

Deaf Coaching Services for Families

What is a Deaf Coach?

A Deaf Coach is a deaf adult who is fluent in sign language and has the skills to work with families with deaf and hard of hearing children. The Deaf Coach works with the early intervention specialists to coordinate services and target the language goals of the child and the family.

Services provided by the Deaf Coach

- Prepares Child for Kindergarten
- Focuses on Language Acquisition for success in Kindergarten
- Meets with the family for 1 to 1.5 hours each week at their home
- Teaches sign vocabulary and engage the family in sign language communication
- Models the use of sign language and visual cues when interacting with their child
- Provides strategies for communication especially visual communication
- Shares information about Deaf Culture and the general experiences from a deaf perspective
- Introduces families to events in the Deaf Community

What are the benefits of a Deaf Coach?

- Positive adult role model for the child and family
- Increase family communication at home
- Support for the child's language development
- Increase family's ability to support child academically
- Additional resource for the family
- Safe and comfortable access to extensive knowledge of deaf culture and deaf community
- Non-judgemental and respectful parent's choices

Who may be interested in Deaf Coaching Services?

- Families with deaf and hard of hearing infants or young children under age 5 who want the benefit of providing a language rich environment for their child to enhance language acquisition.
- Families who want to explore all possible options to support their child's future success
- Families who desire the opportunity to learn firsthand about the experiences and challenges faced by deaf children and adults in a safe environment

Qualifications of the Deaf Coach:

Deaf Community Services screens Deaf coaches for their fluency in American Sign Language, their ability to communicate and develop rapport with families, their comfort in interacting with young children. We seek Deaf coaches who have completed a college education or possess professional experience providing ASL instruction, and experience or involvement working with youth. We employ coaches who support all types of communication modalities. Our mentors are non-judgmental, neutral and respect parents' choices. All deaf coaches are screened via a background check. Deaf coaches are required to participate in quarterly meetings and trainings provided by Deaf Community Services of San Diego.

Curriculum

Deaf Coaches are using the Deaf Mentor Curriculum developed by SKI-HI Institute at Utah State University. The curriculum may be supplemented by other resources to meet the individual family and/or child goals, the SKI-HI curriculum includes three sections:

- ASL For Families - A series of 37 topics to help families learn ASL for use in everyday environments and routines
- Early Visual Communication Program - A series of 18 topics summarizing strategies to focus on the child's visual environment so the child is able to shift toward acquiring language
- Deaf Culture Program - This program is designed to introduce families to Deaf Culture and the Deaf Community

For more information, please contact your school district's early intervention specialist for more information or contact Nick Roquemore
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