



MINNESOTA
HANDS &
VOICES™

FOCUS

Supporting families with children who are deaf & hard of hearing

Minnesota Transition Guide for Teachers, Parents, and Students

Parents and educators work together on a common goal for children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) to grow up to become independent, happy, and contributing members of our society. At a young age it is difficult to visualize them living on their own, managing their own finances, and making life decisions. Seeing beyond receiving a high school diploma can be a stretch. However, it is essential for these children to leave high school with an awareness of his or her learning needs and the capacity to acquire the accommodations they will need to continue their education and/or find employment.

The Minnesota Transition Guide for Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing was developed to prepare transition-aged students for adulthood. The guide lists transition areas that should be addressed in their Individualized Education Program (IEP), including employment, postsecondary education or training, and independent living. It is not an exhaustive list and not all the items listed apply to each student still it is a useful tool to start the transition conversations. The recommendation is students in 9th grade or earlier should start attending their IEP meetings along with their parents and the rest of the IEP team to go through the guide to help set transition IEP goals.

Transition

The Guide offers a list of possible transition activities with a timeline starting as early as 4 to 5 years, 2 years, and the last year before leaving the school system.

A few examples of transition activities from the 4 to 5 years section of the timeline are:

- Identify personal learning styles and the necessary accommodations to be a successful learner and worker.
- Be able to explain your disability and the accommodations you need.
- Learn to communicate effectively your interests, preferences, and needs.
- Learn and practice informed decision making skills.
- Investigate assistive technology tools that can increase community involvement and employment opportunities.
- Broaden your experiences with community activities and expand your friendships.
- Pursue and use local transportation options outside of family.
- Identify and begin learning skills necessary for independent living.

Minnesota Transition Guide, continue on page 2.



The High Five Award is an opportunity for Parents to publicly thank those who do more than expected on behalf of children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH).

Parents are invited to nominate another parent, teacher, interpreter, medical provider, community advocate, role model who is DHH, child who is DHH—anyone who inspires your family!

Now through July 1st, MNH&V is accepting one nomination per family from parents. Details on how parents can submit a nomination found on page 2, MNH&V High Five Award.

MNH&V EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Parent Guide for the Cultural Spanish-Speaking Community

MNH&V is looking for a Parent Guide to continue to serve families in our Spanish-Speaking Community. Candidates should be fluent in Spanish and eager to support other parents like themselves with a child who is deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing. The program for the Spanish-Speaking Community is established, but in need of an individual to continue to provide emotional support, unbiased information, referral resources, and connect parents to other parents.

The Parent Guide for the MNH&V Spanish-speaking community is responsible for organizing events, sustaining, and reporting activities related to these events. This person represents MNH&V in the community and participates in family support activities. The Spanish-speaking community requires the candidate to be fluent in Spanish. Flexible work schedule, 10 hours a week.

For a full outline of duties and application go to: www.lifetrack-mn.org/about/careers/parent-guide-10-hours-week

Minnesota Transition Guide, continued from page 1.

The guide has specific tasks on the list to consider for IEP goals for students in their senior year of high school for example:

- Register to vote.
- Lead your IEP meeting by stating your plans for the future, asking for support where needed and taking a lead in the decision making.
- Explore legal status about decision-making prior to the age of majority. Investigate/consider guardianship, power of attorney, conservatorship, etc.
- Begin to utilize academic accommodations that are more in line with what is used in college.

The idea is to start early! Work with your child and the rest of the IEP team to figure out which transition items should be added as an IEP goal. Be aware of transition activities that naturally happen over time and can easily checked off. Create opportunities for the transition activities you feel will likely need to be repeated and practiced. Include your child in discussions about which items are the most relevant to their interests and needs. Share with your transition-aged child your own experiences and real-life examples of becoming an adult.

Depending on where you are on the parenting road, adulthood for your child who is DHH may be a distance concept or right on your heels. Either way it is important to be actively involved, work with the IEP team, be available for discussions, and start preparing your child for their transition years.

Download the Minnesota Transition Guide for Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) at www.cehd.umn.edu/dhh-resources/Transition-Guide/default.html

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.

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Continued from page 1, MNH&V High Five Award

To submit a nomination for the MNH&V High Five Award we ask parents to reply to the questions below in 200 words or less by July 1, 2016.

- 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 your child and/or the community? Please include at least one specific example of their service.

Email your nomination to mnhv@lifetrack-mn.org and include in the subject line "High Five Award".

To assist our Advisory Board when choosing recipients, we ask for only one nomination per family per year.

MNH&V staff will compile and forward the submissions to our Advisory Board who will select one or more winners to be announced at the metro MNH&V Family Picnic on August 4th, 2016. If a nominee and/or family nominating is from outside the Metro area and therefore not attending the picnic, recognition will take place in that community if they are selected.



Deanna Rothbauer, MN DeafBlind Project, Project Coordinator and Family Specialist

Deanna Rothbauer and her husband have one son who she describes as, “Kind, smart, determined, and quite a big deal around their house.” Danny, 20 years old, attends a transition program through Metro Deaf School, and he is deafblind. Danny was born prematurely and he has CHARGE Syndrome, which resulted in a combined vision and hearing loss.

“After a very tenuous start to life, Danny

I am MNH&V

has faced all of his challenges with an optimistic attitude and a joyful love of life,” Deanna adds.

Deanna has a B.S. in Healthcare and Human Services Management. She works for the Minnesota DeafBlind Project as the Project Coordinator and Family Specialist, which fulfills her passion to help families navigate the joys and challenges that coincide with raising a child with deafblindness. She is a strong advocate in the field of deafblind intervention and the role of the intervener. Since she started her work with Minnesota DeafBlind Project in 2007, she has been involved in training interveners and has witnessed the difference an intervener can make in the life of a child who is deafblind.

“I want every child who is deafblind to have the opportunity to experience the world through the guidance of a trained intervener so he or she can reach their fullest potential,” said Deanna.

In her free time, Deanna enjoys volunteering with Children’s Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota, the Ronald McDonald House, and spending time with family and friends.

HURRY, Respond By May 31!

Emergency Preparedness Survey

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division (DHHS) and the Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens (MADC) are working to address emergency preparedness issues for individuals who are deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing. They are asking people to please fill out a short 7 question survey online related to emergency preparedness by May 31, 2016. The results of the survey will be shared at a later date.

<http://surveys.dhs.state.mn.us/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=145980456742>

Take the Closed Captioning Pledge

The Commission of Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans (MNCDHH), in collaboration with the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), the Minnesota Association of Deaf Citizens (MADC) and Minnesota Hands & Voices, have started a campaign asking local businesses to take the Closed Captioning Pledge, promising to activate closed captioning on their TVs at all times. You and your child who is DHH can practice self-advocacy skills by asking your local businesses to sign the pledge!

To link our online activities and help spread awareness, use hashtag: #captionMNnow!



Closed captioning makes TV programming accessible to Minnesotans who are DHH. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, restaurants and other businesses are required to turn on the captioning upon request. However many businesses and even many people who are DHH are not aware of this requirement.

Closed captioning has changed due to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) quality standards prohibit captions from blocking other important visual content on the screen.



Welcome blanket recipient, “We love to play on the floor with the blanket! Thank you,” said Cody’s mother.



Brothers, Freddy and Gil, who are both hard of hearing each received a welcome blanket!



The View from Greater Minnesota

Cassie Ramerth is the newest Southwest Regional Parent Guide. Her educational background is in counseling, community health, and mental health. She is the parent of one son who is profoundly deaf and three other children.

Within a day of the birth of her oldest son's birth, newborn screening confirmed he may be DHH. "The nurse brought him back to me and reported he 'referred' on his hearing screening, meaning he needed more testing. The nursing staff stated 9 out of 10 babies 'refer' for more testing but after rescreening, babies usually 'pass.' My mother instincts kicked in and I just knew we were not part of the 9 babies who later 'pass.'" She said her feelings and emotions on top of normal postpartum changes had her in a whirlwind. Appointments, phone calls, home visits, all led to a confirm that her son's hearing level was caused by Connexin 26. This is a genetic change which prevented the small hairs in the inner ear to form. Cassie's

son's hearing went from mild/moderate to severe/profound within the first months of his life.

Throughout the process of follow up services, Cassie shared that she unknowingly followed the typical stages of acceptance. Even after becoming aware her son would eventually lose ALL hearing, she denied the hearing loss and attempted a diet change, food elimination and other holistic approaches. It wasn't until the third visit with her son's doctor, did she begin to understand this would be something her son would have for the rest of his life.

Her son is now 6 years old and thriving. He is a wonderful big brother to three siblings, enjoys sports, outdoors, and music. "He LOVES music, which

is something I was worried he would never enjoy!" He benefits from a genuine excitement to learn. With the help of deaf and hard of hearing educators, intense focus on language and speech services and special education; he is a successful young kindergartener.

Cassie looks forward to sharing her support to other families with children like her own son.



Cassie Ramerth and her husband with their four children

New Accessible Technology Section Added to ADA.gov Website

The Department of Justice has launched a new Accessible Technology section to their website, ADA.gov. This will further assist people with disabilities to understand how the ADA applies to certain technologies, such as web sites, electronic book readers, online courses, and point-of-sale devices. Covered entities have longstanding obligations to make their programs, goods, services, and activities accessible—including those they provide online or via other technology.

For more information go to www.ada.gov/access-technology/index.html

Advanced Bionics Processor Exchange Program

Advanced Bionics (AB) has initiated a processor exchange program. Any recipient who was newly implanted and received a Naida CI Q70 sound processor, or who had recently upgraded to a Naida CI Q70 has an opportunity to exchange one of their Naida CI Q70 processors for the new Naida CI Q90. Additionally, recipients with two processors who were implanted after August 16, 2015 will be eligible to trade in both Naida CI Q70s for Naida CI Q90 processors. AB will accept orders for the processor exchanges placed by your child's audiologist now through November 15, 2016.

AB will contact the families of children who are eligible for the processor

exchange program directly. If you choose to exchange your child's processor, you will need to schedule an appointment with your child's audiologist to complete the redemption. The processor exchange requires you to return one Naida CI Q70 and in return you will receive a new Naida CI Q90 along with two new headpiece cables. AB will be contacting the families of eligible recipients in batches based on their implant/exchange date to provide the best customer service.

If families have any questions regarding the processor exchange program, please contact your local AB representative.

<http://advancedbionics.com>

Zoo U Online Game: Assess and Improve Social Emotional Skills

Zoo U is a game for students in grades K through 5. One to many children can be assessed at once while playing the engaging motivating game. Created by a team of researchers, artists, and game developers, Zoo U is the only research-proven online game geared to improving children's social emotional skills.

These skills include:

- impulse control and self-management
- emotion regulation
- communicating effectively
- showing empathy
- social initiation
- cooperating with others

Developed with funding from the US Department of Education. Find out more at: http://personalizedlearninggames.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/15-0019-Zoo-U-PLG-WhitSht_FNL.pdf

Adoption Center Seeking Homes for Two Children

Cradle of Hope Adoption Center, a nonprofit adoption agency with 26 years' experience, is seeking homes for children who are DHH from China. Two children who will be visiting the US for three weeks in July: Maya who is almost 7 and William who is 9. We are looking for families who would be interested in hosting each child and are open to adoption. If the visit goes well we hope the family will move forward with that child's adoption.

Eligible families are between 30 - 55 years old, married or single, who are employed, and financially stable.

For more information on the children and the adoption process. Please contact Linda Perilstein, Executive Director, Cradle of Hope Adoption Center in Silver Spring, MD, 1-301-587-4400

About Meaningful Parent-to-Parent Connections

Shoua Moua, a "MNH&V Mom" and educator, was asked by a Parent Guide to reach out to a new mother with a child who was newly identified as DHH. Shoua is a little farther down the parenting path with a son who is a happy active 3 year old pre-schooler who is hard of hearing. The parent-to-parent connection was a positive experience for both families. Shoua and the new mother found they had many things in common, especially helpful to the new mother was their shared Hmong culture.

The two mothers and their children met for a playdate and spent an entire afternoon into early evening talking, laughing, and helping each other understand the nuances of child development, healthcare systems, school services, and how to help siblings understand the needs of their sibling who is deaf or hard of hearing.

Meaningful conversations with others who share the experience of raising a child who is DHH can be powerful. Shoua briefly summarized, "As an educator, I've seen how much children thrive when they are supported at home, especially those with special needs. I conveyed to the new mom how important it is that not only do the adults have to understand how to support their children, but the siblings and extended family and friends have to know



too, especially in our Hmong culture with its cultural stigmas."

In reference to her Hmong culture, she continued by adding, "A lack of understanding can create tense miscommunication around treatment, services, support, expectations, and ultimately, how to love a child with needs." Shoua also added what families of any culture can appreciate, "All children must have love."

If you are a parent or professional acting on behalf of a parent, and would like to be connected to another parent, please go to the MNH&V website to find more details. www.mnhandsandvoices.org/first-stop/of-interest-to-parents.aspx

Need a Summer Nanny?

Jackie Duddingston is a junior at the University of Minnesota working towards a degree in Special Education. She is fluent in ASL and plans to get a masters degree in DHH Education. She would love to put her ASL skills to use as a nanny this summer. If you are in need of a summer nanny contact Jackie by phone 612-508-2206 or email duddi014@umn.edu.



Welcome blanket recipient, Claire, sitting pretty!

NEW Resource of Information: *Journal of Early Hearing Detection & Intervention*

The Journal of Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (JEHDI) is a biannual scholarly peer-reviewed online publication dedicated to advancing early hearing, detection, and intervention by publishing current research, evidence-based practice, and standards of care. The JEHDI is a

publication of the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM) at Utah State University.

The first issue of the JEHDI was published on-line March 2016. To review the contents or to sign up for a subscription go to <http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/jehdi/>

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission: Federal Agencies to Hire 12% Workers with Disabilities

In a significant step for disability rights advocates the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has proposed an increase to 12 percent of the federal agencies workforce be made up of people with disabilities. Currently federal contractors have a goal of 7 percent.

“It’s a tremendous step forward with us,” said Marca Bristo, president and CEO of Access Living in Chicago. “This has put in place a significant piece missing in action.”

The EEOC proposed rule guides federal agencies on how to satisfy their affirmative action obligations under Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination against employees with disabilities in the federal sector. The current rules state only that the federal government should be a “model employer of individuals with disabilities” and instructs federal agencies to give them “full consideration” in hiring, placement and advancement. Several executive orders have set hiring goals for the federal workforce but did not establish a numeric target.

Although the data shows the federal government has achieved a 12 percent disability representation in their workforce it is disproportionately at low income levels. The proposal calls for a 2 percent representation rate at all levels of income

for people with severe disabilities. Though the commission has encouraged federal agencies to adopt the 2 percent goal for many years, they have fallen short, particularly at higher-paid positions.

Though the rule would apply only to federal agencies it is still significant, because usually federal jobs are stable and offer opportunities for lateral transfers and promotions. The commission hopes the example set by the federal government will encourage employers in the private sector to get on board.

The unemployment rate for people with disabilities who are actively looking for work is double that of the general population. Between 60 and 70 percent of people with disabilities are not in the labor force at all.

The EEOC rule also would require agencies to provide personal assistance services to employees who need help with activities such as eating, taking off their coats or using the restroom while at work.

“This is the segment of the community whose talents have been most excluded,” Bristo said. “You never know who is going to be the next Stephen Hawking.”

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-eeoc-disabled-employees-0225-biz-20160224-story.html>

2016 Camp

Haven Acres

Haven Acres is a faith-based youth ranch located in Burnsville, MN that addresses the needs of youth who live with various challenges. Sessions run from June 17 through July 22 and August 5 through September 9th. FREE OF CHARGE to all participants.

Weekly Program

90-minute sessions are available. Children will do various chores on the farm and ride horses guided by a caring mentor. For Weekly Program registration email: info@havenacresmn.org

Friday Day Camp Program

Fridays, 9:00 am to 10:30 am or 11:00 am to 12:30pm, includes horse instruction, ranch chores, crafts, snack time, and a Bible lesson.

Interpreters are available for select session times. Space is limited. For more information visit www.havenacresmn.org



Early Intervention: Five Factors to Support Language Development

Parents with a child who is DHH know the importance of developing language skills as early as possible. Now the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center offers strategies to get started. They gathered a team of early intervention specialists, educators, parents of children who are DHH, and professionals to come up with a list of five overarching factors to support the development of language.

Factor 1

Direct and daily access to language and communication is essential to facilitating each child's language and communication development.

Factor 2

A collaborative, ongoing process should be used to explore modalities, technologies, and strategies to support the development of linguistic competence.

Factor 3

Early exposure to accessible language through sign is beneficial to language acquisition.

Factor 4

Early fitting of amplification and ongoing monitoring of its effectiveness are integral to selecting communication strategies to facilitate language development.

Factor 5

Planning for language and communication development should be individualized and systematically guided by ongoing assessment and monitoring.

The Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center provides literature that supports each factor along with recommended practices and demonstrations of the practices. Find more information at www.gallaudet.edu/clerc-center/sites/early-intervention-network-supporting-linguistic-competence-for-children-who-are-deaf-or-hard-of-hearing.html

NCSA iBooks: Cued English Versions of Children's Stories

The National Cued Speech Association (NCSA) offers iBooks to increase literacy using cued English and make classic children's books accessible to children who are deaf and hard of hearing. Cued Speech users will be able to have the book 'read' to them by fluent cueders.

The following titles are available for download with on your Mac, iPad, or iTunes at <http://cuedspeech.org/ibooks>.

The Little Red Riding Hood
Hansel and Gretel
Snow White
I Have a Special Grandma
The Three Little Pigs
Alice in Wonderland



#BetheONE Video Challenge!

The Disability Awareness Task Force is a collaboration of local agencies committed to bringing education and awareness to disability and inclusion, and to break down the barriers that people with disabilities face. Each year the Task Force hosts two major events; Dinner and a Movie on October 11, 2016, and Celebration of Abilities on October 18, 2016. As a part of these events they offer participation in a video challenge.

1. Create a 2 minute #BetheONE video
2. Use one or all of the following concepts:
 - Treating people with disabilities or those who are different with respect
 - Finding ways to be inclusive of those who have a disability or are different
 - End bullying for those with disabilities
 - Use "person first" language
 - Invite others to #BetheONE for change in themselves, schools and community.
3. Video must be appropriate for all ages.
4. Under the age 18 a parent or guardian must sign a video release form, as well as any people in the video.
5. Submit your video via email NO LATER than 12:00 p.m. on September 16, 2016.

Email to: datfmn@gmail.com
Include your name or your group's name and contact information. The Subject line should say #BetheONE video submission.

6. The Task Force will notify you if it will be posted on YouTube. Your job is to PROMOTE it! The more views, the greater chance you have of winning!
7. Winners will be announced October 3rd. Prizes presented at the Celebration of Abilities on October 18th, St. Cloud, MN.

Email questions to: datfmn@gmail.com
Link to flyer www.mnhandsandvoices.org

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Minnesota Hands & Voices FOCUS Newsletter

May-June 2016

FAMILY PICNIC

2016 Annual ★ Minnesota Hands & Voices ★ Metro

Free for Families:

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

Date: Thursday, August 4th

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

Where: Como Park Midway Pavilion
1360 N Lexington Parkway, St. Paul, MN

HANDS & VOICES
LEAGUE OF HEROES
SUPERPOWERS WITHIN™

*Calling all the Superheroes in the MNH&V Community!
Dust off your superhero costume or come as you are to join our Hands & Voices' League of Heroes!*

Find more details online at www.mnhandsandvoices.org/news-events/current-news-events.aspx