

## NJ Agency Resources

Department of Human Services  
<https://www.state.nj.us/humanservices>

Department of Health <https://www.nj.gov/health>

Department of Education <https://www.nj.gov/education>

Grow NJ Kids <http://www.grownjkids.gov>

## Early Intervention Resources

Family Matters Website  
<https://www.thefamilymatterswebsite.org>

Center for Parent Information and Resources  
<https://www.parentcenterhub.org>

Innovative Interventions NJ  
<https://innovativeinterventionsnj.com>

## Additional Advocacy Resources

Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN)  
<https://spanadvocacy.org>

American Society for the Deaf Children (ASDC)  
<https://deafchildren.org>

New Jersey Association for the Deaf (NJAD)  
<https://www.deafnjad.org>

NJ Parent Link <http://www.njparentlink.nj.gov>

## Other Educational Programs for Ages 0-5

Bruce Street School <https://www.nps.k12.nj.us/bru>

Gloucester County Special Services School District  
<https://www.gcsssd.org>

Lake Drive Program <https://ld.mlschools.org>

Summit Speech School <http://www.summitspeech.org>

Union Street School <https://www.bergen.org>



New Jersey Division of the  
Deaf and Hard of Hearing



State of New Jersey  
Phil Murphy, Governor  
Sheila Oliver, Lt. Governor



Department of Human Services  
Carole Johnson, Commissioner

FOR PROVIDERS

# Importance of Language Acquisition for a Child that has Hearing Loss Ages 0-5



Are you a provider that has come in contact with a child that is deaf or hard of hearing?



It's important for deaf or hard of hearing children to have access to early language exposure during the most critical years of brain development -birth to age 3 - to avoid irreversible delays in learning.

The New Jersey Department of Human Services' Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DDHH) supports families in their journey to provide their child with the tools needed for full language acquisition and development.

Several programs ensure a child-centered and family-centered approach to language acquisition for deaf and hard of hearing infants. Families can combine the use of American Sign Language (ASL) with listening and spoken language to assist their child with language development.

Families can request to have an ASL Deaf Language Associate work with their child on language development and the services of a Deaf Mentor. See below for more about these innovative programs:

### ASL Deaf Language Associates Program

An ASL Deaf Language Associate is a Deaf adult with experience working with young children/babies/toddlers. The individual has strong communication skills and is able to interact and develop rapport with children, adults in the child care setting, and the parents of the child.

The ASL Deaf Language Associate has advanced proficiency skills to provide a fluent language model

for the child and provides supplementary services to support the child's educational plan, and development.

ASL Deaf Language Associates can spend up to 25 hours a week with a child in a child care, pre-school program, or home setting.

For more information on the ASL Deaf Language Associates program contact: (609) 588-2648  
[DDHH.communications2@dhs.state.nj.us](mailto:DDHH.communications2@dhs.state.nj.us)

### SPAN Deaf Mentor Program

A Deaf Mentor is an adult who is deaf or hard of hearing who communicates via ASL, Total Communication, Listening and Spoken Language, and/or Cued Speech. Deaf Mentors meet with families at home and family functions, expose the child and parents to Deaf culture and how to handle new environments. The Deaf Mentor answers questions and shares first-hand experiences.

Deaf Mentors who communicate via ASL are trained in ASL instruction, teach families about Deaf culture and introduce them to the Deaf community.

For more information on SPAN's Deaf Mentor Program, contact Pam Aasen at [Paasen@spanadvocacy.org](mailto:Paasen@spanadvocacy.org) or 732-956-4917.

### Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf

DDHH partners with the Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf to offer several programs for families:

**Family Playgroups** offer families with a deaf or hard of hearing child an opportunity to connect with other families and develop peer-to-peer relationships. Play groups are run by a certified Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

**Audiology and other services** consult on how to make auditory accommodations in classrooms and childcare centers.

**Family ASL Classes:** FREE ASL classes for families. (609)-530-3120 [www.mkسد.org](http://www.mkسد.org)

### NJ Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

DDHH also offers the following:

**Information and referral:** DDHH services provide deaf and hard of hearing residents with resources for accessing services. The division also responds to a wide range of questions about accessibility and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Case Management/Deaf Specialist:** Fluent in ASL with an understanding of the unique needs of those who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind, the case manager works as a liaison between consumers and service providers. All services are free and confidential.

**Advocacy:** DDHH works with individuals to make them aware of their rights, and also works with community service providers to make them aware of obligations to provide communication access under state and federal laws. Deaf sensitivity training is offered for any organization interested in learning how to communicate and interact with deaf people.

**Communication Access Services:** DDHH assists entities to provide effective communication by providing consultation and guidance in locating and securing qualified ASL interpreters and CART providers.

**Community Outreach:** DDHH offers trainings and presentations on state and federal laws as it relates to hearing loss, deaf sensitivity training, communication issues, and technology awareness. DDHH also participates in community events such as disability awareness days and health fairs.

**Equipment Distribution Program:** DDHH provides specialized telecommunications and home safety equipment to residents who are deaf or hard of hearing with low-incomes.

**Hearing Aid Project:** DDHH offers free refurbished hearing aids for deaf and hard of hearing, and deaf-blind NJ residents who are age 65 years or older with low-incomes.

(609)-588-2648

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