

My Child Has Hearing Loss...

NOW WHAT?

If your child is newborn to 3 yrs of age, you will be starting with Early Start and an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The IFSP is a legal document developed to address the needs of your child AND your family and is driven by parent concerns and parent priorities.

If your child is 3 to 22 yrs of age, you will be navigating the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process with your school district or local education agency. The IEP is the legal document that provides the appropriate placement, supports, and services and is driven by the needs of your child.

- **Note:** even if you are working with a county group who handles all of the DHH needs, your school district is still responsible for your child receiving the appropriate placement and services. You can request an IFSP or IEP at any time, and we can help!

Melinda Gillinger & Consultants (MG&C) is a Special Education Consulting Agency that supports families across all 13 eligibilities, specializing in serving families with children with hearing loss. We are a team of professionals who have worked with families and school districts in understanding the needs of these children for over 30 years. We are also parents of children with hearing loss, children who use cochlear implants, and children with other disabilities. We have walked the path you will be walking, and we know how overwhelming and intimidating this process can be. We speak the language of Special Education and understand the importance of receiving the appropriate placement and services your child needs. It would be our honor and pleasure to support you in navigating this journey.

See the flowchart on the next page to understand the process of getting started with your district or Early Start. And remember:

- As the parent of a child with hearing loss, **YOU** have the right to choose their mode of communication
- **YOU**, the parent, are an equal member of your child's team
- **YOU** have the right to be prepared and to participate in all aspects of the development of the IEP
- **YOU** have the right to agree or disagree either in part or in whole: you can say 'no' to the no!

Getting Started with Your District or Early Start

