

Discussion Group of Parents and Service Providers at the March 24, 2017 Hands and Voices Conference, Manchester, New Hampshire - Middle and High School Transition Group

2. S.P.O.T. Analysis

Strengths- What are the benefits to family involvement?

- Parents policing/monitoring the classroom – is the classroom set up properly? How are the acoustics?
- Parents create a dialogue with the school
- Providing teaching tools to kids – how to teach kids to say “this is working” or “this is not working right now”
- Middle schoolers generally gain independence in using FM equipment, showing teachers the correct way to use it

Problems- What are barriers to getting families involved?

- School says, “We’re doing everything we can.”
- The school thinks one thing about the student and his/her abilities and the parents think another. Maybe hearing loss is being ignored because of other labels.
- Parents may not follow up with other parents who have D/HH children

What opportunities exist or can be created to increase family involvement?

- Teens and tweens should get together to show each other they are not alone.
- Have a Deaf role model in each school.
- Send kids to Deaf summer camp programs so they can meet and socialize with other Deaf/HOH teens, especially in a rural state like New Hampshire.

What threats exist if families are more involved?

- Parents too demanding, always asking for more
- Asking for something different criticizes what’s there now
- Communication access
- How does the student know if the interpreter is interpreting correctly? What if there are a lot of inaccuracies?

3. What do parents want from professionals?

- Understanding the laws and parents’ rights.
- Parent Information Center in New Hampshire is a resource.
- Educators may need some professional skill building working with your child.
- Week long or multi-day classes for parents – what do we need to learn?
- Website resources

Discussion Group of Parents and Service Providers at the March 24, 2017 Hands and Voices Conference, Manchester, New Hampshire - Middle and High School Transition Group

4. What do professionals want from parents?

- Strong Hands & Voices group
- Parents banding together, working together and with service providers and teachers, and going to the Legislature to lobby for better services for D/HH students
- If parents could relay information from their child about how their hearing assistance equipment is working – what the child says to the parent may be valuable for the audiologist and the child may not think to relay that information to the audiologist
- Have the school do a whole range of assessments before the student graduates – these will serve the student well in the next phase of his/her life
- Bring a list of accommodations (either generic or specific) to college visits, job placements, etc. and make sure the child/student or parents discuss the accommodations needed

Who do I call?

- New Hampshire Deaf & Hard of Hearing Education Initiative
- The student's TOD
- Voc Rehab counselors

5. Family engagement – what does it mean to parents as you move through the system?

- Families are always engaged with their child.
- Middle school seems to mean a lot more emotional and social support than previously.
- Elementary to middle school transition means there are more teachers to get to know!
- Technology point person in your child's school – get to know that person!