RDHH
RESOURCE FOR DEAF/HARD OF HEARING

✉ outreach@mdelio.org
🌐 rdhh.org
f facebook.com/mderdhh.social

Profile

Child Information

Child's Name:

Parent Name(s):

Language(s):

Date of Birth:

Age at Identification of Hearing Status:

Mode(s) of Communication:

Hearing Status

Diagnostic Hearing Information:

Left Side Hearing Level:
- ☐ Slight: 16-25 dB
- ☐ Moderate: 41-55 dB
- ☐ Severe: 71-90 dB
- ☐ Mild: 26-40 dB
- ☐ Moderately Severe: 56-70 dB
- ☐ Profound: 91+ dB

Right Side Hearing Level:
- ☐ Slight: 16-25 dB
- ☐ Moderate: 41-55 dB
- ☐ Severe: 71-90 dB
- ☐ Mild: 26-40 dB
- ☐ Moderately Severe: 56-70 dB
- ☐ Profound: 91+ dB

Michigan Early Childhood Planning Guide for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Revised January 15, 2026

MICHIGAN
Department of Education

Table of Contents

Introduction

About

The *Michigan Early Childhood Planning Guide* is an optional data-collection tool to assist educators and parents as partners in monitoring progress and facilitate discussions that support the success of young children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH).

This document contains sections to develop a child profile, record family engagement, and track developmental progress. Educational teams may track stages of a child's development in receptive and expressive language and ability to access learning. Research indicates that receptive/expressive language and the ability to access learning represent valuable skills for students who are DHH. (See references.)

The *Assessment Resource Guide for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing* (bit.ly/DHHAssessmentGuide) contains tools that may be used to collect relevant data to complete portions of the *Michigan Early Childhood Planning Guide*. The *Michigan Language Milestones for DHH* (michigan.gov/mde/resources/lead-k/language-milestones) is another resource families and educational teams may use along with this planning guide to track and monitor language development.

Instructions

Use this document to compile data and facilitate conversations in the areas of family engagement, receptive and expressive language, and accessing learning. Educational teams are encouraged to revisit the document repeatedly to monitor progress over time.

Profile

Complete the Profile section to compile an overview of the child's personal and educational details. Use input from parents and current medical, developmental, and audiological information. Educational teams may find the *Michigan Communication Plan for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing* (bit.ly/DHHCommPlan) helpful for considering the child's language and communication needs.

Family Engagement

Families are critical partners on the educational team. They have the right to be informed, and their confidence and involvement contributes to positive results for their child (NASDSE, 2018). Complete the Family Engagement section in collaboration with the child's family, parents, caregivers, and other educational team members as appropriate. Use this page to guide and foster collaboration and communication. The compiled data will highlight a family's growth in several areas. The "Notes" section is available to capture ideas, next steps, and any additional supports needed.

Receptive/Expressive Language Milestones Overview

Acquiring language is critical for every child who is DHH. Ongoing tracking and monitoring of language support children developing the foundational skills they need to acquire language. Use parent input, as well as data from assessments, checklists, and observations to document mastery of skills. Educational teams may cross out items that do not apply to the child's language(s) or mode(s) of communication. Targets specific to American Sign Language (ASL) are in **bold** and those specific to English are *italicized*. Any use of "words" included in the targets refers to spoken or signed words.

This section offers only a snapshot of receptive/expressive development. Educational teams are encouraged to utilize the *Michigan Language Milestones for DHH* (michigan.gov/mde/resources/lead-k/language-milestones) along with additional language assessment tools to track and monitor the full foundation of language development.

Access to Learning

The ability to access learning is key to future school success; it helps children engage and take part in everyday activities and interactions from a young age, building the skills they need for learning and connecting with others. Use parent input, as well as data from assessments, checklists, and observations, to document mastery of skills. Educational teams may cross out items that do not apply to the child's unique needs.

Scoring

Score the Receptive/Expressive Language Milestones Overview and the Access to the Learning sections using typical early childhood development stages.

- Stage 1 benchmarks represent objectives achieved by typically developing 1-2-year-olds.
- Stage 2 benchmarks represent objectives achieved by typically developing 2-3-year-olds.
- Stage 3 benchmarks represent objectives achieved by typically developing 3-4-year-olds.
- Stage 4 benchmarks represent the outcomes for children who are ready for kindergarten.

The stage identifying the child's current level has the most items marked as mastered. Mastery can be defined as 90 percent accuracy or demonstrated proficiency of the skill at least five times over multiple occasions.

Acknowledgments

References

Anderson, Karen L., and Kathleen A. Arnoldi. *Building Skills for Success in the Fast-Paced Classroom: Optimizing Achievement for Students with Hearing Loss.* Butte Publications, 2011.

Calderon, R. "Parental Involvement in Deaf Children's Education Programs as a Predictor of Child's Language, Early Reading, and Social-Emotional Development." *American Annals of the Deaf 5*, no. 2 (2002): 140–55.

DesGeorges, Janet. "Spoken Language Gets a Piggy-Back Ride on Language in Any Modality." Hands & Voices, 2004.

French, Martha M. Starting with Assessment: A Developmental Approach to Deaf Children's Literacy. Washington, DC: Pre-College National Mission Programs, Gallaudet University, 1999.

Meadow-Orlans, Kathryn P., Patricia Elizabeth Spencer, and Lynne Sanford Koester. *The World of Deaf Infants: A Longitudinal Study*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

"*Michigan Language Milestones for Deaf/Hard of Hearing.*" LEAD-K Michigan, July 30, 2025.

"*Minnesota Compensatory Skills Checklist for Students with Hearing Loss.*" 2011.

Moeller, M. P. "Early Intervention and Language Development in Children Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing." Pediatrics (2002). Accessed November 20, 2010.

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE). *Optimizing Outcomes for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing: Educational Service Guidelines, 3rd ed.* Alexandria, Virginia: Author, 2018.

Simms, Laurene, Sharon Baker, and Diane M. Clark. *The Visual Communication Sign Language (VCSL) Checklist*. Gallaudet University, 2016.

Spencer, Patricia Elizabeth, and Marc Marschark, eds. Advances in the *Spoken Language Development of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Watkins, Sue, ed. Sensory Kids Impaired Home Intervention (SKI-HI) Curriculum. North Logan, UT: Hope Publishing, 2004.

Wilkes, Elizabeth M. Cottage Acquisition Scales for *Listening, Language and Speech*. San Antonio: Sunshine Cottage School for Deaf Children, 2001.

Yoshinaga-Itano, Christine, and Allison Sedey. "Early Speech Development in Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing: Interrelationships with Language and Hearing." *The Volta Review* 100, no. 5 (1999): 181–211.

Yoshinaga-Itano, Christine. "Early Identification, Communication Modality, and the Development of Speech and Spoken Language Skills: Patterns and Considerations." *Advances in the Spoken Language Development of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children*, edited by Patricia Elizabeth Spencer and Marc Marschark, 298–327. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006

Profile

Child Information

Child's Name:	Date of Birth:
Parent Name(s):	Age at Identification of Hearing Status:
Language(s):	Mode(s) of Communication:

Hearing Status

Diagnostic Hearing Information:

Left Side Hearing Level:

☐ Slight: 16-25 dB   ☐ Mild: 26-40 dB

☐ Moderate: 41-55 dB   ☐ Moderately Severe: 56-70 dB

☐ Severe: 71-90 dB   ☐ Profound: 91+ dB

Right Side Hearing Level:

☐ Slight: 16-25 dB   ☐ Mild: 26-40 dB

☐ Moderate: 41-55 dB   ☐ Moderately Severe: 56-70 dB

☐ Severe: 71-90 dB   ☐ Profound: 91+ dB

Use of Hearing Technology

In the following table, enter the device implementation/activation date and device model for the right side and/or left side.

Personal Hearing Device	Right Side	Left Side	Model
Hearing Aid			
Bone Conduction Hearing Device			
Cochlear Implant			

Hearing Device Use Per Day: ☐ None ☐ < 1 Hour ☐ 1-3 Hours ☐ 3-8 Hours ☐ 8-10 Hours ☐ > 10 Hours

Remote microphone technology is used at home or in the community: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Remote microphone technology is used in an educational setting: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Additional Information

Intermediate School District/Educational Service Agency:

Local District:

Teacher with DHH Endorsement:

Primary Service Provider:

Person Completing Form:

Initial IFSP/IEP Date:

Current IFSP/IEP Date:

IFSP/IEP Service Hours/Week:

Describe the child's strengths and interests:

Describe any additional diagnoses, conditions, or contributing factors:

Family Engagement

Child's Name:	Parent Name(s):	Date:

	Not Yet	Somewhat	Yes	Notes
I understand the impact of my child's hearing status.	☐	☐	☐	
I can explain my child's audiogram.	☐	☐	☐	
I am aware of the language and communication opportunities available for my child.	☐	☐	☐	
I use my child's language and communication approach(es).	☐	☐	☐	
I feel confident in the daily use and care routine for my child's hearing device(s).	☐	☐	☐	
I am aware of hearing assistive technology options available for my child and am confident in using them.	☐	☐	☐	
I participate during home visits.	☐	☐	☐	
I intentionally include language in our daily routines (e.g., mealtime, bath time, bedtime).	☐	☐	☐	
I intentionally include language into our family experiences (e.g., going to the store, visiting extended family).	☐	☐	☐	

	Not Yet	Somewhat	Yes	Notes
I know how to advocate for my child's needs.	☐	☐	☐	
I communicate and feel like a member of my child's educational team.	☐	☐	☐	
I actively participate in program planning and meetings.	☐	☐	☐	
I know of opportunities for meeting other families of children who are DHH.	☐	☐	☐	
I know of opportunities for meeting adults who are DHH.	☐	☐	☐	
I know how to access outside resources to support my family when needed.	☐	☐	☐	
I know my family's rights and where to find updated information on DHH-related laws.	☐	☐	☐	
I am comfortable asking my child's medical team questions.	☐	☐	☐	
I understand the schedule of appointments recommended by my child's audiologist and ear, nose, and throat (ENT) doctor.	☐	☐	☐	
I understand the upcoming transitions related to my child's school-based services and supports and feel informed about what to expect.	☐	☐	☐	

Receptive/Expressive Language Milestones Overview

Child's Name:	Parent Name(s):	Date:

Note: Cross out items that do not apply to the child's language(s) or mode(s) of communication. Any use of "words" refers to spoken or signed words. Targets specific to ASL are in **bold** and those specific to English are *italicized*.

Stage 1

- ☐ Receptively understands 250-300 vocabulary words.
- ☐ Responds to simple questions (who, what, where, what-for).
- ☐ Imitates new words.
- ☐ Uses 10-100 (or more) words, primarily labels for people, food, animals, toys, and actions.
- ☐ Uses gestures to answer yes/no questions (e.g., shakes head no, nods head yes).
- ☐ Uses one-to-two-word phrases (e.g., mine, no, more, my milk, mommy shoes).
- ☐ **Uses simple handshapes of C, A, S, 1, 5,** *and/or uses consonant sounds, including b, m, p, d, t, n.*

Stage 2

- ☐ Follows two-to-three-step directions (e.g., get the book and put it on the table).
- ☐ Understands that objects can be grouped by categories (e.g., items you can wear).
- ☐ Expressively uses 250-500 words or more.
- ☐ Uses simple three-to-four-word sentences.
- ☐ Answers questions with the words yes or no.
- ☐ Asks simple two-to-three-word questions (who, what, where, why, how, yes/no).
- ☐ Uses two or more pronouns.
- ☐ Uses some plurals and possessives.
- ☐ Uses negation (e.g., no, none, not, don't like, don't know, not yet).

Stage 3

- ☐ Follows two-to-four-step unrelated commands (e.g., sit down and eat your lunch).
- ☐ Understands opposites (e.g., hot/cold, wet/dry, day/night, same/different).
- ☐ Expressively uses 800-1,600 words or more.
- ☐ Uses four-to-six-word sentences including nouns, verbs, and adjectives.
- ☐ Answers how and why questions.
- ☐ Asks when, how much, and how many questions.
- ☐ Names an object when given the function (e.g., what do you see with, what jumps).

Stage 4

- ☐ Follows more difficult directions (e.g., get a cup from the top shelf that is not blue).
- ☐ Understands similarities (e.g., things that fly, things you eat).
- ☐ Understands time phrases (e.g., later, today, tomorrow, seasons).
- ☐ Understands more prepositions (e.g., behind, beside, between).
- ☐ Answers questions about the past (e.g., what happened, why, how).
- ☐ Expressively uses 2,500 or more words.
- ☐ Uses four-to-eight-word sentences including nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.
- ☐ Uses two-to-three different sentence structures.
- ☐ Uses time indicators (e.g., **FINISH, NOT-YET**, yesterday, tomorrow).

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
☐ Uses **simple movements (straight, forward, up, or down)** and/or *varied volume and pitch with early developing sounds and single syllable words.*	☐ Uses prepositions (e.g., in, on, under, above, below, next to).	☐ Retells familiar stories.	☐ Tells a simple story, including character(s), a setting, and a beginning, middle, and end.
☐ Imitates **what others sign** and/or *vocal duration patterns (e.g., short vs. long vocalizations, numbers of syllables).*	☐ Takes two turns in conversation.	☐ Carries a simple conversation and stays on topic through four or five turns.	☐ Uses language to easily relate ideas, stories, problems, and feelings.
	☐ Gives one- and two-step directions to others (e.g., you do it, sit down and eat).	☐ Describes actions in pictures (e.g., dogs run, boy eats).	☐ Uses words to invite others to play.
	☐ **Uses more complex handshapes (e.g., B, F, O) but substitutes basic handshapes at times (e.g., 5 for W for WATER)** and/or *correctly produces most vowels and the consonants b, m, p, d, t, n, h, and w in words.*	☐ Uses language in symbolic, dramatic, and cooperative play.	☐ Uses complex scenarios in play.
		☐ **Uses verb modification (e.g., STROLLING, WALKING QUICKLY).**	☐ **Uses number distribution (e.g., leaves falling – FALL SINGULAR – one leaf falls; FALL PLURAL – many leaves fall; FALL RANDOM – leaves fall from time to time, here and there).**
	☐ **Uses simple classifiers (CL) to describe objects and show movement (e.g., CL:O for POLE, CL:3 for CAR DRIVING FORWARD).**	☐ **Uses movement correctly for noun-verb pairs (e.g., FLY/ AIRPLANE, SIT/CHAIR).**	☐ **Uses the five ASL parameters of handshape, palm orientation, location, movement, and facial expression.**
	☐ Uses **non-manual markers (raised/squinted eyebrows)** and/or *vocal inflection* to indicate questions.	☐ **Uses rhetorical questions.**	☐ *Uses irregular plurals (e.g., children, mice, feet).*
	☐ *Uses -ing verbs (e.g., eating, running).*	☐ *Uses -ed to tell about past actions (e.g., played, looked, cooked).*	
		☐ *Understands -er and -est.*	
		☐ *Uses articles "a" and "the."*	

Access to Learning

Note: Cross out items that do not apply to the child's unique needs. Any use of "words" refers to spoken or signed words.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
☐ Wears personal hearing device(s) consistently.	☐ Uses hearing device(s). (Goal: 10 hours per day.)	☐ Uses hearing device(s). (Goal: 10 or more hours per day.)	☐ Recognizes need to wear hearing device(s) to access auditory information.
☐ Detects sound.	☐ Identifies familiar sounds and voices.	☐ Tells an adult when hearing device(s) are not working properly.	☐ Responsible for putting on own hearing device(s).
☐ Discriminates identification of at least 15 sounds/visual indicators of routines.	☐ Recognizes that words have meaning.	☐ Responds to teacher-directed questions.	☐ Reports problems with hearing assistive technology.
☐ Recognizes that visual information is meaningful.	☐ Listens/watches for meaning in a small group setting.	☐ Listens/watches for meaning in a large group setting.	☐ Listens/watches for meaning in a variety of settings.
☐ Demonstrates joint attention.	☐ Attends to multiple familiar speakers for information.	☐ Attends to multiple speakers for information.	☐ Begins to attend to an interpreter.
☐ Points to a picture in a book when asked (e.g., where's the ____).	☐ Participates in small group instruction.	☐ Participates in large group instruction.	☐ Participates in small and large group settings appropriately.
☐ Looks at and pretends to read books.	☐ Answers simple questions about a story.	☐ Attends to a story.	☐ Understands that books are made up of written words.
☐ Uses single words to request, repeat, and label.	☐ Requests objects and actions.	☐ Responds to and interacts with stories read aloud to a group.	☐ Volunteers to answer questions.
	☐ Uses content vocabulary as single words. (May include facial expressions, gestures, and pointing.)	☐ Uses content vocabulary in connected language.	☐ Actively participates in conversations and social interactions with content vocabulary and extended discourse.
	☐ Requests help when needed.	☐ Has beginning knowledge of access/self-advocacy needs.	☐ Reports when there is a communication breakdown.
		☐ Begins to display appropriate attention skills.	☐ Attention span has increased long enough to gain curriculum concepts.
			☐ Begins to recognize distance/clear line of sight as a factor in accessing and comprehending information.