



Act Early Response to COVID-19 Project: Year 1

Promising Practice:

Using Deputy Ambassadors to Expand the Reach of LTSAE

Promising Practice: Recruit and train Deputy Ambassadors representing different regions and early childhood programs across a state or territory to develop and implement individualized action plans to expand the reach of *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* (LTSAE) program integration.

Who is involved: A state or territory's Act Early Ambassador, the Response Team, and Deputy Ambassadors worked collaboratively to expand the reach of LTSAE. Each Deputy Ambassador represents a different region in the state, as well as a different type of early childhood program. Collectively, the Deputy Ambassadors support cross-sector and state-wide initiatives to promote early identification of young children with developmental disabilities.

How implementation occurs: Deputy Ambassadors receive technical assistance to develop and implement individualized action plans outlining their planned activities for integration of LTSAE into early childhood programs in their region. Integration includes the promotion and dissemination of LTSAE materials, as well as communication and collaboration with local partners. Deputy Ambassadors receive training to support their knowledge and skills to facilitate integration, and in turn they deliver training to early childhood programs and providers to support the use of LTSAE with families of young children.

Resulting activities included:

- Community events
- Holding resource fairs or other types of outreach, such as drive-through events for families
- Presenting at conferences
- Providing training for early childhood program and systems
- Presenting to councils or coalitions

Response Team Example:

Texas focused on implementing a Deputy Ambassador program within their six Help Me Grow sites and several state agencies (Part C, Pediatric society, Department of Family and Protective Services, Texas Education Agency, Texas Association for the Education of Young Children, & Texas PN-3). Deputy Ambassadors received initial training and support from the state team. The Deputy Ambassadors then began building upon existing partnerships and developing new ones to share materials across a variety of local and state partners to get materials into the hands of families.

Accomplishments

- Deputy Ambassadors have:
 - Successfully shared materials to local communities and statewide stakeholders, and many have been asked to present at conferences
 - Strategically partnered with agencies working with families to distribute materials
 - Reached over 450 early childhood program or system providers and family members

- Help Me Grow sites are utilizing LTSAE materials to support family education and engagement strategies.
- The Texas Pediatric Society is sharing materials with their stakeholders and has several committees that have adopted materials as a strategy within their work.
- Help Me Grow North Texas is beginning the integration of LTSAE materials within all early childhood intervention teams across North Central Texas.
- Department of Family and Protective Services Prevention and Early Intervention is incorporating materials within their grantees' projects and has offered to fund future work.