

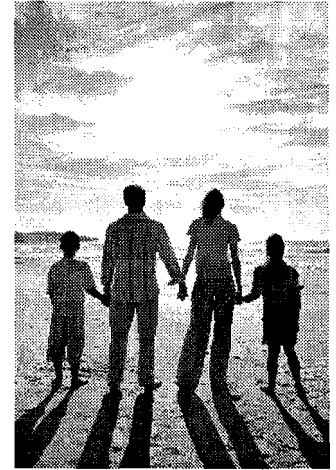


OUR MISSION:

We are an organization dedicated to non-biased support to families who have children who are deaf or hard of hearing. We will provide activities and information statewide to parents and professionals that may include outreach events, educational seminars, advocacy, parent-to-parent networking, and newsletters. We believe that families will make the best choices for their child if they have access to good information and support. Our organization represents people who use varying approaches to communication and assistive technology— from American Sign Language to cochlear implants.

Across the State...

Tired of all the activities for families of children with hearing loss being on the east side of the state? Well, hello from the southwest side of the state!! In the Kalamazoo area, a H&V regional group has been started. Our regional group is for the entire family. The idea behind starting a regional group was to allow parents the opportunity to get together and share conversation, information, stories, and experiences. Also, we encourage parents to bring their whole family so the kids can play together outside of the classroom. (They really enjoy it!) We want to meet new parents and families. If you are interested in attending one of our meetings or fun activities on the west side of the state please send your contact information and we will keep you informed on our growing group. Send your info to: Becky Mucha 51261 Parkville Rd., Three Rivers, MI 49093 or feel free to contact Becky - Email: bmucha9844@comcast.net PH/ VP: (517) 335-8273



Guide-By-Your-Side (GBYS)

Do you know a family that could benefit from direct parent to parent support from an experienced parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child? The Guide-By-Your-Side (GBYS) program is affiliated with the National H&V organization and offers parent support throughout early hearing detection and intervention years, at times of important transition or on demand as families feel the need for support. Parent Guides are able to bring their direct experience, specialized knowledge, and personal compassion to their role while making the family's needs their prime agenda. GBYS Parent Guides offer:

- * Timely emotional support at the time of screening and/ or confirmation of hearing loss
- * Direct parent/ peer support and networking
- * Information and resource sharing specific to deaf/ hard of hearing issues including insights on navigating the systems from a parent perspective
- * Support to families throughout the early intervention years by combining an experienced parent's insight with knowledge of early intervention and educational systems
- * Continuity of support to families throughout a child's life, especially at times of transitions.

If you are interested in having a Parent Guide visit with you and your family or if you would like more info about the program, please contact Kylie Sharp: PH/ VP: (517) 335-8273 or email: sharpk@michigan.gov .



GUIDE BY YOUR SIDE



Interested in submitting an article? If so, please send it via email to: info@mihandsandvoices.org. We would love to hear from you!

Michigan H&V List-Serve for Members



Do you want to meet local families and learn about upcoming events? Join the Michigan Hands & Voices Yahoo List-Serve. It is a wonderful way to get connected directly to other Michigan H&V members. You can send and receive emails that provide you with a wonderful opportunity to give or receive direct and quick support. Sign up today, it's quick, free and easy! Just go to - <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/handsandvoices-mi>

Michigan Hands & Voices is partially funded by a grant through Michigan Department of Community Health



News/Events

New Board Positions

MI H&V recently had nominations for positions on the Board of Directors. We would like to welcome some new faces to the Board of Directors and graciously thank those that served in the past. Shelley Cates (Oakland County) and Becky Mucha (Kalamazoo) are taking on the Co-Director positions. Kylie Sharp is taking on the Director's position and Kristy Medes is maintaining her role as Treasurer, while former MI H&V Director, Amy Lester, has returned as Secretary. We would like to recognize and thank Linda Wright for her outstanding and devoted role as former Secretary and we are thankful that she is remaining on the Advisory Board! Also new to the Advisory Board is Lindsay Potter (Kalamazoo).

We always welcome new faces to our Board. If you are interested please email - info@mihandsandvoices.org or go to our website (www.mihandsandvoices.org) to read our bylaws to see where your skills could fit our organization.



MSU's American Sign Language Living/ Learning Option will open for the first time in August 2008. Housed in the newly renovated Snyder-Phillips residence hall, the program is an option for students from all majors who have some proficiency in American Sign Language (ASL). The students will live together and use American Sign Language during daily communication. They will also study and engage in activities focused on ASL and Deaf culture.

For more information about the American Sign Language Living/ Learning Option contact Marta Belsky (ASL Coordinator in Counseling, Educational Psychology & Special Education) at belsky@msu.edu.

MI H&V Executive Board Members

Director - Kylie Sharp
Co-Director - Shelley Cates
Co-Director - Becky Mucha
Treasurer - Kristy Medes
Secretary - Amy Lester



MI H&V Annual Picnic

Don't miss out on our annual end of summer tradition. Join us, August 23, 2008 from 11am to 3pm for family fun. There will be sports, food and social activities for everyone. Park Details - Rayner Park, Ingham County, 730 East Ash St. Mason, MI 48854. Pre-registration/contact info: info@mihandsandvoices.org or call Kristy at: 517-694-3079 (See our flyer in this mailing)

Hands & Voices Worldwide

Kylie Sharp and Sonya Adams just returned from the National H&V conference in Breckenridge, CO. What an event! Look forward to an article in the Fall newsletter, recapping their experiences. It's clear that H&V is a strong leader in supporting families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. In the USA, H&V now has 19 approved state chapters, and 17 provisional state start-up chapters! They have also expanded internationally by their approved chapter in British Columbia, Canada and a provisional start-up chapter in the Philippines. Other countries have expressed a keen interest in starting their own chapters, including South Africa, Italy and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands. Congratulations Hands & Voices for being a leader in our communities!

Hands & Voices Values:

- * Non-Biased support with equitable presentation and respect for all languages/ modes/ methods
- * Parents working as advisors within systems to provide "end user" perspective
- * Educational advocacy support regardless of the language/ mode/ method
- * Access to comprehensive information about language and communication options, new technologies, & research in all aspects of the field.
- * Exposure to adults who are deaf or hard of hearing, modeling diverse language and communication modes/ methods
- * The right of each child to meaningfully access an excellent education and reach his/ her highest potential regardless of the language/ mode/ method of communication

