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# Introduction

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This resource guide was designed to provide assistance to parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing (deaf/HH) within the state of Arizona. Many parents who discover that their child is deaf/HH have typical hearing themselves and have questions about how to best to meet their child's unique needs. These questions might include: "What is the most effective way to communicate with my child?" or "What is the best educational placement for my child who is deaf/HH?"

While we will not promise to have the answers to all of the tough questions, we have designed this resource guide to give unbiased information on these and other topics pertaining to children who are deaf/HH. We will also highlight resources available to assist parents as they make decisions about what is best for their child, from the time they are born to when they are in preschool, particularly in the state of Arizona. An article published by the American Society for Deaf Children (available at [www.deafchildren.org](http://www.deafchildren.org)) states,

***"If you are looking for information about how to raise a child with hearing loss, there is good news and bad news. The good news is there is a lot of information available. The bad news is...there is a lot of information available!"***

*How does one sort through the information provided in books, articles, websites, from professionals, family, friends, and other sources to arrive at decisions that are right for your child and family?"*

This resource guide is an attempt to sort through the information available for parents in Arizona. To accomplish this task, we searched over 90 websites, many of which are included in this guide, and reviewed over 200 guidebooks, information packets, and articles. Much of the information available on these sites is similar, but almost every time a ‘nugget’ of information was found that we thought would benefit parents. We would like to make it clear, however, that this was not an extensive review of websites. Rather, the information in this resource guide includes information that was deemed relevant at the time this guide was written, and was available to those reviewing it.

The authors of this guide do not endorse any of the resources or service providers listed in this publication and cannot verify the continuation of information and/or services past the publication date. It is the reader’s responsibility to determine the validity and availability of the resource or service listed in this guide. With that said, we are excited to share what we have found with parents of children who are deaf/HH, and hope that the resources in this guide are helpful to them as they make decisions about what is best for their child and family.

This guide is structured by topic, beginning with hearing screenings and evaluations and understanding the types and degrees of hearing loss. The second section pertains to making the best choices for your child and your family post-diagnosis. Here we discuss communication opportunities, seeking advice and support from others, and amplification and technologies for children who are deaf/HH.

The topic of the third section is early intervention for children from birth to 3 years of age, including understanding your child’s rights and participation in an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Transition to preschool for children who are at least 3 years old follows, paying specific attention to the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process and educational placements and modifications. In each of these sections, state and national resources are woven into the text as they pertain to each particular topic. The final section of this resource guide provides an alphabetical listing and short description of each resource listed discussed in this guide.