



# CHIMES

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NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTH DAKOTA EARLY HEARING DETECTION & INTERVENTION PROGRAM

## Ehdi Attends HIMSS

By Jerusha Olthoff

The North Dakota Health Information Management and Systems Society (ND HIMSS) held its first event in November at the Best Western Ramkota, in Bismarck, ND. The ND Ehdi staff was pleased to attend the informative event in preparation for the upcoming changes occurring regarding the Health Information Exchange (HIE) progress taking place in North Dakota. The conference covered topics regarding HIE's such as, Meaningful Use, lessons learned from electronic health record (HER) adopters, Privacy topics, and ND's timeline for implementing the HIE process as well as many more topics.



As most CHIMES readers may already know, North Dakota birthing facilities, many Audiologists, and Early Interventionists utilize a data system called OZ eSP. The data system is a secure electronic hearing health record accessible via the Web. As progressive technological changes are occurring in the healthcare field regarding the exchange of information, Ehdi staff is keeping an eye on how those changes may benefit hearing healthcare processes and programs throughout North Dakota. The ND Ehdi program

recognizes the great possibilities and benefits the HIE process will provide in the form of better healthcare as a result of the efficient communication of outcomes and real-time access to those outcomes. Ultimately, the overall feel of what the HIE will have to offer has been what many Ehdi healthcare providers and interventionists have had access to for some time in the form of a hearing specific electronic health record.

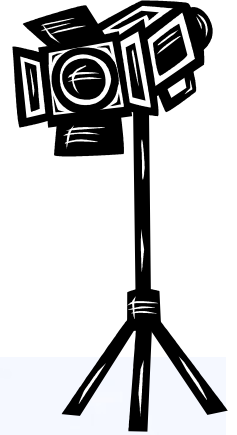
ND Ehdi staff will continue looking for ways to be proactive in an effort not only to participate, but to promote a great healthcare system in North Dakota. Great healthcare can be accomplished through the timely and complete access and communication of health information resulting in efficiencies and quality medical treatment.

### Inside this issue:

Hospital Spotlight: Essentia Health	Page 2
Total Number of Births Reported Looking Good	Page 2
ND Hands & Voices Featured Family: The Stiels	Page 3
Calendar of Events	Page 4
Our Journey (ND Hands & Voices Featured Family)	Page 5

## Hospital Spotlight: Essentia Health

By Sue Routledge



ND EHDI staff would like to spotlight Essentia Health and their community's hearing health support network in Fargo, ND. Recently, our EHDI team visited their hospital for a well-attended community site visit. The meeting provided an in-depth look at their facility's current program. It also offered a time and place for vested community partners to meet face to face with hospital staff, discuss each partner's role and how everyone is working together to assure infants receive timely hearing healthcare. Attending the meeting were hospital nursery management, staff, and audiologists as well as Early Interventionists representing the Right Track Program, the Parent Infant Program, and Part C/Infant Development.

Essentia Health's infant hearing screening program has shown an exceptional level of dedication and commitment. Reported data indicates every infant available to receive a hearing screen was screened prior to discharge (100%); additionally, every infant for whom an outpatient rescreen was recommended returned and completed the additional screening (100%). This is an outstanding achievement! Tips that Essentia staff would like to share are: 1) assure outpatient appointments are made for families prior to an infant's discharge, 2) educate parents on the importance of hearing care follow-up, and 3) make referrals to early intervention programs immediately.

Essentia Hospital staff are effectively working together with area early intervention programs to promote follow-up past hospital doors. Immediate early intervention referrals are many times the key to meeting the national 1-3-6 guidelines of hearing care. The guidelines indicated screenings should be completed by 1 month of age; those who do not pass the screening should have a comprehensive audiological evaluation completed by 3 months; and infants with a confirmed hearing loss should receive appropriate intervention no later than 6 months of age.

Teamwork is vital. Our ND EHDI staff would like to congratulate Essentia Health's infant hearing care staff and surrounding area Early Interventionists on a job well done. Keep up the great work!

## Total Number of Births Reported Looking Good

By Thomas Orluck



As we prepare for a new year, it is important to reflect on the past to see if changes are needed to improve tomorrow. Since data is only as good as what is reported, a good starting point is to assure all births are reported to ND EHDI. To accomplish this, a comparison was done between the total number of live births reported to ND EHDI and the number of live births reported to Vital Records.

*(Continued on page 3)*

*(Continued from page 2)*

In 2010, 3 of North Dakota's 13 birthing hospitals reported all births (100%) to ND EHDl when compared to Vital Records. The remaining hospitals reported nearly 100%. ND EHDl would like to extend many thanks to all birthing hospital staff for their proficiency of ensuring that for every live birth an OZ eSP file was created, a birth screen was completed, and follow-up was provided if needed. Comparisons for 2011 data will be made available as Vital Records allow. ND EHDl is hopeful 2011 and the coming 2012 will be as good if not better because of the wonderful people we work with on a daily basis. Thank You!

## ND Hands & Voices Featured Family: The Stiels



**Family Members:** Thomas, Stephannie, Matthew (7), Abigail (5), and Sophia (2)

**Family Members with Hearing Loss:** Sophia was born profoundly deaf in both ears.

**How Your Family Communicates:** Spoken language

**What supports you utilize:** Cochlear Implants; Teacher of the Deaf; Early Intervention; Direct Speech-Language Therapy; Northern Voices; and Moog Center for Deaf Education via Skype

**Favorite things to do as a family:** Snuggling up on the couch to watch family movies in the winter and heading to the lakes in the summer!

**Something you wish you knew earlier on:** This is not a one size fits all deal. Listen to what you are being offered and then think outside the box on how you can tailor that to what works for your family. It doesn't hurt to ask.

**A great resource you would like to share:** We have found many wonderful learning tools for Sophia at the Art and Learn store in Fargo. They have wonderful flashcards and picture cards and many manipulative objects to learn shapes, colors, fruits, vegetables, and countless other things.

**How has having a child with hearing loss changed your family:** We definitely have a new "normal" and went through many changes as a family. Initially we were devastated with all the unknowns: 1) will we have to move; 2) will we have to send her away to a school; 3) will she ever have a boyfriend or go to prom (silly-we know); 4) what lies ahead for us; and 5) can we handle this? But today we feel so much better because we are informed about what lies ahead. Today we feel lucky and blessed. Many things have been put into perspective.

**Advice to other families:** Get connected with other families and the professionals and don't be afraid to ask the tough questions, we are all working towards the same goal, right?

*(Continued on page 5)*

# Calendar of Events

## January

**New Year's Day Observed—ND EHDl offices closed**  
Monday, January 2, 2012

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day—ND EHDl offices closed**  
Monday, January 16, 2012

### January 2012

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## February

**President's Day—ND EHDl offices closed**  
Monday, February 20, 2012

### February 2012

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26	27	28	29			

## March

**EHDl 2012 Annual Meeting**  
Monday, March 5—Tuesday, March 6, 2012  
St. Louis Missouri  
[www.ehdconference.org](http://www.ehdconference.org)

### March 2012

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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**ND EHDl Program**

Contact Ashley for more brochures and growth charts at  
[ashley.dhuyvetter@minotstateu.edu](mailto:ashley.dhuyvetter@minotstateu.edu).

# Our Journey

by Stephannie Stiel

*(Continued from page 3)*

I am not a patient person and I don't like to wait for answers or test results. So when they told me that Sophia failed her newborn screening, I asked the nurse every chance I got if they had repeated it yet and if she had passed. The answer was always the same. An appointment was scheduled for two weeks for a recheck - probably fluid they said. I had to put it out of my head and try to focus on my new baby but I couldn't get it out of my head that she didn't startle in the hospital when my cell phone had been on vibrate next to my dinner tray and caused a noise so loud I nearly jumped out of my skin. In fact, she had never startled at all. I started trying to make her startle (banging pots and pans behind her head) and watched her like a hawk for any reaction at all to noise - nothing!

My family assured me that she could hear and they saw her startle and that everything was fine, but I knew better and I knew this was going to be more than fluid. But I was forced to wait. Finally, when Sophia was 3 ½ months old, an ABR was performed. With an official "profound bilateral hearing loss" diagnosis, we quickly took action to schedule appointments in Minneapolis to see if she was a candidate for a cochlear implant and explore other options. Things seemed to go quickly at that point but not without obstacles. After many tests, decisions and appointments, we decided to

proceed with simultaneous bilateral cochlear implants. Sophia's implants were turned on last fall. Last Thanksgiving she had been using her implants for almost two months when she finally said her first intelligible word - "Mama". It was the most beautiful mama I had ever heard and it gave me so much hope.

It has been over a year since I heard her say her first word. Others soon came. It is amazing how much these words mean to us and that they are now the milestones that we live by. We just have to smile when she now yells "get down mommy" when I climb up on the counter to get something high. I felt pride instead of guilt when one of her first words was Eva from the

movie Walle (pronounced just as Walle would EEEEEVAAAAA). Today I reluctantly had to tell her to be quiet in church. After all the effort of getting her to talk, I am telling her not to. Each day brings something new and new words we didn't even know she knew. My husband and Sophia were sweeping the floor and she

was in charge of the dust pan. My husband was telling her to wait and she said "ready, set, go." A phrase we had never heard from her. We are excited to see what each day brings and are so blessed to have Sophia in our lives. We have gotten through all of this with the support of family, friends, and the professionals who work with Sophia who have all been our sounding boards and who are all willing to do what it takes to help Sophia reach her full potential.

*Stephannie is also a co-president of the ND Chapter of Hands & Voices. You can visit the national website at [www.handsandvoices.org](http://www.handsandvoices.org).*



The Stiel Family.



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## What is EHDI?

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EHDI (Early Hearing Detection & Intervention) programs are located in states and are designed to identify infants with hearing loss by universal screening. This allows identified infants to be enrolled in an early intervention program. These intervention programs are designed to help facilitate the development of visual and/or spoken language and the cognitive (thinking) skills needed to succeed academically and socially.

### Chime In!

Check out the most updated ND EHDI website at [www.ndcpd.org/ehdi](http://www.ndcpd.org/ehdi) for information or to meet the staff. If you have questions, find broken links or typos, or have suggestions, please let us know.



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Alternative formats of materials available upon request



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT of HEALTH  
Children's Special Health Services

