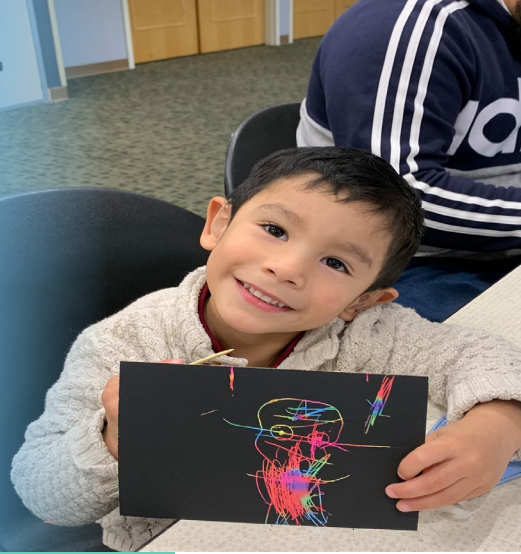




HANDS &  
VOICES™  
MINNESOTA

Supporting families  
with children who  
are deaf & hard of  
hearing



# FOCUS

DEAF CAMP provides a valuable social outlet for children and a fully accessible environment, free of communication barriers. Deaf camp provides an opportunity to try something new and build long-lasting friendships. Camp may appear to be all fun and games, but research shows that camps can have a positive impact on development outcomes related to independence, leadership, self-esteem, problem-solving, and feelings of empowerment.

Deaf camp can provide ways to develop personal and professional relationships outside of school. They can contribute to a wide range of growths such as youth, career, and academic development. Deaf camps strengthen self-esteem, self-confidence and independence.

Youth benefit from attending disability-specific camps because they reduce feelings of isolation. Deaf camps are unique in that they bring together deaf students, many of whom are not in regular contact with other deaf students or adults. The opportunity to learn from and alongside other kids with a hearing difference can be a powerful experience.

By Leslie Carnegie-Hilde

## A Sister's Perspective by Rachel Harriman

Every preschooler lives the same life at daycare. The day consist of arts and craft, nap time, eating and playing on the playground. As I loved all of those except for nap time, my favorite part of going to preschool every day was coloring. I had loved crafts from an early age and would always show my parents the art I made day after day after day. One evening in particular, after I was brought home from preschool, I ran through the front door with my drawing I had finally finished. I was so eager to show my older sister, Hannah, who is DeafBlind. Since I had seen Hannah read braille before, I understood that using her fingers was equivalent to me using my eyes to see. I ran up to her, took her fingers and guided them over each thing I had drawn, explaining what each thing was and what color I had made them. I described the art I made in such a way that she could understand what my art page had inside of it. That was the day my mom was going to tell me about Hannah and how she couldn't see.

As siblings, we catch on to subtleties and how to accommodate. Being a sibling of someone with a disability has made me a better person. I see what the world has to offer and where it falls short. That being said, I get angry at the world

and the people in it for not being fair to my friends and family with disabilities. I take it upon myself to help others with equal accessibility. I am a better person for being able to identify and find solutions to flaws in the world. I find myself getting irritated at strangers for staring and pointing at my sister. If someone is looking at her, sharing a simple smile instead of just a scowling face can change my day in an instant. Being a sibling makes me feel protective of Hannah, wanting to stick up for her or tell someone off for being so blatantly obvious of how clueless and judgy they are. I know that the only way for someone to understand and change behavior is to raise awareness and teach. Sometimes it is hard to find the patience to do that. I am still learning how to adapt to the needs of my sister and disabled of my sister and disabled people I know and will know.



A Sister's Perspective continued on page 2

*A Sister's Perspective continued from page 1*

As I have easily adapted to Hannah's blindness, I have adapted to her loss of hearing as well, but I will admit, adapting to hearing loss is a bit more challenging for me. If I'm in a cheery mood and find myself whistling, I need to catch myself and stop, since Hannah's hearing aid will amplify the sound in her ear. I love to listen to my loud rock music, but when Hannah is in the car with me, I turn it down or off so she can hear without excess background noise. When we are going to eat in public, I will think of where Hannah needs to sit before I let anyone else sit down. She has hearing loss in her left ear, so I find a spot for her on the far left end of the table so that other people are either to her right, or across from her. Hannah is also my roller coaster buddy. If we are going on a ride, she will always be on my left so we can communicate better through the process of getting on and off as well as riding the ride. It is second nature to me now, but it is so important to meet the needs of people and accommodate them as best as possible. Being a sibling of someone with a disability is a challenge and a blessing. I have cried myself to sleep just thinking about how unfair the world is. Why can I see the beauty in life, but Hannah and many others I love don't have the privilege of doing so? I don't find myself crying over this as much now, as I know that they aren't missing out on beauty. They are able to find beauty in different ways.

## In Your Corner

with Robin Coninx

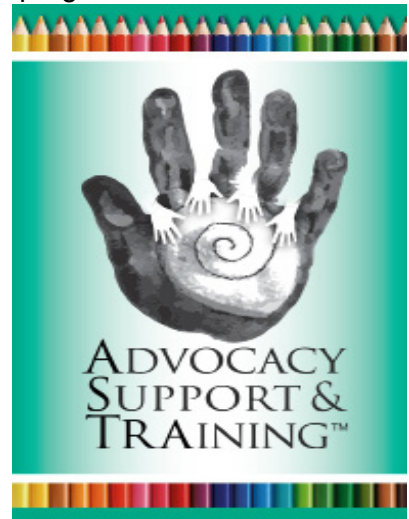
Today, things have been made complex for our DHH students with distance learning, hybrid classrooms and additional rules as our students have returned to school in person.

What does Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) look like for DHH students during these transitions? How do we keep track of how our students are doing on their IEP's?

One of the ways MN lawmakers have decided to assist in the process of supporting students on IEP is to law – Article 5 is about Special Education Recovery Services and Supports addresses and outlines what school must do. Perhaps you have read about this legislation within our weekly MNHV email blasts.

As a MN Hands & Voices ASTra Advocate ~ I would like families to consider the following: Has your IEP team reached out to you to have a meeting to discuss the specific topic of Special Education Recovery? If not, feel free to contact your child/student's IEP Case Manager and request the meeting to discuss the Special Education Recovery Plan. Lawmakers put a deadline on schools reaching out to start the process as December 1st, 2021. This meeting must go through the DHH Students' IEP. Perhaps even discuss informal/formal

assessments to determine how your DHH child/student is making progress on their IEP, which should be based on the regular education curriculum. Remember that your child has the right to gain one academic educational year progress in one school calendar year. Unless there is an in-depth assessment done that proves your child can't make this level of progress. Remember, you know your child/student best. There are many proven ways/tools to support a DHH child/students during classes and social time at school. Challenge your IEP to investigate several different ways that are for DHH child/student. Don't let the team approach underestimate your child/students abilities academically/socially. When appropriate supports that work for your child are in place, they can make appropriate academic progress.



*Robin Coninx is a parent to four wonderful adult children one of whom is DeafBlind and medically fragile. Robin Coninx is the former MNHV Metro Parent Guide Supervisor, Statewide ASTra Guide and ASTra Coordinator.*

FOCUS is published quarterly by Minnesota Hands & Voices, a program of Lutheran Social Services. Information in this newsletter about other organizations does not imply endorsement by MNH&V or LSS.

© 2022 Lutheran Social Services

Newsletter Editors: Report/Layout Editor: Leslie Carnegie-Hilde

## Deaf Experience

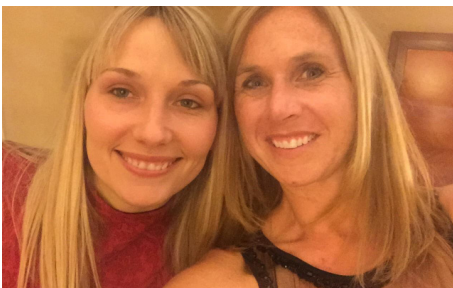
with Emily Smith-Lundberg

Emily Smith-Lundberg and Jenni Bailey are excited to announce that they will host a SECOND summer of Camp "YOU BE YOU"! June 26-July 1, 2022, at Lake Poinsett, South Dakota (near the Minnesota border).

Emily and Jen are former Camp Sertoma co-directors who have decades of experience running successful camp programs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children.

Camp UBU is a place where Deaf and Hard of Hearing campers gather with peers who share similar experiences. Campers meet positive and energetic summer camp counselors who are also Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Camp UBU serves campers from Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska.

Camp UBU is thrilled to continue its' partnership with Communication Services for the Deaf of South Dakota to support new activities and programs for our campers. Registration will begin January of 2022. Be ready to register, as Camp UBU fills up quickly! Also, follow Camp UBU on Facebook for updates and to learn more about camp activities.



### MN Deaf & Hard of Hearing Children's Family Camp

Onamia MN

June 20-24, 2022

Registration opens Jan.1st.

[mndhhffcamp@gmail.com](mailto:mndhhffcamp@gmail.com)

[campbrainregistration.com](http://campbrainregistration.com)

Text: 507-384-7575

### MN State Academies -

Faribault MN

June 12-24, 2022

[pathwaystolife@msa.state.mn.us](mailto:pathwaystolife@msa.state.mn.us)

"Pathways to Life Summer Transition Program"

[www.msa.state.mn.us/1/content2/summer-transition-program](http://www.msa.state.mn.us/1/content2/summer-transition-program)

### Camp UBU

Lake Poinsett SD

June 26-July 1, 2022

@CampUBU

[Campubu@gmail.com](mailto:Campubu@gmail.com)

218-203-0670 (VP)

218-839-3915 (Text)

218-839-8303 (Voice & Text)

### Gallaudet University

2022 Summer

Youth Webinars

[www.gallaudet.edu](http://www.gallaudet.edu)

"Camp Catch Them Young" Leadership.pipeline@  
[gallaudet.edu](http://gallaudet.edu)

### Rochester Institute of Technology

Check out "Kids on Campus" at  
<http://www.rit.edu/k12>

### MN Conservation Corp

Hires 15-18 year old deaf hard of hearing youth from all over the United States to do environmental work in state and national parks.

[www.conservationcorps.org](http://www.conservationcorps.org)  
(651) 209-9900

### Camp Sertoma

Brainerd MN

[greatplainscampsertoma@gmail.com](mailto:greatplainscampsertoma@gmail.com)

[www.campsertoma.com](http://www.campsertoma.com)

Sign Up for Summer Camp

# Transition

## Help Your Young Adult Learn About Accessing Accommodations After High School

When your young adult with disabilities graduates from high school, many aspects of his or her life will change. Services that had been provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) will end, and your son or daughter will need to find new ways to receive accommodations in postsecondary education and training, employment, and independent living. Although accommodation rights are guaranteed to adults with disabilities through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, services are not provided automatically. In order to receive services, adults must disclose their disabilities to schools or employers, request accommodations, and provide required documentation showing that the accommodations are necessary because of a disability.

You can help your son or daughter learn how to understand, manage, and explain his or her disability to others and obtain needed accommodations.

Make sure your son or daughter knows these three things in order to request an accommodation

1. General and specific information about his or her disability. Naming the disability can increase your young adult's confidence and self awareness. Provide your child with factual information that shows both the strengths and challenges of his or her disability.

2. Types of accommodations that have worked in the past. Knowing which supports have worked (and which haven't) will help your young adult identify the

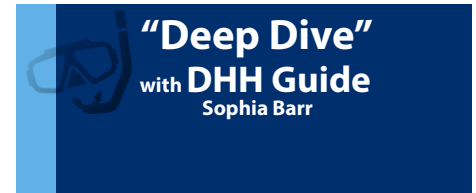
types of accommodations he or she may find useful in the future. Think of these supports as tools in a toolbox. Teaching your youth how to choose familiar "tools" for future "projects" provides an important life skill.

3. Types of accommodations that may help in adult roles. Moving into postsecondary education or employment situations will present your youth with new challenges. Help your son or daughter think about which accommodations have worked.

Discuss which "tools in the toolbox" might still be helpful and what new "tools" are needed. Teach your young adult how and when to disclose information about his or her disability. Disclosing means intentionally releasing information for a specific reason. People may disclose disability information in order to receive an accommodation, explain behavior, or obtain services. Disclosure does not mean telling everything about a disability. It means sharing only information that will result in accommodations that promote success in the workplace or at school. Let your youth know that accommodations may be requested at different times in his or her career.

Provide Suggestions When Asking for Accommodations Whether at work or in a postsecondary education setting, young adults may find it necessary to disclose their disability in order to receive accommodations that will help them succeed. It's best to disclose as soon as the need for accommodations is realized. It's also helpful to suggest specific accommodations compensate. As you think about the ways you accommodate your own needs, consider how you might share these methods with your son or daughter. With these supports, your young adult may not need to disclose at all in order to succeed.

Article taken in part from the PACER.org website. PACER is the Minnesota Parent Training and Information Center, funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs Call 952-838-9000 (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. CST, M-F)



I attended Wisconsin Lions Camp from the ages 7 to 17. I absolutely LOVED camp. Camp had a week designed for different groups of children; Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Diabetic, Autism, etc. I went to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Week. Growing up, I attended a mainstream school where I was the only student with a hearing difference. So, it was an isolating experience. I didn't have friends to sign or resonate with, but when I was at camp, I had all of that. I never felt left out because everyone knew American Sign Language (ASL) and I would be gabbing with everyone. Not only did I enjoyed camp due to the inclusivity, but I was introduced to new friends



and new hobbies. kayaking, archery, team building, arts and crafts, and so much more. I will never forget the time that my craft teacher dared us to eat peanut butter balls with fried worms and jump in the old stinky mud pit in the deep woods. Camp was such a great experience. The only con was that the stay was too short. Time flies when you're having fun.

*Sophia identifies as deaf, speaks English and sign Signing Exact English (SEE). She took several courses of ASL and knows basic ASL. She is profoundly deaf on her right ear and has a severe hearing loss on her left and wears a hearing aid for assistance. She speaks for herself but uses an interpreters when in meetings or with more than two people.*

## MNHV Online Family Events Are Like Distance Learning, But Way More Fun!



### “Virtual Slumber Party”

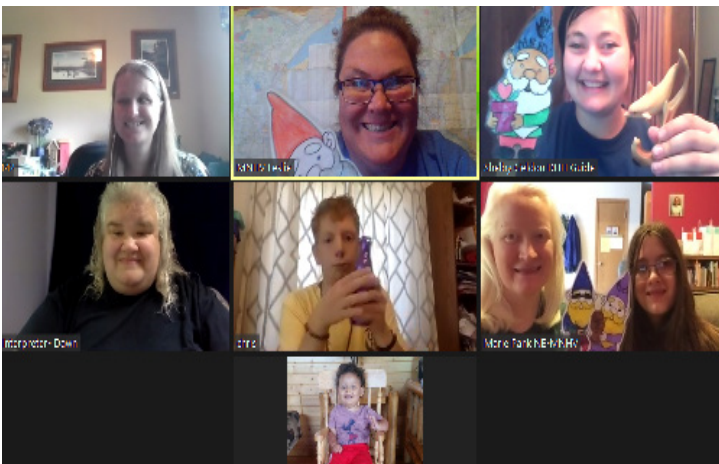
The kiddos sure had a blast reading “Pete the Cat and the Bedtime Blues”. They played Bingo along with the story telling. Thanks to Parent Guide Suzanne Iwaint, DHH Guide Janie Barlow, Deaf Mentor Sharon Rosen and Interpreter Peggy!

### “Fish, Frogs & Forts!”

Ray Ruiz, a fishing and hunting skills liason with the MN DNR joined DHH Guide Kelsey Woodward and Parent Guide Leslie Carnegie-Hilde. We learned who the DNR is, what they do, told fish stories and made our own lures!

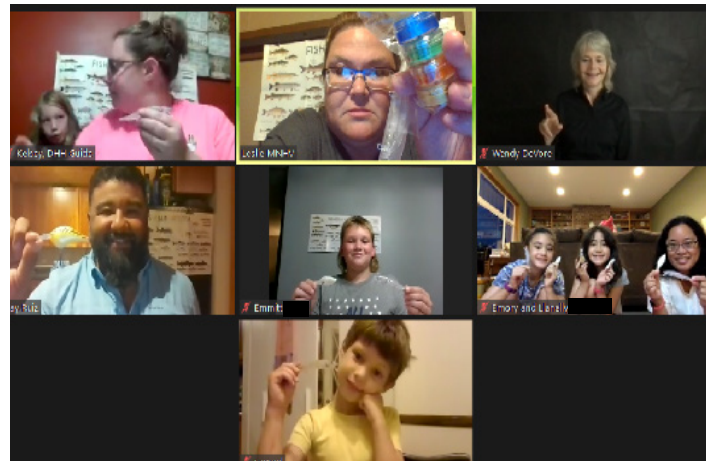
### “Gnome Adventures!”

MNHV hosted an event, Gnome Adventures! What an awesome success! The kiddos sure seem to have a blast sharing their gnomes. Great thanks to Parent Guide Leslie Carnegie-Hilde and DHH Guides Shelby Geldon and Hannah Harriman.



### Virtual Book Club!

They discussed the book ‘Song for a Whale’. The main character is deaf, so we shared experiences relating to their own hearing differences! We learned about deaf history and idioms in ASL.



Find a current list of MNHV Online Family Events online, for more information and registration visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/minnesota-hands-amp-voices-at-lss-9882223703>

## Latino Cultures

with Elena Miranda

### Campamentos de Verano

El verano es una gran oportunidad para nuestros niños sordos o sordos parciales para tomar un buen descanso de la escuela y recargar baterías para el próximo ciclo escolar. Pero además es una gran oportunidad para exponerlos a una nueva experiencia en cualquiera de los campamentos de verano que se ofrecen en Minnesota para niños sordos, sordos parciales y/o con otras condiciones médicas; la oportunidad de socializar y hacer amigos.

Minnesota ofrece una amplia variedad de campamentos de verano de acuerdo con las necesidades de su hijo(a), ellos pueden incluir servicios especiales para niños con otras condiciones médicas a bajo costo o sin costo extra, dependiendo del campamento que usted elija para su niño.

No olvide consultar la lista de campamentos de verano en nuestro email o nuestra revista "Focus".

Como experiencia personal recuerdo que para mí no fue fácil la primera vez que mi hijo asistió a un campamento de verano, yo tenía muchas dudas sobre los acomodos en cuanto a comunicación para mi hijo, sus medicamentos, y como iba a manejar sus emociones estando lejos de casa por primera vez. Este campamento ofreció incluso un email para mantenerme en contacto con mi hijo.

Para mi grata sorpresa una semana paso tan rápido, que pronto tuve que volver por mi hijo. El regresó feliz de la gran experiencia que lo primero que me dijo fue "Me encantó, ¿cuándo

puedo volver al campamento?"  
"con una gran sonrisa en su cara.

Los campamentos de verano regularmente incluyen actividades de aprendizaje y actividades de socialización y convivencia. Algunos otros campamentos, aquellos para adolescentes pueden incluir actividades más enfocadas al trabajo comunitario.

También hay algunos campamentos que son familiares, quiere decir que la familia es bienvenida a participar en el campamento de verano con los niños sordos o sordos parciales. Estos campamentos generalmente están enfocados en proveer actividades de interés para los padres, para los niños y para la familia completa. Estos campamentos son una gran oportunidad para que toda la familia se de la oportunidad de conectar con otras familias, encontrar otros recursos disponibles y por supuesto practicar el modo de comunicación que ustedes tengan en casa con su niño sordo o sordo parcial. Hay campamentos específicos para familias que se comunican en ASL (American Sign Language).

Si usted desea registrar a su hijo(a) en cualquiera de los campamentos de verano, se le sugiere leer con su niño(a) la información disponible sobre el campamento, vean las fotos del campamento, hable con alguien que ya haya tenido esta experiencia, y si tiene dudas específicas del campamento, llame directamente al responsable del campamento las veces que sean necesarias hasta que usted haya aclarado sus dudas.

Por favor no olvide de asegurarse de cumplir los lineamientos de seguridad por COVID.

¡Les deseamos un feliz Verano!

## Summer Camps!

Summer is a great opportunity for our deaf or hard of hearing children to take a good break from school and recharge their batteries for the next school year. But it is also a great opportunity to expose them to a new experience in any of the Minnesota summer camps for children who are deaf, hard of hearing and/or with other medical conditions. These camps offer opportunities to socialize and make friends.

Minnesota offers a wide variety of summer camps according to your child's needs. They can include special services for children with other medical conditions at little or no extra cost, depending on the camp you choose for your child.

Do not forget to check the list of summer camps in our email or our magazine "Focus".

As a personal experience, I remember that it was not easy for me the first time my son attended a summer camp, I had many doubts about the communication arrangements for my son, his medications, and how he was going to manage his emotions while being away from home for the first time. This camp offered an email address so I could keep in touch with my son.

To my pleasant surprise, a week passed so quickly that I soon had to return for my son.

Summer camps regularly include learning activities, socializing and conviviality.

*Summer Camps! continued on page 7*

Summer Camps! continued from page 6

Some other camps, like those for teens, may include activities more focused on community work.

There are also some camps that are family friendly, which means that the family is welcome to participate in the summer camp with the deaf or hard of hearing children. These camps are generally focused on providing activities of interest to parents, children and the entire family. These camps are a great opportunity for the whole family to connect with other families, find other available resources and of course practice the mode of communication that you have at home with your deaf or hard of hearing child. There are specific camps for families who communicate in ASL (American Sign Language).

If you want to register your child in any of the summer camps, it is suggested that you read with your child the information available about the camp, see the photos of the camp, talk to someone who has already had this experience and if you have specific questions about the camp call the person in charge of the camp directly as many times as necessary until you have clarified your doubts.

Please don't forget to make sure you adhere to the COVID safety guidelines.

We wish you a happy summer!

## MNHV In-person Family Events

### Starting back up after the 2020 Covid Pandemic!

Cultural Guide Elena Miranda and DHH Guide Heidi Nazario held the Dia de los Muertos Event in person. The families sure had a blast dressing up and doing some arts and crafts.

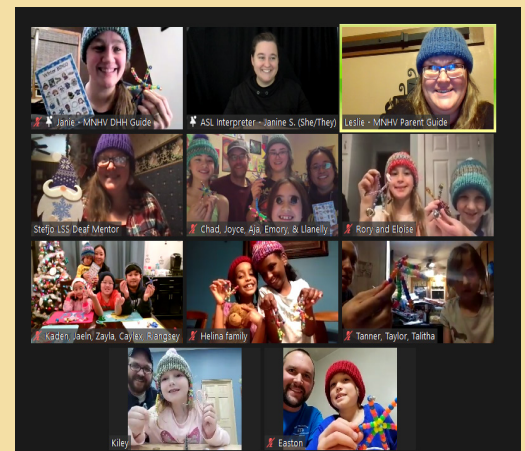


NW Parent Guide Shannon Hohrman, Upper NW Parent Guide Leslie Carnegie-Hilde and DHH Guide Kelsey Woodward held the Autumn Fun Event at Buffalo River Pumpkin Patch. The families sure had a blast eating pizza from Pizza Ranch! Thank you to Dilworth Pizza Ranch for the Donation.



Thank you to Laura Kasper of Woodlake Hats and Wraps Charitable Knits for the donation of these wonderful winter hats! During the Winter Games Event, led by DHH Guide Janie Barlow and DM Stephanie Nutt, played "What's in the Hat" along with several other fun games.

Families loved the hats!





HANDS &  
VOICES™  
MINNESOTA

709 University  
Ave. W.  
St. Paul, MN  
55104

# FOCUS

NEWSLETTER

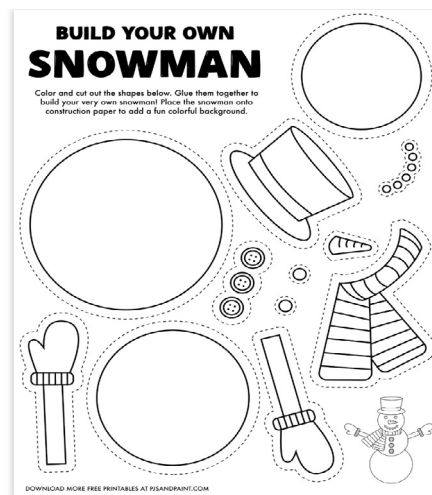
Minnesota Hands & Voices FOCUS Newsletter

January - February - March 2022

## MNHV Build Your Own Snowman Event

Do you like to build snow forts or snowmen? How about sledding down a big hill or having a snowball fight with your friends? Over the winter, take some selfies and pictures with your friends to show us all your winter fun.

- Print out the snowman, color it and cut out.
- No registration needed for "Build your own Snowman."
- Share pictures of your winter fun and your paper snowman on MNHV Facebook page by emailing them to [sophia.barr@lssmn.org](mailto:sophia.barr@lssmn.org)
- As winter comes to an end lets meet back here again and celebrate spring! Don't forget to register for the Online Event.



Please contact  
Leslie Carnegie-Hilde at  
[leslie.carnegie-hilde@lssmn.org](mailto:leslie.carnegie-hilde@lssmn.org)  
or 218.902.0148  
if you have questions.

**Build Your Own Snowman!**  
- Online Event -

★ **Thurs., Feb. 10, 2022** ★

**7:00 PM - 8:30 PM**

MNHV Central Parent Guide  
Suzanne Iwainat  
MNHV DHH Guide Shelby Geldon,  
and Deaf Mentor Michele Rolewitz  
Deaf Mentor Family Service Program  
will host a virtual event  
for kids and parents.  
We will do an activity and  
share stories of your winter fun!  
[https://www.eventbrite.com/e/  
build-your-own-snowman-tick-  
ets-215777856377](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/build-your-own-snowman-tickets-215777856377)