

# We Are Hands & Voices And Guide By Your Side

***Empowering Parents  
to  
Influence & Lead***



**HANDS &  
VOICES™**



# H&V Mission Statement



Hands & Voices is dedicated to supporting families with children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodology.

We're a parent-driven, non-profit organization providing families with the resources, networks, and information they need to improve communication access, social and educational outcomes for their children. Our outreach activities, trainings, parent/professional collaboration, and advocacy efforts are focused on enabling Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing children to reach their highest potential.

# Hands & Voices...



- ***We are a parent-driven, parent/professional collaborative group that supports families without bias about communication modes and methods.***
- ***We believe that there is no one communication choice that will work for all children who are deaf or hard of hearing. We think families need access to good information that's free from a sponsoring agenda or ideology.***

# Hands & Voices...

## what makes us tick



- ***We believe that “What works for your child is what makes the choice right.” ©***
- ***We believe our children have a fundamental human right to communication, regardless of their mode or method of communication.***

# Hands & Voices...

## what makes us tick



- *We get meaningfully involved in early hearing detection and intervention programs, educational advocacy, and other systems to improve them from an end-user perspective. – through highly trained, knowledgeable parents*
- *We exist to help our children/students reach their highest potential.*

# Hands & Voices supports and represents...



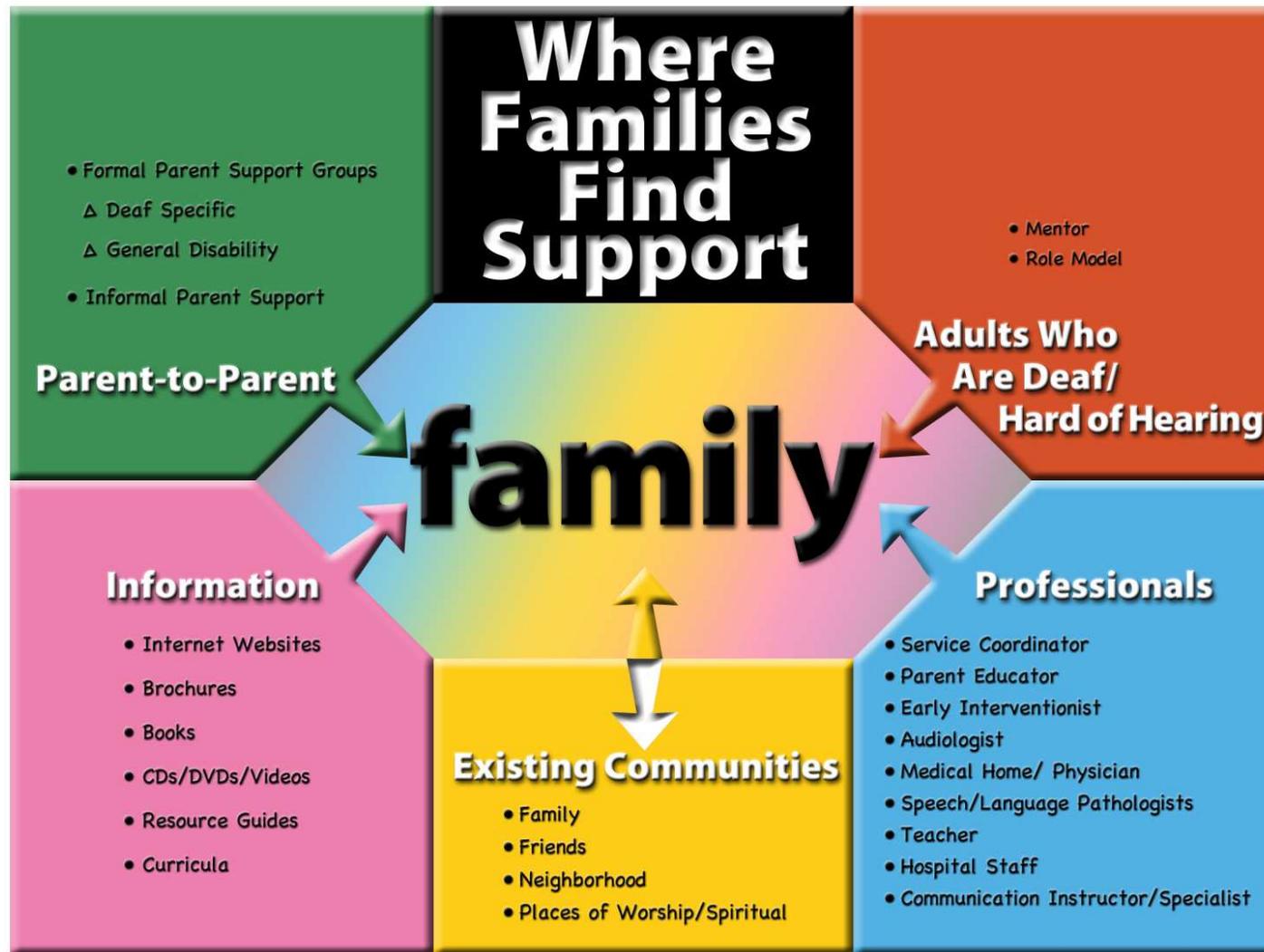
- Kids with mild, moderate, severe, profound, unilateral, conductive, auditory neuropathy, congenital, sensorineural, acquired, deaf +, and age progressive hearing loss or deafness
- Kids who speak, kids who sign, kids who do both, kids who cue, kids who are aided or not aided, and/or kids who have cochlear implants
- The families of these children and the professionals who work with them in all capacities

# Why do families need Hands & Voices?



**95% of all deaf children are born to hearing families (Mitchell & Karchmer, 2004)**

**90% of these families have no background in deafness or connection to the deaf community. (Center for Demographic Studies, 1984)**



*Hands & Voices presents...*





GUIDE BY  
YOUR SIDE

- A program based on direct feedback from families sharing their opinions on what is most helpful to them: **direct support from experienced, trained parents of deaf/hh children.**
- Modeled after H&V unbiased support philosophy and replicable in early intervention systems.



# GBYS Programs

## 18 GBYS Implemented Programs

- Arizona: Jeanne Hollabaugh
- Colorado : Janet DesGeorges, Sara Kennedy
- British Columbia, Canada: Teresa Kazemir
- Delaware: Julie Johnson
- Georgia
- Illinois: Carrie Balian
- Indiana: Lisa Kovacs
- Iowa: Susan Hagerty
- Kentucky: Susan Francke
- Louisiana – Mariah Ranko
- Maine: Darlene Freeman
- Michigan: Denise Farrand
- Minnesota: Candace Lindow Davies
- New Mexico
- Nevada

- Pennsylvania: Anne Gaspich
- Oregon: Helen Cotton-Leiser
- Texas: Debbie Kopp
- Washington: Christine Griffin
- Wisconsin: Laurie Nelson
- Virginia: Bailey Vincent Clark

8 GBYS START-Ups  
(Has shown interest)

- Arkansas
- Idaho
- North Dakota
- Ohio
- Utah

## **Guide By Your Side**™

is a Hands & Voices program that embodies our strong values for direct peer connections and networking.

It promotes self efficacy and hinders isolation by exploring our common bond, shared experiences, challenges, wisdom and insight.



# What do GBYS Guides do?

## Guides Do...

- . Know how to share their personal story concisely & appropriately
- . Provide unbiased, non-judgmental emotional support
- . Go with the family's agenda
- . Share resources and information in a comprehensive, equitable manner
- . Maintain ethical standards and actively develop their knowledge-base to help families make informed decisions.

## Guides Don't...

- . Sway a family's opinion through bias
- . Manipulate a family towards a decision
- . Air their personal issues & put themselves in the spotlight
- . Provide intervention or professional services
- . Give medical advice or share medical/clinical opinions about services or providers

# Program Elements Oregon

## Oregon EHDI contracts with Parent Guides and H&V to:

### Parents as “Follow-Up” Support

- Reduce the risk of loss to follow up by connecting Parent Guides to families with babies who do not pass the newborn hearing screening.

### Parents as Point-of-First Contact

- Provide timely parent-to-parent support at the time of confirmation of hearing loss.
- Offer specific support and resource dissemination about deafness/hearing loss

### Parent support after EHDI

- Assure continuity to families by providing support throughout a child’s life, especially at times of transitions.

Support families through the early intervention years by combining an experienced parent’s insight with knowledge of early intervention and educational systems. GBYS programs can also support families with older children and teenagers.

# Program Elements...



## **Parents as Change Agents**

- Influence and improve the systems
- Representation and collaboration

## **GBYS D/HH Guides**

- Allows parents to possibly “see the future” for their child
- Provides children with an opportunity to identify with an adult
- Allows families to hear real life experiences from a person with hearing loss
- Exposure to D/HH adults can provide families and D/HH children/youth with invaluable perspectives that come from personal experience.
- GBYS does not “proscribe” what a DHH Guide does for/with a family...that directive comes from the family—based on what they want from a Guide.

# GBYS Program Goals



Goal 1: provide parents with the opportunity to **establish a supportive relationship** with an experienced parent of a child who is d/hh soon after they learn of their child's hearing loss.



*Photo by Widex*

## GBYS Program Goals



Goal 2: Provide an understanding of the unique needs of infants who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Goal 3: Provide unbiased information regarding communication options.

Goal 4: Link families to resources locally, regionally, and statewide

Goal 5: Ensure that families are linked to their county Birth to 3 Program or local school district



# GBYS Program Goals



Goal 6: Ensure that families are connected to other parent to parent resources

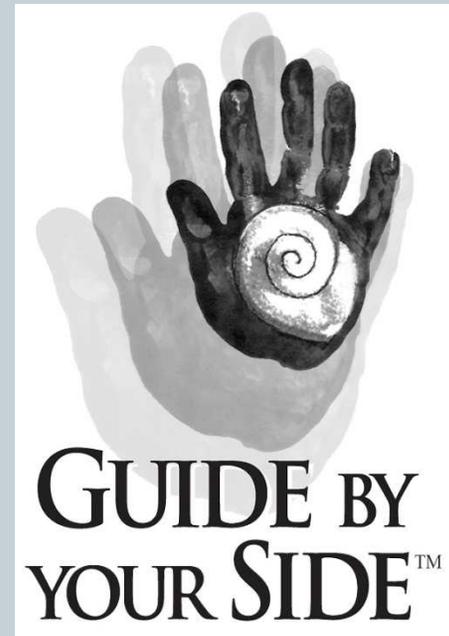
Goal 7: Ensure that families have an opportunity to create context for their own child's life by connecting to Adult Role Models who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.

Goal 8: Ensure that families' voices are heard in the systems that are serving them.

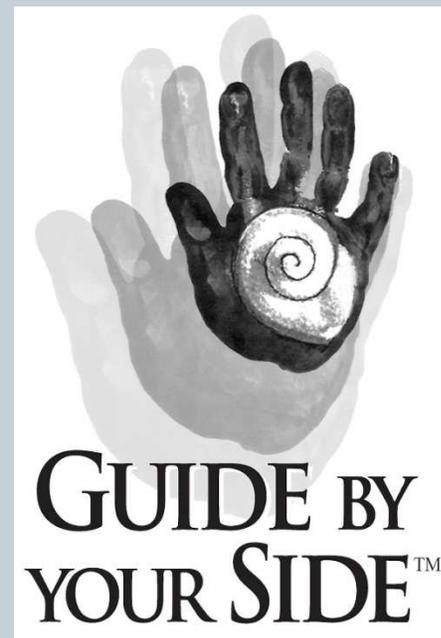
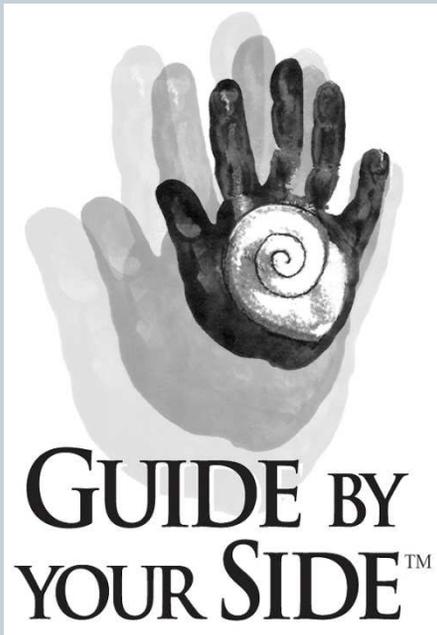
“The Guide talked to us like hearing loss was normal.

I want to be like that.

I just knew after talking with the Guide that everything was going to be okay.”



Thank you!



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