

Subject: Coalition of Florida Support Groups for Families with Deaf or Hard of Hearing Children

Last June, a group of interested individuals met in Orlando to discuss support throughout the state of Florida for parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. The session was organized by Mark Keith and hosted by Outreach Services at the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind. A copy of the notes from that meeting is attached to this email, along with a "SPOT" analysis showing the strengths, problems, opportunities and threats the group felt we face. We applaud Mark and FSDB for getting this effort off the ground!

The consensus of those in attendance was that we should move forward in an effort to establish a statewide coalition of agencies that sponsor support groups for such families. As two of the participants in this session, we offered to organize and host the next meeting.

You are invited to join us for the next planning session for a Florida coalition of support groups for families with children who have hearing losses. We have reserved a conference room at the Hilton Tampa Airport Westshore, 225 N Lois Avenue, Tampa, Florida, on Thursday, October 19, 2006, from 9 am to 12 pm.

This is in conjunction with the Southeast Regional Institute on Deafness, whose formal sessions begin at 1:30 pm that day. The 2006 SERID has arranged for us to use this space free of charge, and we encourage you to check their Web site ([www.SERID.com](http://www.SERID.com)) to review the excellent speakers and workshop presenters planned for this year's conference. Early registration ends September 15th, and accommodations are available at the hotel at a special rate through September 20th.

We are excited about future possibilities as we explore the advantages of collaborating for better parent support resources throughout the state. Won't you join us in this effort? Please RSVP to [info@familycenterondeafness.org](mailto:info@familycenterondeafness.org) no later than Thursday, October 12, and feel free to contact either of us for any additional information you need. Hoping to see you there!

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