

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program fosters student success by partnering with students who have hearing loss, their families, schools and community agencies.



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program



The program supports students in their educational placements and helps them understand and manage their hearing loss now and into the future.



Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program
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The Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE) established the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Program in 1984 with one teacher and five students. Today, several teachers and an educational audiologist serve over 200 students in schools across Sonoma County. A special education administrator oversees the program.

DHH teachers are credentialed by the state, most with graduate-level specialization in deaf and hard of hearing education. Many also hold multiple- or single-subject teaching credentials. All of the teachers meet federal No Child Left Behind proficiency standards and are authorized to serve students who are English-language learners.

The program's audiologist is certified by the American Board of Audiology and has experience in clinical, educational and research settings.



Program overview

The DHH Program serves individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing from 3 to 22 years old, with hearing loss ranging from mild to profound.

The program offers a continuum of services that is based on student need and responds to communication preferences. Students are enrolled in regular, resource, special day, preschool, or home-based programs and receive DHH services in conjunction with their instruction. Itinerant DHH teachers travel from school to school to provide services for individual students.

DHH services range from assessment and consultation to direct instruction and coordination. A DHH teacher serves as a member of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and works in cooperation with audiologists, parents, school staff and community agencies to provide services.

Range of services

DHH staff can help evaluate the educational needs of students with hearing loss, provide support to facilitate student integration in current educational settings and coordinate support services. Depending on individual needs, students may receive a selection of the following services.

Evaluation

- ◆ Assess auditory, communication, speechreading and compensatory skills
- ◆ Evaluate the need for specialized equipment and services

Instructional support

- ◆ Make recommendations about the scope and extent of services required for the student to access the core curriculum
- ◆ Support IEP goals and objectives and/or classroom instruction as applicable
- ◆ Provide direct instruction in auditory, communication and compensatory skills

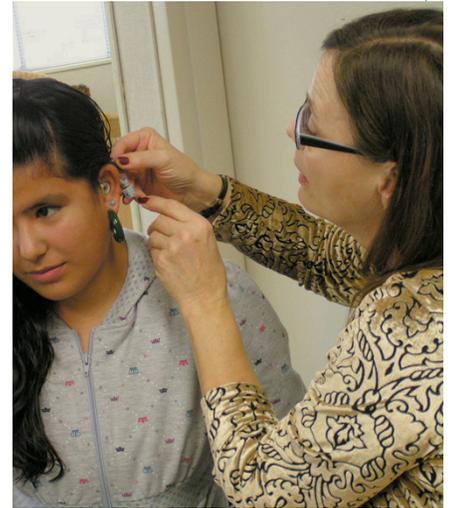
- ◆ Monitor student progress and adjust instruction and support services as changes occur
- ◆ Assist with appropriate use of note-takers, sign language interpreters and signing assistants

Technical assistance

- ◆ Request and manage specialized low-incidence equipment such as FM and amplification systems
- ◆ Perform regular checks of amplification systems and provide troubleshooting assistance
- ◆ Teach students to use and care for hearing aids, cochlear implants and FM systems

Consultation

- ◆ Participate as a member of the student's IEP team
- ◆ Help students, staff and parents understand audiological reports and their educational implications
- ◆ Consult with students, school staff and parents regarding educational placement and program adaptations
- ◆ Interface and consult with local, regional, state and national agencies



Personal development

- ◆ Help students understand, accept and manage hearing loss
- ◆ Provide inservice to parents, school staff and classmates
- ◆ Support student transition from one grade level to the next, to post-secondary programs and adulthood
- ◆ Facilitate specialized co-curricular activities, such as periodic gatherings for students with hearing loss in Sonoma County
- ◆ Promote self-advocacy skills and independence

Eligibility, screening, and referral

A student is considered for DHH services when he/she has a qualifying disability as defined in the Title 5 California Code of Regulations:

- Deafness means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects a child's educational performance [Title 5 CCR 3030 (b) (3)]
- Hearing impairment means an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness in this section [Title 5 CCR 3030 (b) (5)]

Requesting Service: School district personnel may request a screening by SCOE DHH program staff to determine the need for assessment by completing the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program screening packet at scoe.org. Please also contact the program at (707) 524-2700 to alert staff to the screening request.

Screening: When a request for a screening packet is received, DHH Program staff will send a packet to the student's school. The school completes and compiles the following documents, which are used to assist the district in determining if further assessment is recommended.

- ◆ Screening request form
- ◆ Student checklist
Student checklists should be completed by all school personnel familiar with the student and the student's parents.
- ◆ Consent to Release Information form, signed by the parent
- ◆ Current clinical audiogram *Audiograms should be no more than one year old.*
- ◆ Other pertinent information, such as current IEP, speech-language and/or psychological reports, report cards, etc.

Referral: If assessment is recommended upon completion of the screening process, a Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) Special Education Referral form is completed and signed by appropriate school personnel. The referral is sent to the DHH Program office and a DHH teacher is assigned to the student.

Referrals are processed in a timely manner in accordance with the policies of the Sonoma County SELPA and DHH Program. An acknowledgment is mailed to the parents, along with program materials, contact information, and the Special Education Rights of Parents and Children document. An Assessment Plan form – which must be completed, consented to, signed and returned to the DHH Program office – is also included in the packet.

The next step is for the DHH teacher to assess the student, compile a report, and call for an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting. The IEP team reviews the results of the testing and the recommendations of the specialist, then determines the level of DHH service, if any, that is needed to support the student's current educational placement.

Referral steps

- 1 School requests screening
- 2 Documentation is submitted by school and reviewed by DHH staff to determine the need for assessment
- 3 If assessment is recommended, referral form is completed by school
- 4 Parent signs and submits Assessment Plan form
- 5 Student undergoes DHH assessment
- 6 IEP meeting is held to review assessment results and determine eligibility and level of DHH services needed
- 7 Services are provided to student