The EAR Foundation of Arizona held its 8th Annual Seminar on October 4, 2013 at the Tempe Center for the Arts. There were over 115 attendees, including audiologists, speech and language therapists, early intervention staff, educators, audiology students, and other professionals who serve deaf and hard of hearing children and adults in Arizona. With wonderful presentations by Dr. Christine Yoshinaga-Itano, Dr. Terry Fife and Dr. Steve Huart, it is no surprise that attendees gave the speakers the highest scores to date.

Attendees indicated they are looking forward to the 2014 Seminar (date TBD). The EAR Foundation Seminar has become a welcome annual event, offering an opportunity to obtain AAA and ADHS CEUs as well as networking between colleagues from various agencies and programs around the state.

Planning has begun for the next Annual Screeners meeting. It will be held on March 7th, 2014 in the ADHS Igloo.

More information will be available in the near future. We would like to know if there are any “Hot Topics” screeners would like more information on. If so, please feel free to submit ideas and requests to hearing@azdhs.gov.
EHDI Reflections

A note from Arizona’s EHDI Chapter Champion

As we enter the 4th quarter of 2013, we reflect on the accomplishments of Arizona EHDI. What stands out the most is how well we do with screening newborns for hearing loss. At the same time, our loss to follow-up is quite high. Unfortunately, we are not alone as this is a common trend across the United States. The issue of lost to follow-up has become such a point of interest that the AAP EHDI Task Force developed a separate work group to focus on this area. Challenges include lack of reporting testing results along with lack of knowledge from primary care providers (PCPs). A primary goal for EHDI nationally is to improve the knowledge base for our PCPs. This includes luncheon presentations, grand rounds, committee meetings/discussions and development of the maintenance of certification modules.

This month, as a member of the AAP EHDI Task Force, we will gather for our annual meeting to determine and plan the future course of EHDI nationally. At this meeting, we will determine what our goals will be for the next few years and how to implement them. I am anticipating a lot of new projects on the horizon going into 2014 and look forward to sharing them with the rest of Arizona’s PCPs and the EHDI community.

Until next year,

Brad Golner M.D. FAAP
Arizona EHDI Chapter Champion
AAP EHDI Task Force

“Are You EHDI Ready” Presentations

"Are You EHDI Ready” presentations continue with the latest offered to the Pima Medical Society on September 10, 2013 by Dr. Brad Golner and Lylis Olsen. Over twenty physicians were in attendance, with many stopping Dr. Golner after the presentation with questions. "Are You EHDI Ready” posters, pocket guides and hearing packets were distributed.

Please contact Sondi Aponte at: NBSEducation@azdhs.gov to schedule a presentation at your practice or hospital.

Save the Date!

The 13th Annual Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Meeting will be held in Jacksonville, Florida April 13-15th 2014.

More information to come!

http://ehdimeeting.org/
Checking Outpatient Follow-Up Protocols to Ensure Best Practices

The hospital plays a critical role in getting babies in need of follow-up to the next step in the process of identifying a hearing loss. There are some very simple guidelines and strategies that can make a significant difference in efficiency and timeliness of follow-up. We all want our babies who may have a hearing loss to have the best chance of early identification. If your hospital follows best practices and properly enters the status in HiTrack, it WILL make a difference for babies and families. If you have questions or need technical assistance on implementing these practices and properly documenting results and next steps in HiTrack, contact consulting audiologist Randi Winston: randiwinston@mac.com

- Well babies and babies in the NICU for less than 5 days with no risk factors for hearing loss:
  1. **Schedule an appointment with family for baby to return to hospital within 2 weeks for an outpatient screening.**
     a. Bringing the baby back to the hospital benefits the community you serve and makes it easier on the family by knowing exactly what to do next. It should not be assumed that the pediatrician conducts in-office newborn hearing screenings. MOST DON'T!
     b. Data shows that scheduling an appointment prior to discharge, obtaining two contact phone numbers and making a reminder call the day before the appointment significantly improves follow-up.
     c. Make sure you document the screening results on the back of the immunization card.
     d. Provide the family with a copy of the results and tell them to show the results to their baby’s PCP at the first appointment.

  2. **If baby fails the outpatient screening, it is considered a developmental emergency because it is much more likely that the baby has a hearing loss.**
     a. Make sure you screen both ears during the outpatient re-screen, even if only one is referred on the inpatient screen.
     b. Document the screening results on the back of the immunization card.
     c. Provide the family with a copy of the results and tell them to contact their PCP immediately to schedule a diagnostic ABR.
     d. Immediately fax the results to the baby’s PCP.

- Babies in the NICU for more than 5 days (with or without risk factors):
  Outpatient re-screening should NOT be conducted as these babies are at the highest risk for hearing loss. Babies in this category should be referred to a pediatric audiologist for a diagnostic ABR and ongoing monitoring.

New Hi*Track Web User Reminder

In order to obtain a Username and Password for HiTrack, a phone training on the Arizona HiTrack Web Protocols must be completed. Contact consulting audiologist Randi Winston (randiwinston@mac.com) to setup training. In addition, training is encouraged for current HiTrack Web users who would like to be updated on the state requirements and protocols. Efficiency and accuracy in documentation can positively affect your quarterly scorecard results!

Hi*Track Training Tips: Helping Connect the Dots for Further Testing

- Enter physician name on all babies that refer, are missed or refused
- Document nursery level on all NICU babies
- Make sure that the screening stage is properly reflected in HiTrack. This is usually accomplished in the screening equipment by choosing “inpatient” versus “outpatient”
- Every baby’s record must have Mother’s name and date of birth
- Take the time to accurately enter the medical record number and be sure the spelling of the baby’s name is correct

Contact randiwinston@mac.com if you need assistance or have any questions.
EHDI-PALS: An Easy-to-Use Resource For Finding A Qualified Pediatric Audiologist

Visit www.ehdipals.org today!
How Can Professionals Make Referrals to AzEIP?

- The Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) is now using a Central Referral Line for ALL referrals for the following counties: Gila, Maricopa, Pima, Pinal and Santa Cruz. In these five counties AzEIP has multiple contractors, and in order to ensure equal distribution of referrals, AzEIP is using a Central Referral system, which means that no referrals may go directly to a contractor without first being processed by the Central Referral Line. To do this, you may initiate a referral in the following manner:

  a. Online: [https://egov.azdes.gov/azeip/AzeipREF/Forms/Categories.aspx](https://egov.azdes.gov/azeip/AzeipREF/Forms/Categories.aspx)

     This is the fastest and most efficient method for professional referrals. To receive confirmation of the assigned contractor, please include an email address and you will be notified which contractor was assigned to work with the family.

  b. Phone: 602-635-9799
  c. Phone: Spanish 602-635-9810
  d. Phone: Outside of Maricopa: 1-888-592-0140
  e. E-mail at: AzEIP.Info@raisingspecialkids.org
  f. Fax: 602-242-4306

- Please note: phone referrals take longer to process, as the central referral system must first enter data to determine the assigned contractor, and then also enter all referral information into the web-based data system. This also increases the likelihood for data entry error when speaking on the phone and entering data.

- In single contract regions, or after you have received confirmation of the assigned contractor, please fax the assigned contractor any documentation (for which you have a consent to share information from the parent) that will support determining the child eligible for AzEIP. Please do not send this information to the Central Referral Line as this will delay the documentation getting to the assigned contractor who determines eligibility.

- If you would like the AzEIP contractor to share information with you, please go to our website, [https://www.azdes.gov/AzEIP](https://www.azdes.gov/AzEIP), and go to our “Forms” page and download the following consent form: “GCI-1020 Authorization to Disclose Protected Health Information.”

- The AzEIP contractor coordinates with the Division for Developmental Disabilities (DDD) and the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (ASDB). Referrals should be made to AzEIP, the AzEIP contractor will ensure that DDD and ASDB are involved in determining eligibility for funding and/or supports.

### AVERAGE DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

| 0-3 Months | Quiets when hearing familiar voice  
Startles to loud sounds  
Makes vowel sounds like ahh, ohh |
|---|---|
| 3-6 Months | Looks for sounds with eyes  
Uses sounds such as squeals, whimpers, chuckles  
Vocalizes excitement and displeasure |
| 6-9 Months | Turns hearing toward sounds  
Babbles sounds like ba-ba, ma-ma, da-da  
Looks for quiet sounds made out of sight |
| 9-12 Months | Imitates speech sounds made by others  
Understands no-no or bye-bye  
Correctly uses ma-ma or da-da  
Turns to own name |
| 12-24 Months | Conversation babbling to self and others  
Follows simple directions “get your shoes”  
Knows and uses more than six (6) words  
Uses 2-3 word sentences |

This is not a screening tool and does not replace objective testing. Inform parents on hearing, speech, and language milestones.
Message From the High-Risk Coordinator

This has been a busy year! Reducing loss to follow up continues to be the major focus of our daily work. At the Office of Newborn Screening, we have been working hard at increasing our collaboration with community partners to spread awareness of the importance of newborn hearing screening and follow up. We are already starting to see some of the impact on reducing those babies who are lost to follow up. In addition, the Office of Newborn Screening has exhibited and presented at numerous conferences to increase awareness of our program and to share information.

Early in the year, we began a partnership with the Immunization program at ADHS. Our follow up staff now have access to the ASIIS database. This extra resource offers follow up staff another tool to easily locate pediatricians so that they can be advised of the necessary next steps to getting their patients to see the audiologist.

We have increased collaboration with the home visiting community. By exhibiting and presenting at conferences, we are able to share information on how important hearing screening is and the impact hearing has on early learning and school readiness. The home visiting community is an important partner in reaching out to families and helping them follow up on their hearing screening.

The Office of Newborn Screening is in the early stages of collaboration with the WIC program. We are currently in the middle of a small pilot project with one local WIC office. We have identified a group of babies that did not pass their newborn hearing screening and have not returned for an outpatient screening. The families of these babies are flagged in the WIC system and when they come in for their WIC appointment, they are given a reminder that their baby needs further testing as well as given resources on where to go for further testing. We have had several successes already! We are encouraged by the results and anxious to evaluate this strategy at the end of the pilot.

With 2014 just around the corner, we are looking forward to continuing our collaboration with home visiting programs and identifying community partners that are able to help spread our message on the importance of completing follow up for those babies who do not pass their newborn screening. Loss to follow up continues to be a significant concern, but ongoing collaboration seems to be helping in reaching out to families. It is important for those who work with infants to have regular conversations about screening results and follow up testing and understand that identifying hearing loss early can positively impact the future for children.

Fran Altmaier
High Risk Coordinator

Reporting Reminder

Are you reporting? Reporting hearing screening and test results timely is an important step. The intent of Universal Newborn Hearing Screening is to identify infants with a hearing loss as early as possible so that appropriate interventions can begin. Timely reporting allows ADHS follow up specialists to focus their time on helping children who need further testing get the follow up they need. Results can be faxed to (602) 364-1495. Reporting forms are available at www.aznewborn.com or by calling (602) 364-1409.
This past August was the Arizona Hands and Voices Retreat. The goal of this retreat is to educate parents on information that they can use to better support their deaf or hard-of-hearing child. This year the Retreat was at the Camp Tatitie in Lakeside, Arizona. It was beautiful there and the staff was awesome.

The parents attended advocacy sessions which hit the basics of IDEA, IFSP, IEP, 504 and Vocational Rehabilitation. Each session lasted an hour. The last session was a discussion meeting where everyone wrote down questions and every question was addressed and parents could help in answering other parent’s questions.

While the parents were involved in learning, their kids did various fun activities. The kids were able to do numerous activities, including swimming and archery. Childcare was provided for the babies.

The best part of the retreat was watching all the kids with various communication modes creatively communicating with each other. The camp was an awesome experience.

-Story and photos submitted by Megan Graham, parent
For Whom The Bell Tolls

In his poem “For Whom the Bell Tolls,” John Donne wrote that “it tolls for thee.” I am here to tell you it does not toll for checking the hearing of our children. We have known for a long time that children do best if we can identify a hearing loss as early as possible. In the past, many different methods were used to screen children for hearing loss. One of these became common in practice, even included in a broadly used "standardized" developmental tool called the “Denver,” but we know better now. Similar to the behavioral methods of identifying hearing loss, such as "paper screens" or checklists of years past, the bell does not provide an accurate screening, as it underestimates and overestimates hearing in a child. Although no screening tool will catch every child with a hearing loss, it is important to follow the data and use a tool that has an acceptable success rate. The following are recommended screening tools:

- For newborns, either automated brainstem response (A-ABR) or otoacoustic emissions (OAEs)
- For young children (newborn to three years old), otoacoustic emissions (sometimes with tympanometry to check middle ear function) is the best tool
- For children who developmentally are able to participate (three years of age and older), the gold standard is pure tone screening.

In the novel “For Whom the Bell Tolls,” Ernest Hemingway writes, "I thought I knew so many things that I know nothing of." We now know better. **Throw away your Bells and your Paper checklists!**

The Office of Newborn Screening Welcomes New Employees!

**Brandon Carlson, Data Integrity Specialist**

Brandon Carlson has recently joined the Office of Newborn Screening as the Data Integrity Specialist. He has worked in the IT field for the past 5 years and is currently working on his Bachelor’s Degree in Informatics from Washington International University. Brandon was recently married to his beautiful wife, Linda, and spends his free time watching science fiction television shows/movies, cooking, and tinkering with new technologies. Brandon is already working on restoring the Vital Records merge into HiTrack, looking at preparing the next round of scorecards and enhancing the newborn screening data reviews. Brandon is proud to be a member of the Newborn Screening team, and looks forward to contributing to the program.

**Davida Carr, Epidemiologist**

Davida Carr is an Epidemiologist who has recently joined the Office of Newborn Screening. She just relocated back to the Valley after working with the DOD and VHA in Washington DC on military traumatic brain injuries. Davida brings almost a decade of experience in the field of epidemiology, including positions at the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention as well as the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc./Indian Health Service’s Tribal Epidemiology Center. In her “spare time”, Ms. Carr teaches Microbiology and other Biology courses at local community colleges. She is looking forward to helping the Newborn Screening Program grow in the coming future.
Arizona EHDI Constant Contact Sign-Up

The Office of Newborn Screening: Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) values your partnership and your time. In an effort to be more efficient, we are changing the system we use to communicate health-related information to you. This list will be used for newsletters, upcoming events and updates; it will not replace but will enhance the person-to-person contact you have come to expect. Registering for this email communication will allow us to keep you up to date on information that supports your efforts to improve the health of all Arizonans.

To add yourself to this list please do the following:

- Visit this page: [http://visitor.constantcontact.com/email.jsp?m=1101362445484](http://visitor.constantcontact.com/email.jsp?m=1101362445484)
- Enter your email address and click “Continue”
- Click the box next to “Office of Newborn Screening: Early Hearing Detection and Intervention”
- Feel free to choose additional topics you would like to receive info on from ADHS
- Fill out the contact info in the column to the right so we can include you in specified correspondence as well.
- Forward to anyone you feel would benefit from specified correspondence

Thanks for joining our communication list and we look forward to sharing information to help you and your community. If you have any trouble viewing the newsletter or have difficulty signing up for Constant Contact, please give the Office of Newborn Screening at (602)364-

Resources for Professionals and Families

- Arizona Hands and Voices, Guide by your Side
- Raising Special Kids
  [www.raisingspecialkids.org/](http://www.raisingspecialkids.org/)
- Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (ASDB)
- Arizona Early Intervention Program
  [https://www.azdes.gov/azeip/](https://www.azdes.gov/azeip/)
- EAR Foundation of Arizona

Check out our website for all the latest news and information from the Office of Newborn Hearing Screening!

[www.aznewborn.com](http://www.aznewborn.com)