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MEMORANDUM

To: State EHDI Coordinator
From: Karl White
Re: State EHDI Coordinator Orientation Kit

Welcome to your new position as EHDI coordinator! Significant progress has been made for children born with hearing loss over the past decade. Nationally, over 95% of infants are being screened for hearing loss before hospital discharge. In addition, the average age hearing loss is diagnosed has decreased from 2-3 years of age to 2-3 months of age, providing a window of opportunity that can make a world of difference for their futures.

While we have much to celebrate, there is still a lot of work to be done. For example, many children who fail newborn hearing screening are lost to follow-up, effective family support programs are not available for some families, there are not enough pediatric audiologists, and many health care providers don't understand how they can help families with a newly identified child who is deaf or hard of hearing. To successfully meet the needs of children who are deaf or hard of hearing requires improvement in all of these areas, and many more. It is challenging, but rewarding, work!

This orientation kit was designed to help you get started. It was developed by other State EHDI Coordinators as a resource for you as you begin to learn and understand the various components within the EHDI system. The National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM) provides technical assistance for people in each state as they strive to continually enhance the various components of their EHDI program. Each region in the United States has an NCHAM network member to support you.

The NCHAM website www.infanthearing.org has numerous resources, and there is also an NCHAM HelpDesk that can be reached by email at ncham.helpdesk@usu.edu.

As an EHDI program coordinator, you are in a position to monitor each component of the EHDI process to make sure that children with hearing loss have access to timely and appropriate services. The progress we have made in the last few decades is the result of the hard work of many dedicated individuals that has been guided by State EHDI Coordinators. The leadership you provide will contribute greatly to our shared goal of helping children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families.

We look forward to working with you!