of
  - ☰ ACDHH & EHDI Advisory Committee September 11, 2025-Minutes
    - Motion to approve: **WENDY STEUERWALDT**
    - Second: **DANI MERRILL**

### IV. Old Business

#### 1. Committee Membership & Representation

- Reviewed current committee roles and identified missing representation.
- Discussed adding:
  - **DeafBlind parents/family representation**
  - **Early Intervention / Early Learning provider representation**
- Timeline for role expansion & voting:
  - **November:** Vote on adding new roles
  - **December:** Vote on new members
  - **January:** Welcome new members
- Hybrid meeting model considered for families with distance/childcare needs; will ask about pilot hybrid format at next in-person meeting
- Agreed to ask for a possible **experiment with hybrid format** at the next in-person meeting.
- Suggested advertising open meetings on ACDHH social media.
  - Create video summary blurb about the in person meeting
  - Work sessions remain closed; the 3rd monthly meeting is open to the public.
- **Potential New Committee Member:** Laura (Early Learning Program supervisor, Valley) could strengthen advisory committee team

#### 2. Family Survey Rollout Updates

- ASL & Spanish video translations completed.
- Google Form submitted to ACDHH media (Spencer) for integration.  
Incentives discussed: completing families may receive a **free children's book**
- Confidentiality maintained unless families voluntarily share addresses for incentives.

### 3. Family Letter Redesign

- Reviewed two versions of the redesigned AZDHS family letter.
- Parent feedback received in person (from *Annie Finney*).
- Decision points:
  - Remove phrase “**help reduce isolation**” (per parent suggestion).
  - Maintain clear, concise wording that reduces overwhelm.
- **Discussion: Terminology Clarification: Free vs. No-Cost Services**
  - Use “**no cost**” or “**free**” carefully depending on final AZDHS preference.
  - Kelly Randall clarified that “no-cost” implies the organization absorbs the expense, while “free” simply indicates no charge to the client.
  - Latrina acknowledged the distinction and noted she would follow up with Fran for final decisions.
  - Removed icons for **DeafBlind accessibility** and screen reader flow
  - Top resources included: AZEIP, ACDHH, Hands & Voices
- **Next:** Final edit, QR code placement, one-page layout, and submission to ADHS.

### 4. Family Resource Packet Development

- The family binder/digital toolkit is being updated with a clear, streamlined structure.
- Content will focus on **ages 0–3**, to avoid overwhelming newly diagnosed families.
- Review of relevant schools and agencies:
  - **Desert Voices** (Early Intervention services)
  - **ASDB** (replaces PDSB reference under the statewide ASDB umbrella program)
  - **Victory Deaf Academy removed**, as it is not aligned with this age group
- **SPED information:**
  - Individual district contacts not listed due to staff turnover.
  - Families referred to each district’s website → **Special Education (SPED) Department** for updated contact information.
- **QR Codes:**
  - Require an annual subscription to keep active?
  - Hard copies are essential for families with limited or no internet/computer access.
- **Digital Toolkit Proposal:**
  - **Reena Banerjee** proposed a single **Google Doc** consolidating all links and resources → shared across partner websites for easy, consistent access.
  - **Latrina** will follow up with Fran regarding next steps and approval.
- **New school programs:**
  - **Latrina** plans to visit Victory Deaf Academy (VDA) at the end of the second quarter to learn more about their new program before deciding on inclusion in the ACDHH’s family resource guide booklet.

### 5. Outreach Book List

- Outreach book list is ongoing; participants can contribute.

## 6. Video Series: [3-Month](#) & [6-Month](#) EHDI Milestone Updates

- Scripts reviewed; content is simple and milestone-aligned.
- Subcommittee (Amber, Bibi, Latrina) to review ASL signs and vocabulary for CDI hired.
- Vocabulary must avoid negative connotations (“hearing differences” instead of “issues”).
- Emphasis on medically accurate ASL, including fingerspelling medical terminology.

## V. New Business / Next Steps & Assignments

- **Meeting Format**
  - Agreement to retain **2nd Thursday, 10:00–12:00** schedule.
  - Latrina to confirm other members’ availability (Amber, Katie).
  - Calendar invites to clearly indicate **in-person vs. virtual**
- **Assignments & Next Steps**
  - Finalize letter and toolkit decisions for the next meeting.
  - Continue recruitment of new committee roles.
  - Expand outreach book list
  - Subcommittee continues video series work

## VI. Upcoming Meetings, Reminders, & Future Agenda Items?

- Next Zoom work session: **November 13, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM.**
- **Work Session and Public meeting format:** December on Zoom; January 8, 2026, in person with hybrid testing if permitted.
- The committee confirmed the continued **second Thurs., 10 AM – 12 PM** schedule.
- Attendance flexibility noted; members can suggest alternate times.
- Reminder: Dani Merrill will miss the November meeting but can submit votes in advance if needed.
- Meeting invitations will clearly label “In-Person” or “Virtual” to avoid confusion.

## VII. Community & Professional Updates

- **Microtia/Atresia Family Event** – November 8, 9:00 AM–12:00 PM at Phoenix Children’s.
  - Congenital outer ear malformations; severity varies
- **Project ECHO** – Six-week early intervention/medical provider series launched; partnership with Motion Light Lab (Gallaudet University).
- **EAR Day** – October 25 at A.T. Still University
- **Weather Advisory** – Rain from hurricane remnants; members reminded to drive safely (Rob Voreck).

## VIII. Public Comments

### A. Visiting Parent Experience – Annie Finney

- Hard of Hearing/Deaf parents, 7-month-old baby Sawyer.
- **Experience:**
  - First newborn hearing screening: positive interaction with supportive technician.
  - Second screening: less supportive, prompting concern about inconsistent technician attitudes.
  - Question raised about training for newborn hearing screeners and certification standards in Arizona.
- **CMV (Cytomegalovirus) Discussion:**
  - Annie Finney raised concern that CMV testing is not standard in Arizona.
  - Expressed “what if” concern: if her child had CMV but was not tested.
  - Recommended preventive CMV screening be considered statewide.
  - CMV can cause hearing loss, blindness, cerebral palsy, and other birth complications.
  - Only Minnesota and Connecticut currently mandate screening using dried blood spot testing.
  - Arizona pilot projects underway at St. Joseph’s and Valleywise hospitals to collect data.
  - **Website:** [Stop CMV AZ](#)
- Praised resources provided by **Bibi and Jennifer**; spouse learning ASL to support child

### B. Committee and Staff Responses

- **Heidi Klohmaus:** Confirmed staff turnover impacts consistency of newborn hearing screeners; ongoing Stop CMV awareness efforts.
- **Wendy Steuerwald:** Provided CMV background and national comparison.
- **Rob Voreck:** Asked about statewide registry or certification for screeners.
- **Heidi:** Explained hospitals and birth centers manage their own screening processes; no mandated credential.
- **Wendy:** Reiterated NCHAM certification is available but optional.
- **EHDI Pals** identified as the most reliable public resource for locating pediatric audiologists, ENTs, and related professionals.

### C. Newborn Hearing Screening Practices

- **Rob Voreck** asked if Arizona has a statewide registry or credential requirement for newborn hearing screeners.
- **Heidi Klohmaus** clarified screening varies by hospital/home birth provider; **no mandatory statewide certification** exists.
- **Dr. Wendy Steuerwald** noted that **NCHAM** offers training/certification, but it is **optional**, not required.

## **D. Pediatric Audiology Resources**

- Visiting parent, **Annie Finnley** described difficulty finding **child-focused audiologists**, as many primarily serve older adults.
- **Heidi Klohmaus** recommended **EHDI Pals** for locating pediatric audiologists, ENTs, and related services.
- **Latrina** confirmed **EHDI Pals** is included in the family toolkit and digital binder.

## **IX. Adjournment**

- **Motion to Adjourn:** Latrina Harris Lewis
- **Adjournment Time: 11:55 AM**
- Members were reminded to drive safely due to weather.