



2020~2021 ANNUAL REPORT

EMPOWERING PARENTS OF CHILDREN WHO
ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING, THROUGH
EDUCATION AND SUPPORT

ncbegin.org



Notes from the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Diane Doak
Executive Director
BEGINNINGS

DID YOU KNOW?

Hearing loss is one of the most common birth defects.

The earlier children with hearing loss start getting services, the more likely they are to reach their full potential.

As we look back over our fiscal year 2020–21, I can't help but see how devastating this year has been for families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Audiology offices were closed or limiting services in order to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. School buildings were closed and parents were thrust into the responsibility of managing the education of their children, often with conflicting video sessions for children in different grades all while trying to work remotely at the same time. Exceptional Children's programs were unable to meet the federal requirements for evaluations, and children who needed individualized instruction were waiting for services. The pandemic highlighted disparities based on income, ethnicity, and culture.

Educate. Support. Empower.

These concepts are the foundation for our mission to serve parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. During 2020–21, our parent educators discovered alternate, sometimes better, processes for meeting our mission. They revised our home visit process to provide visits virtually. They supported parents through virtual IEP meetings, texting and chatting to encourage them during the process. When parents were unable to attend virtual therapy or meetings because of unreliable internet, they facilitated support for parents through our Grants to Parents program. And they supported each other, especially since over 80 percent of our staff had their own children in remote learning, adult children back home due to job loss, spouses working in the same home office, or spouses out of work.

As the disparities became more pronounced, we reached out to a consulting firm to evaluate our current culture. We are about to launch our diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) action plan with our commitment to improve these benchmarks within our agency and in the services we provide to families. Our parent educators have reviewed our service delivery and are developing strategies to be more culturally sensitive while providing support.

It has been an honor to be part of this amazing group, and I look forward to seeing BEGINNINGS grow as we support the families we serve.



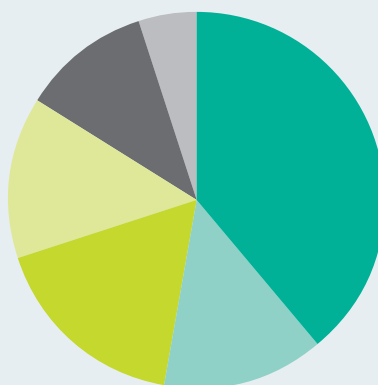
Visit our website:
ncbegin.org

2020~2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Maintaining Services Statewide During a Challenging Year

Although COVID-19 restrictions changed some of the ways in which we empowered parents of deaf or hard-of-hearing children—remote versus in-person—as well as impacting our referrals from schools, audiologists, and state-mandated screenings, we were still able to serve 1,249 families in an impressive 92 out of 100 North Carolina counties.

In FY 2021, we served
1,249 FAMILIES

709 returning
families and
540 new
families



Age at Identification

Birth–3 months	39%
4–12 months	14%
13 months–3 years	17%
3–5 years	14%
6–10 years	11%
11–21 years	5%

Message from the BOARD PRESIDENT



Wade Monroe
President, Board of Directors
BEGINNINGS

I am thankful to have been on the BEGINNINGS board for more than five years, and to have served as Board President for the past two. A friend introduced me to this organization and started getting me involved through various events and fundraisers.

As I learned about the mission and vision of BEGINNINGS, what impressed me the most was the commitment of the parent educators to provide the best possible services across the entire state of North Carolina. The team works tirelessly, driving across the state, meeting with families in their homes and schools for the sole purpose of helping them navigate the realities of hearing loss. The number of families served continues to grow year after year and is truly awe-inspiring.

Like so many organizations, we have experienced challenges due to the COVID pandemic, but I am so proud of how our Executive Director and all the parent educators have learned to pivot to a virtual format and continue to serve the families of children with hearing loss. Our team's dedication to serving our communities, despite the challenges they face, is humbling. They put our families above all else, and I am honored to serve as their Board President.

The goal of the Board moving forward is to grow our resources and expand the organization, so we can continue to increase the number of families served across North Carolina.

FY 2020–2021 Financial Information (Audited)

REVENUE

State Contracts:	\$1,004,216
Released Grants:	\$72,219
Other Grants:	\$172,278
Public Support: (EVENTS/INDIVIDUAL GIVING)	\$21,762
Earned Income:	\$14,775
Total:	\$1,285,250

EXPENSES

Admin/Fundraising:	\$163,330
Services to Families:	\$900,690
Grants to Parents:	\$8,600
Total:	\$1,072,620

**85% of income is
spent on providing
services to families
in North Carolina.**

**SUPPORT
BEGINNINGS!**
ncbegin.org/donate

**We ask for your monthly, annual,
or in honor of/in memory of gifts
to support our work statewide!**

**921 HOME VISITS
Provided**

*(the majority are
to new families;
others are follow-up
and preschool
transition visits)*



**287 SCHOOL MEETINGS
Supported**

*(ranging from infant/toddler transition
issues, to school age and transition
to adulthood)*



All statistics regarding the services we provided to families refer to Fiscal Year 2021 (July 1, 2020–June 30, 2021).

SAVE THE DATE!

A Night for Beginnings/
Annual Fundraising Gala



THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2022
The Fairview, 1125 Capital Blvd., Raleigh

For more information,
visit www.ncbegin.org.

Enjoy delicious food and drinks, live and silent auctions, dancing to DJ Bunn, and the opportunity to support **BEGINNINGS** as we empower, inform, and support families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A PARENT EDUCATOR

SINCE 1987, BEGINNINGS has had a remarkably effective, highly trained, and empathetic group of Parent Educators (PEs) whose job it is to empower parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. However, just like snowflakes or autumn leaves, no two PEs are exactly alike in how they carry out their particular duties.

And, in the words of several PEs, "There is no such thing as a typical day!"

To read more about how Erin, Johanna, Wilma, Melanie, Joan, Karen, and Alejandra work their magic as PEs, go to www.ncbegin.org/news.

PARENT SUPPORT GRANTS MEETING EMERGENCY NEEDS

BEGINNINGS has instituted the Family Support Grant program, setting aside funds that parents can apply for in times of need to help their deaf or hard-of-hearing children.

The establishment of this program was made possible by initial funding from the Ragland Family Foundation, and our fundraisers help with visibility and support.

Parents complete an application, then a BEGINNINGS committee assesses the need and determines the funding. Examples of hearing-related expenses include ear molds; FM systems and accessories; transportation to hearing-related appointments; and classes for communication modalities. Families who apply must live in North Carolina; have been referred to/served by BEGINNINGS; and the child with hearing loss must be under the age of 22. Parents may reapply every 12 months; there is a limit of three awards per family.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2021–2022

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Here are two
examples of the
**NEEDS WE
WERE ABLE
TO MEET FOR
FAMILIES**
during 2020–2021



THE MCVEY FAMILY, Conover, NC, received a grant to help pay for Wi-Fi so that their son Christian had access to online sign-language resources. In her application, Melissa McVey said, "The only access to learning sign (language) at the moment is through online resources. I don't want his progress to be delayed due to the virus. It is a scary time in our world, and I'm trying to keep his life as normal as possible for him and give him that access to communication."



THE AQUILAR-GOMEZ FAMILY, Seven Springs, NC, received a grant to pay for their four-year-old son Harlem's earmolds and batteries as well as some travel expenses to/from audiology appointments. This funding was particularly needed as Harlem is in remission from cancer, his father had lost his job due to the many medical appointments for his son, and the family had just relocated to North Carolina from Texas.