



MINNESOTA
HANDS &
VOICES™

FOCUS

supporting families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing

Community Impact of Minnesota Hands & Voices' Cultural Parent Guides

More families from different countries and cultures are choosing to live in the great state of Minnesota. Statistically a percentage of these families will have a child who is deaf or hard of hearing (DHH). Thankfully MNH&V Cultural Parent Guides are ready to serve!

MNH&V Cultural Parent Guides are themselves parents of a child who is DHH, specially trained to be a resource of unbiased information, to assist parent-to-parent networking, and most importantly, to reach out to families who have a child who is newly identified as DHH. Cultural Parent Guides not only share the experience of having a child who is DHH, but also share the same cultural experiences and same language. This level of support can break down the barriers some families may face and helps them to gain access to resources and services their child who is DHH might need to reach their full potential.

"MNH&V has long awaited the day when we could deliver services to families from diverse cultural communities in a more direct, meaningful and effective way. With additional funding from MN Department of Health in November of 2013, we were able to add three Parent Guides: one for the SE Asian Communities, NE African Communities and the Spanish-speaking Communities," explains Candace Lindow-Davies, "Witnessing these three parents at work, connecting with their families in ways we could never have in the past, is nothing short of amazing."



2014 MNH&V Annual Family Picnic metro area.

From the start the MNH&V Cultural Parent Guides have had an impact in our community. Hosting cultural specific events and activities, in addition to raising awareness of the importance of hearing screening, early intervention, and the services available through MNH&V. Below are just a few of the highlights documented to date:

Spanish-Speaking Communities:

- 22 families referred in 2014
- MNH&V Spanish-Speaking on Facebook www.facebook.com/ManosyVocesdeMN
- MNH&V Spanish-Speaking Parent Guide participated in a call-in show on Spanish Radio Rey 630 am
- Spanish-Speaking Family Get-Together with a guest speaker from ARC
- MNH&V Spanish-Speaking Parent Guide participated in H&V HQ forum about how to better deliver services to Spanish-speaking families all over the US and abroad.

NE African Communities:

- 23 families referred in 2014
- Hosted an Educational Advocacy Workshop with a guest speaker from PACER Center.
- Somali families participated the 2014 ASTra training through an interpreter.
- Somali families referred to the Deaf Mentor Family Program

SE Asian Communities:

- 26 families referred in 2014
- Hmong Radio Show, KPNP, Peter Xiong, radio host, Kou Vang, MNH&V Parent Guide, Kay Lee, public school nurse, and Dr. Pao Vang, the only Hmong Otolaryngologist in the United States.
- Collaborated with Metro Deaf School for a Hmong New Year Family Event.
- MNH&V Hmong-Speaking Get-Together with guest speaker, Diana van Deusen, presenting Audiologist Basics

Families from cultural communities were also well represented at non-culturally specific MNH&V events. A total of 196 people who identify with a cultural community attended the 2014 Metro Family Picnic and the 2015 Family Roller Skating Event. MNH&V had provided four language interpreters, and a Spanish and Somali interpreter. Candace comments, "Wow. I was just blown away by that number. Having families feel comfortable enough to come out for all events has been a goal of ours and goodness, I think we're succeeding!"

MNH&V Lending Library Closed

MNH&V Lending Library has been discontinued due to low activity. “We are finding families have access to materials through early interventionists, and other libraries, like Merriam Park library in the Metro, the captioned media program and the MN Resource Center library. Also, families are able to access much more on-line as well,” explained Candace Lindow-Davies, MNH&V Manger.

However, the library materials were donated, distributed, and will continue to be accessible to families with children who are DHH through two organizations; the Deaf Mentor Family Program and to the MN Department of Education’s Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

“MNH&V is eager to put these materials in the hands of educators and parents who need access to sign language and cued speech DVD’s and books, and other materials about Deaf Culture, technology, research and parenting,” said Candace.

Other Library Resources:

MN Resource Libraries (MNRL) at the Minnesota Department of Education is a statewide library providing information and resources to help families and educators meet the educational needs of Minnesota children who are DHH, visually impaired or deaf/blind. Find the MNRL catalog at: mn-state-academy.follettdestiny.com

Described and Captioned Media Program has over 4,000 free-loan described and captioned media titles available to registered members, and members can watch media online or order a DVD copy to be shipped to them. For more information go to: www.dcmp.org



MNH&V High Five Award is an opportunity to publicly thank a teacher or professional or someone who does good work on behalf of children who are DHH. Nominate a parent, teacher, interpreter, provider, advocate, role model who is DHH, child who is DHH —anyone who inspires you!

Now through July 1st MNH&V is accepting nominations. To make a nomination simple reply to the questions below in 200 words or less:

- 1) What has the nominee done above and beyond what is typical for their role or profession?
- 2) How has this individual made an impact on a child and/or the community? Please include at least one specific example of their service.

Email your response and the nominee’s name to mnhv@lifetrack-mn.org. Please include “High Five Award” in the subject line. One nomination per family and/or individual per year.

MNH&V forwards submissions to the Advisory Board to select one or more winners to be announced at the metro MNH&V Annual Family Picnic on August 6th, 2015. Separate arrangements will be made for greater Minnesota High Five Award recipients.

Raising Readers: MNH&V Literacy Event

Free for all multicultural families with children who are DHH are welcome!

Saturday, May 16th, 2015, from 1:30 to 4:00 PM at North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Ave. N., Minneapolis, MN.

Learn, meet other families, meet adults who are DHH, and meet MNH&V’s staff.

Presentation by reading specialist, Gina Aguirre-Larson, ESL Lead Teacher/ DHH Teacher and Diane Dee-Tourdot, DHH Teacher.

Please RSVP by Tuesday, May 12th by phone 651-265-2357 or email MNHV@lifetrack-mn.org or online www.mnhandsandvoices.org

Meet and Greet Networking Meeting

Networking meeting for service providers and community leaders involved with individuals who are deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing sponsored by Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services (DHHS).

On Tuesday, June 2, 2015, from 10:30 am to noon at the DHHS Metro Office Golden Rule Building, Suite 105, 85 E 7th Place, St. Paul, MN

This time will be used to identify new services and programs and obtain feedback and support.

Sign language interpreters and CART services will be provided. Requests for other accommodations must be received no later than Monday, May 11, 2015. Send your request to dhhs.metro@state.mn.us

For more information email at marie.koehler@state.mn.us

In Your Corner



January of 1996, my husband and I sat in a dark movie theater with our nine month old baby on our lap. Our first born had been just identified as profoundly deaf and fitted for two hearing aids, and needless to say, we felt a bit desperate. We had heard about the movie “Mr. Holland’s Opus” and when we learned that the plot revolved around a main character with had a child who was deaf, we were compelled to go.

Not all of our MNH&V’s community might remember this movie or were even alive when it came out. (You really should see it or watch it again!) Before the advent of Newborn Hearing Screening, children were often late identified as deaf or hard of hearing. A pivotal scene in the movie shows mother and child at the local parade, child sleeping peacefully in his stroller. The fire engine goes roaring by, blasting the horn, while the camera slows down and everyone cowers, covering their ears from the noise... children crying in fear. Meanwhile, the little boy in the stroller sleeps on, and the mother knows immediately... something is different. Sitting in the theater, bouncing my son and his new hearing aids on my lap, I start to quietly sob and continue to do so for a good part of the movie.

Fast forward to last weekend, my family was relaxing after a busy Holiday celebration. Looking for a way to unwind, I flipped through cable and happened upon... yup! “Mr. Holland’s Opus.” 20 years have gone by since I saw this film. So much has changed or, had it?

Our extended family watched intently, my daughter picked up immediately on the storyline when the camera panned to the sleeping child in the stroller. “He’s deaf! You didn’t tell me this movie was about a deaf kid!” My mother-in-law started to cry, and I found myself wiping away tears, remembering the emotion of the first time

I saw the movie. Other scenes were hard to watch and my mother-in-law cried harder.

Another pivotal moment in the movie was when the father and son got into a heated argument, and it was apparent that the two of them lacked a common language, forcing the mother to interpret. Finally, the argument ended with the son saying something the father didn’t understand, and stormed off. The father looks incredulous at his wife and asked, “What did he say?”

There was a dramatic long pause in the film, and out of the corner of my family room, my sweet, somewhat naïve 20 year old son said, “He called his father a @@##\$!” Every member of my family turned to look at my son, shocked but somehow... impressed with his accurate translation. (Quickly confirmed by the captioning that followed!) But what happened next struck me even more. My sweet, quite prim and proper relatives all proceeded to get lessons about how to sign those words, being carefully corrected in the subtle nuances of the language for accuracy. And I had to stop and laugh and wipe away more tears from how funny this whole scene was to me... 20 years later. My little baby boy bouncing on my lap was now instructing my family on the proper use of swear words. And for some reason, it made me think that we really have come so far. Not that I’m entirely thrilled that my son knows and is quick to teach others this particular skill, but that we all have come so far along in our journey to be at this place where we do understand each other and can share our worlds with one another.

My in-law’s left the next morning and shared that they had a better appreciation of what our life has been like over the years. And for that too, I am grateful. Hoping the same understanding for all our families out there.

Transition

Map It: What Comes Next

Map It: is a free on-line training designed for transition-aged students who are DHH. The training uses three questions to develop self-determination skills:

1. Who Am I?
2. What Do I Want?
3. How Do I Get There?

Videos in ASL, English, written transcripts, self-assessments, and a series of interactive questions help students to set goals and develop strategies to achieve them.

Request a free educator’s guide at: www.pepnet.org/training/mapit

Find, Rate, & Share Accessible Places

People with disabilities now have a new tool to help find accessible places. AXSmap is an app and website that allows people to rate and review the accessibility of local restaurants, hotels, and other businesses, and find accessible places reviewed by others.



Sign up for an account, tell others in your area to do the same, and start building a reliable resource for accessible places.

Find AXSmap at: www.axsmap.com

Thanks for your contribution!

We rely on your generous support to build better lives for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Make a tax-deductible donation today.

DONATE



2015 Fourth Annual Walk

Saturday, June 6, 2015, 9:30 am to 1:00 pm at the University of Minnesota Arboretum, 3675 Arboretum Drive, Chaska, MN. Individuals or teams can choose a half-mile, two mile, or three mile walk through the beautiful Arboretum to raise funds for Lions Children's Hearing Center.

Children ages 12 and under get in free. With a \$25.00 registration/donation adults will receive:

- FREE entrance and parking
- FREE event t-shirt
- FREE lunch (including root-beer floats)
- Entertainment by the Teddy Bear Band
- Lots of children's activities & prizes

Register for the 2015 Fourth Annual Walk at: secure.qgiv.com/event/604228/register/

For more information contact Jim Bremer at 612.750.2370 or email jpb@5mhf.org

Cochlear Baha 5 Smallest Sound Processor Plus

People who are deaf in one ear, the Baha 5 Sound Processor are the smallest bone conduction sound processor. Plus, with new technology users enjoy clearer, crisper sound even in noisy environments.

The Cochlear Baha 5 takes technology a step further by introducing an app for Apple hand-held devices. Users can customize the sound processor directly from iPhone, save programs to specific locations, adjust treble and bass, and locate a misplaced sound processor.

Cochlear website www.multivu.com

Parent Education Workshop

Moog Center for Deaf Education is hosting a workshop, June 16-20, 2015 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm cost is \$250. Located at the Moog Center, 12300 South Forty Drive, St. Louis, MO.

This workshop is for parents and their children who are DHH. Each day is packed full of activities for the children and information for the parents. Enrollment is limited, so make your reservations early. To register go to www.moogcenter.org

For more information please contact Betsy Moog Brooks at 314-692-7172 or bbrooks@moogcenter.org

Donation Opportunity for Arts Programing

Creating Language Through Arts is an arts program for students who are DHH. Three artists co-teach at Four Seasons Elementary School in St Paul. Angela Olson, Liza Sylvestre, and Canae Weiss come from different artistic disciplines, as well as each having different hearing levels. Students get to work on art from puppet-making, to painting, and dance.

In addition to teaching Angela Olson, Liza Sylvestre, and Canae Weiss also organize and manage the MN Annual DHH Youth Art Contest. Last year artists from various Minnesota schools in grades Pre-K to 8th exhibited over 55 artworks.

Creating Language Through Arts is excited to have received a \$10,000 grant from the Metro Regional Arts Council. However, receiving the grant requires a match grant of 25%, totaling \$2,500, by May 15th. Donations to help them meet this goal can be made at their GiveMN page: www.givemn.org/fundraiser/creating-language-through-arts54fdadc30e20c

Blog for Creating Language Through Arts: www.creatinglanguagethrougharts.blogspot.com

I am MNH&V



Mycie Vue, MNH&V Parent Guide SE Asian Communities

Introducing Mycie Vue, MNH&V Cultural Parent Guide for SE Asian Communities.

In Mycie's words, "I would like to thank, MNH&V, for allowing me to be a part of the Team, to serve with Hmong parents who have a child who is deaf or hard of hearing. I see that this is a very important and good resource to help parents and their children. The reason that I believe this is because I have two hard of hearing children and I wished they had some kind of help like this for me when they were young. I'm so glad that there is such a program like this to help the parents and their families today."

Mycie Vue is looking forward to sharing her experiences of raising children who are hard of hearing with our MNH&V families.

White House Receptionist, Leah Katz-Hernandez

This February, Leah Katz-Hernandez, 27, was appointed as the White House Receptionist. Leah, who is deaf along with an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, both sit at their desk right outside the Oval Office and accomplish all the day-to-day activities of her position. A few of Leah's duties include greeting and collecting cell phones from people coming to meet President Barack Obama, answering the West Wing phone, overseeing the Roosevelt Room and the White House guest book.

"The White House is really a model for accessibility for people with disabilities—and especially for deaf people," said Leah

A Connecticut native, Leah Katz-Hernandez, was born deaf. Her father, Ricardo Hernandez, is hearing and a former professional interpreter and her mother, Lizabeth Katz, is deaf and a social worker for a nonprofit agency. Leah graduated from Maryland School for the Deaf and entered Gallaudet University in the fall of 2005. As a freshman, she was elected president of the graduating class of 2009. In 2006, Leah became actively involved in the "Unity" protests when Jane Kelleher Fernandes was appointed as Dr. I. King Jordan's successor as president of Gallaudet University.

"It was a powerful experience for me. I was amazed at the power, energy, and passion of the Deaf community rallying for what we believed was right. Even though the odds were against us, we won, and we made an impact. I realized that I could and did make a difference," she said.

As a senior at Gallaudet University majoring in Government, Leah applied to and got accepted into the Washington Center's Presidential Academic Seminar, an intensive educational program for students to explore the intersection of current affairs, politics, international relations and society. After graduation



Leah Katz-Hernandez

Leah worked on political campaigns, at the U.S. Congress and in the nonprofit sector, then was appointed as first lady Michelle Obama's press assistant and research associate before accepting her new position as the White House Receptionist.

"It's a fantastic opportunity and also to show that deaf people can do anything," Leah said.

Along with her government career, Leah has been an active supporter of disability rights. The website Disability.gov reports she gained national attention during the 2008 presidential election with her blog The Deaf Perspective. She examined the U.S. political process through a series of video blogs in ASL and emphasized the importance of being an informed voter.

"It is a great responsibility to be here as a deaf person and I feel very proud of the opportunities that have been given to me." Leah Katz-Hernandez.

ASTra Videos Available

In 2014 MNH&V hosted the first-ever ASTra Educational Advocacy Training. This provided parents of children who are DHH with a workshop specifically addressing the needs of these learners. National experts from H&V HQ helped parents develop their advocacy skills and increase their confidence.

ASTra Educational Advocacy Training Videos are captioned, ASL interpreted, and voiced. To gain password-protected access, please contact the MNH&V Parent Guide in your area or by phone at 866-346-4543 or by email at MNHV@lifetrack-mn.org.

Cued American English Summer Classes

Cued American English Summer Classes sponsored by Cued Speech Association of Minnesota on Monday & Tuesday, August 17 & 18, 2015, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Located at Gideon Pond Elementary School, Burnsville, MN. Cost per class is \$75.

Beginning Cue Class will introduce the handshapes and vowel placements of Cued American English. Participants will leave this class with an introduction to cueing single words, short phrases, and sentences.

Cued Speech Skills Class is for those who have already learned the handshapes and placements for Cued American English. This class will sharpen your skills as you continue to work towards developing fluency.

Transliterator Cue Class is for those who are working towards continued fluency in transliterator skills. Activity will be primarily through focused skill development and large group discussions.

Questions or for accommodation requests contact Sarah Druley at 763-502-6737 or email at info@cuedspeechminnesota.org or Cued Speech Association of Minnesota at www.cuedspeechminnesota.org.



The View from Greater Minnesota



Save the Date Popsicles in the Park

Join us for Popsicles in the Park this summer in central Minnesota. Three dates are scheduled on for Tuesdays, June 9th, July 14th, and August 11th, 2015. Specific locations are tentatively planned for Sauk Centre, Buffalo, and St. Cloud. FREE for families with children who are DHH, all ages welcome. This is an opportunity to network with other families with children who are DHH, to meet adult role models who are DHH, enjoy a Popsicle, and have some fun!

Look for details in the MNH&V SOURCE weekly emails. To RSVP contact Brenda Hommerding, MNH&V Parent Guide for Central MN, mnhv@lifetrack-mn.org or 1-800-908-6675.

61st Biennial Conference

Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens (MADC) is a non-profit organization that advocates for and promotes a better quality of life and social wellness for deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing citizens.

“Expect. Employ. Empower.” is the theme for the 2015 MADC 2-day conference, October 16-17, at Calvary Community Church in St. Cloud, MN.

For more information go to:
madconference.wordpress.com

2015 Camps

Sannah Foundation DHH soccer camp

July 20-24 1:00-3:30, grades K-6
Phalen Rec Center in St Paul
www.thesannehfoundation.org

Camp Courage North Deaf & Hard of Hearing

July 26-31, ages 7-18
Lake George, MN
truefriends.org/camp/

Haven Acres

Haven Acres is a faith-based youth ranch for youth ages 9-17 located in Burnsville, MN.

Weekly Program

Mondays, Tuesdays, or Thursdays
90-minute sessions are available. Children will do various chores on the farm and ride horses guided by a caring mentor. Interpreters are available for select session times. Space is limited.

For Weekly Program registration email: info@havenacresmn.org

Friday Day Camp Program

Fridays, 9:00 am to noon, includes horse instruction, ranch chores, craft time, snack time, and a Bible lesson. Weather permitting there will be opportunities to work with the horses each session. Space is limited.

All programming is offered free of charge to participants.

For more information or to register your child visit:
www.havenacresmn.org

Behavioral Health Service

National Deaf Academy (NDA) Behavioral Health System is a residential treatment center for children, adolescents and adults who are deaf, hearing, and hard of hearing. NDA serves individuals with psychiatric and behavioral problems in a safe, home-like environment free from communication barriers. Treatment programs are customized for each resident based on their specific needs including treatment for:

- Impulsivity and antisocial behaviors
- Attention-Deficit Disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Anxiety disorders
- Mood disorders
- Psychotic disorders
- Developmental delays
- Communication disorders
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Autism
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Drug/Substance abuse

In addition to the psychiatric treatment program, NDA provides a year-round instructional program for grades 1-12 based on each student's IEP objectives.

For information contact Kumar Singh by videophone at 352.385.7050 or e-mail at kumar.singh@uhsinc.com

Signed Stories Book Bundles for Schools 1-6

ITV Signed Stories apps are specially designed for children who are DHH. The apps have animated stories told in American Sign Language with supporting captions and narration. Each app has a video dictionary and the stories come with two interactive language-learning games.

Signed Stories Book Bundles for Schools 1-6 have been developed for schools that buy apps through Apple's Volume Purchase Program offering a 50% discount to schools buying 20 or more of each app.

Find the apps at: <http://ow.ly/ewj98>

Cultural Parent Guides, In Their Own Words ...

“Being the Spanish-Speaking Parent Guide has been such an inspiring role because there has been a lot of thought put into doing our jobs in a caring, human, and effective way. Being a native Spanish speaker myself, I get to use my own experience and cultural intuition and even learn more about the strengths and beauty of my own culture,” wrote Judith Cavazos-Beal, Parent Guide for Spanish-Speaking Communities.

“I do Parent Guide work at MNH&V because someone helped me, and now I want to help other parents. When you help someone, you can SEE that you’re making a difference and that you touch the lives of families. That’s why I’m here. It’s not for my own benefit, it’s because I feel called to help others in a critical time in their lives. Sometimes I give emotional support to my clients by just listening to their story and tell them that I relate to their story. But I also make a lot of connections to important resources and reinforce that parents CAN do this,” wrote Sahara Aden, Parent Guide NE African Communities, “Oh! I forgot to mention feedback from several clients. They thanked me for all the help I offer and appreciated my hard work. In return, they make du’a or supplication or invocation for me. Asking Allah to bless my family. That is so powerful to me, and it’s the best gift ever that I will receive from anyone.”

“Moob tshuaj Moob tshaub’ (lit. Hmong medicine, Hmong cook/prepare) is a nice way of saying that we take care of our own because we know ourselves best, and in a negative sense is saying, ‘None of your business’ and we don’t go to outside ourselves for help. Working with MNH&V as a Cultural Guide forces us to bring these two ideas together. We have to take care of our community and also go beyond our culture and traditions for the necessary resources and help,” wrote Kou Vang, Parent Guide for SE Asian Communities.

Minnesota Hands & Voices Cultural Event Photos



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supporting families
with children
who are deaf and
hard of hearing

Minnesota Hands & Voices is a program of Lifetrack

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Sign up for our weekly mass emails
<http://www.mnhandsandvoices.org/news-events/newsletter-signup.aspx>

2015 Annual ★ Minnesota Hands & Voices ★ Metro

FAMILY PICNIC

for families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing

Free for the Family:

- ★ Dinner
- ★ Fun Games
- ★ Entertainment
- ★ Face Painting
- ★ Door Prizes!

Thursday,
August 6th

5:00-8:30 pm
(rain or shine)

Como Park
Midway Pavilion

RSVP: Before
Monday, July 27th