



FOCUS

October 2022



HANDS &
VOICES™
MINNESOTA

Supporting families with children
who are deaf & hard of hearing

A Holiday for the Whole Family: Tips to Include Deaf Guests

More than 90% of deaf children are born to hearing parents. Without other deaf relatives, the communication barriers can be significant.

They don't have to be. If you have a deaf family member or will be hosting a deaf guest, National Deaf Center (NDC) has resources and e-learning courses that can help you ensure they feel accepted and included this holiday season.

Here are some quick tips to help you include a deaf guest in your holiday celebrations.

Involve them

Many hearing people will simply ignore a deaf person. There are many ways to communicate, even if you don't sign. Use a visual cue or tap the deaf person gently to get their attention, and interact with them directly. Use gestures and facial expressions to convey meaning.

Educate yourself

Enroll in Deaf 101, an online course that provides basic knowledge and tools necessary to communicate effectively with deaf people. It's self-paced, and is typically completed in about three hours. Best of all, it's completely free. Here's where to go, <https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/topics/deaf-101>

Eyeball the environment

Deaf people rely on what they can see to understand conversation and other context. Ensure the space for your gathering is well-lighted and does not have a lot of visual barriers. This will not only foster communication, but reduce eye strain.

Remove large centerpieces or table decorations that make it hard to see. Close the curtains to avoid too much backlighting. Bring in extra lamps to brighten up a dark space.

Turn on the captions

Captions help deaf people follow what is happening on the

television, especially in a noisy or busy environment, such as a large family gathering. As an added bonus, they can be beneficial for your hearing guests, too.

Hire a professional

Hire an interpreter or use a qualified speech-to-text service. If cost is an issue, do some research. There may be pro-bono services available. If professional services are not feasible, look for other options. Have a notepad and pen or small whiteboard available to write down questions or requests. Use text messaging to communicate.



Play deaf-friendly games

Avoid any games or group activities that are heavily dependent on oral cues. Instead, choose deaf-friendly games that rely more on visual cues or physical competition.

Check in and ask questions

Not sure what you can do? Reach out to the deaf person directly and ask questions, such as "How do you prefer to communicate?" or "What can I do differently to better communicate?"

This article is taken in part from National Deaf Center, November 20, 2019, © 2021 The University of Texas at Austin/The Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk





The holidays are truly the best time of the year. I enjoy many traditions and celebrations with family and friends, which are made even better when those I cherish provide equal access and accommodations. For example, my sister is usually the one who describes each of my Christmas presents. My extended family is great about finding accessible ways for me to participate in family games. Whether that be describing what to do or reading cards if we're playing a game where a standard deck of Braille cards or Braille dice won't suffice. Pertaining to my hearing loss, I position myself so that people are either on my right side or in front of me. Background noise is inevitable; Therefore, when possible, I try to find a quiet space to converse with family members. Alternatively, I ask them to to speak louder or repeat statements if necessary.

There are also a few adaptations I make to specific holiday events. For instance, when handing out Halloween candy, I ask kids to please describe where their basket is or take my hand to help me locate it. When shopping for Christmas presents with my family on Small Business Saturday, I take turns shopping with each of my family members so that I can thoughtfully pick out gifts while not having the recipient of that gift know what I am getting them. The holidays are some of the most wonderful times of the year, and by making adaptations as needed, you are sure to make the most of your holiday with those you love.

Hannah Harriman
hannah.harriman@lssmn.org



Hannah is blind with unilateral hearing loss and wears one hearing aid. Hannah uses spoken English and identifies as blind and hard-of-hearing, particularly in social situations. Hannah is open to answering any questions about deafblindness. It's important to note that deafblindness encompasses any combination of vision and hearing loss.

DeafBlind Services Minnesota advances the independence of children and adults with hearing and vision loss. DBSM brings one-to-one support to deafblind individuals. Trained support service providers (SSPs) work with adults, while interveners teach communication skills to infants, children, and youth.



ADAPT | CONNECT | THRIVE

Call 612.362.8454 or email info@dbsm.org for more information

The Minnesota DeafBlind Project is funded by a grant from the federal government to provide technical assistance to the families and school teams of children and youth who have a combined hearing and vision loss, birth to age 21.



Services are FREE to Minnesota families.

Contact Brandy Johanson Sebera, family engagement coordinator at brandy.johanson.sebera@metroecu.org or 612.638.1505

MNH&V
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
MNHV Parent Guide for the Northeast African Communities

The MNH&V Northeast African Communities Parent Guide position offers 10 flexible hours a week, some evenings and weekends, and a family-friendly work environment. MNHV Parent Guides receive specific training and team support. Parent Guides are responsible for the initial and follow-up connections critical to families who have a newly-identified child who is DHH. They work closely with the MNHV team and learn the best way to support our families.

MN Hands & Voices Events

Hello! My name is Leslie Carnegie-Hilde, and I am the Upper Northwest Parent Guide and the Statewide Events Cordinator for Minnesota Hands and Voice (MNH&V). I am also a mom to two beautiful girls. These girls are the reason I do what I do. My oldest has a hearing difference with right side Microsia Atresia and is deaf plus. She has since graduated from high school and is gaining adult support services in the Upper Northwest rural area of Minnesota where we live. My youngest daughter is a junior at our local high school. Both of my girls have needed a variety of supports throughout school with either an Individual Educational Plan or a 504 Plan for more physical accomodations. Everyday I am learning something new about how to better support their needs.

Living in Northern Minnesota in a rural community can be very isolating for children with a hearing difference, my daughter grew up being the only student in her school with a hearing difference and this left her feeling very "stuck." She didn't fit in the hearing world and she didn't fit in the Deaf world, as we began attending MNH&V Events I could see the connections she was making and how she started feeling more included. She was even picking up some American Sign Language (ASL). As a parent I was gaining more support and making connections that I really needed, too. Join us at the next MNH&V event to experience this yourself.

IN YOUR CORNER

with Leslie Carnegie-Hilde

Lived Experiences

Minnesota Hands and Voices events are for ALL MNHV Families who have a child who are deaf or hard of hearing. Whether you live in the metro area or in greater Minnesota, all MNH&V Events are open to you. Plan a road trip or a vacation and take in a MNH&V family event along the way. Family events are not only free and fun; they are a rare chance for your child who is dhh to find new friendships with other children who are dhh. Siblings can find support and commonalities with other sibilings. For parents there is always a bonus educational takeaway, plus an opportunity to meet other parents whose parenting journey is remarkably similar to your own. For every 1,000 children, only two to three are born with a detectable level of a hearing difference in one or both ears. Statistically it is a challenge to find other families with children who are dhh. MNH&V family events are worth the drive.

If you're unable to drive, check out the interactive virtual events. These were started due to the COVID-19 pandemic



but MNH&V will continue to hold both virtual and In-Person Events, check out the upcoming events at <https://www.eventbrite.com/organizations/events> or follow the QR code below.

All events at MNH&V will provide accessibility features as needed or when requested during the registration process through Eventbrite. If you have any issue registering on Eventbrite, feel free to contact me directly.



Leslie Carnegie-Hilde
Event Cordinator
leslie.carnegie-hilde@lssmn.org

They organize and lead family events, represent MNH&V in the community and participate in family support activities. Your personal experience of the challenges and joys of parenting a child who is dhh helps support other parents who are just starting their journey. Candidates for this position must be fluent in Somali. To find out more or to apply and send a resume, please contact;

Elena Miranda - Lead Cultural Parent Guide
elena.miranda@lssmn.org
651.265.2383

CONTACT

- 651.265.2435
- mnhv@lssmn.org
- mnhandandvoices.org
- [@MNHandsandVoices](https://www.facebook.com/MNHandsandVoices)
- [@mnhandsandvoices](https://www.instagram.com/mnhandsandvoices)

MNH&V TRANSITION TALK with MEC

Minnesota Employment Center (MEC) is a program that provides career solutions and customized support for the Deaf, DeafBlind and hard of hearing communities in Minnesota. MEC is a collaboration between Rise Incorporated and ThinkSelf, with support from the State of Minnesota. This program supports people ages 16-24 and who are deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing and are in school-to-career transition, career exploration, and career planning leading to competitive and supported employment.

MEC team members have worked with hundreds of transition-aged youth in Minnesota from all work backgrounds to discover new skills, explore career opportunities and find meaningful work.

Program Features Include,

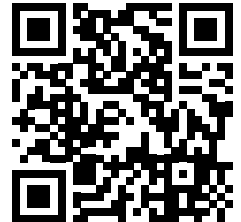
- Job placement.
- Coaching.

- Job-seeking skills.
- Work Evaluations.
- Job try-outs.
- Job shadowing.
- Individualized career planning.
- Goal setting support.
- Job retention.
- Career support.
- Occupational communication support.
- Education.
- Job placement.
- Resume development.
- Other supports.

MEC is a statewide program that offices out of multiple locations. Locations are in Saint Paul, Duluth, Faribault, Moorhead and Saint Cloud. Schedule and location of services determined by individual need. Hours are Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 4:30 pm



Minnesota
Employment
Center



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Welcome to MN Hands & Voices



When Callie Holmes met the MNH&V Team in 2019, she experienced something that she desperately needed but had never felt throughout her parenting journey - parent-to-parent support. She felt supported and empowered, but more importantly, she finally felt capable and confident in her ability to raise her daughter. Her life was changed, and so was her daughter's, thanks to the connections she made with other parents of deaf and hard of hearing children, parents just like her.

Callie was thrilled to join MNH&V as the Southeast Parent Guide in July 2022. She looks forward to connecting with parents and families that are at any stage of their journey. She knows that sometimes the emotions we face during a trying time are unpredictable. She wants parents to know that whether you feel confident or overwhelmed, you do not have to go it alone. Here at MNH&V, there is a wonderful community of parents that are ready to walk beside you.

Callie grew up in the Brainerd Lakes Area, where she started her family. She now lives in Steele County with her husband, their daughter, who is deaf, and their three sons. They are a family who love to stay busy, they enjoy fishing, swimming, traveling, exploring state parks, and caring for their small herd of goats.

Contact Callie at callie.holmes@lssmn.org or 507.696.7550.

¿Las fiestas se aproximan, están listos para las celebraciones?

Aproximadamente el 90% de los niños con diferencias de audición nacen en hogares oyentes, ese muy probablemente sea el caso de su niño. Con padres oyentes las barreras de comunicación pueden ser significativas, aunque depende de nosotros como padres abogar por el acceso a la comunicación para nuestros hijos.

¿Qué podemos hacer para ayudar a nuestro niños a sentirse incluidos en las celebraciones?

Inclúyalos. Hay muchas formas de comunicarse, no es necesario que sea experto en el lenguaje de comunicación del niño, pero usted puede hacer una señal visual para llamar su atención, o un toque ligero, use sus gestos faciales para comunicarse.

Instrúyase. Si usted es padre de un niño con diferencias de audición y su hijo tiene un modo específico de comunicación, usted tome clases, aprenda y practique con su niño.

Observe el entorno. Asegúrese de que el espacio para las fiestas este bien iluminado, que no haya barreras visuales que impidan la comunicación ya que nuestros niños confían mucho en su apoyo visual. No ponga centros de mesa grandes que obstruyan la visión e ilumine los espacios oscuros.

Active los subtítulos. Si planean ver una película, un partido, un desfile, investigue con antelación como activar los subtítulos, el idioma y el tamaño de estos. Esto le ayudara a que su evento fluya con naturalidad y sin estrés.

do, si nuestro niño ya puede leer puede activar o descargar aplicaciones gratis en sus dispositivos electrónicos para que transcriban la conversación. Tenga a la mano lápiz y papel en caso de lo necesite o bien por mensajes a través de su teléfono, claro esta depende de la edad de su niño.

Juegos incluyentes. Piense y prepare con anterioridad juegos acorde a la edad de su niño y que sean basados en señas o actividades físicas, o bien en el modo de comunicación de su niño.

Lugar en la mesa. Analice por un momento y determine cual será el mejor lugar para su niño en la mesa, ese lugar donde podrá tener un mejor campo visual de lo invitados y mejor acceso a las señas y conversación.

Y lo mas importante, haga sentir a su niño incluido, amado y respetado.

Felices Fiestas! Manos y Voces de MN

LATINO CULTURES

with Elena Miranda

Words of Thanks

from the community for Kathy Anderson on her retirement:

"A true ambassador for deaf education, sharing knowledge, securing the latest research and constantly advocating for the best approach in a variety of situations."

"Thank you, Kathy, for being such a fantastic partner in early identification and referral for young children with combined hearing and vision loss."

"Kathy has served the DHH community in various capacities for the last 44 years. We thank her for her service and owe her a debt of gratitude for all she's given us!"

"We are so thankful to Kathy for all she's brought to Minnesota, for all she's taught us and for all she's pushed us to do to improve the outcomes and services for DHH students, their families and their communities. We will work hard to carry on the work and mission that Kathy has come to be known for!"

"Kathy holds a wealth of knowledge about systems for children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and her heart is full of care for their wellbeing. She has left us a lasting gift of making the world better because she was on the team."

"Kathy, thank you so very much for using your deep knowledge and passion to ensure that kids in MN and elsewhere will be well supported for years to come. Best Wishes on your retirement Kathy."



Pictured: Kathy Anderson receiving her MN Hands & Voices High Five Award with Lutheran Social Service of MN President, Patrick Thueson

DEAF EXPERIENCE

with MNH&V High Five Award

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). Each year parents are invited to nominate another parent, teacher, interpreter, medical provider, community advocate, role model or anyone else who may have inspired their family!

Recipients are announced and recognized at the MNH&V Metro Family Picnic in Saint Paul in August. Greater Minnesota High Five Award recipients can be recognized in a community convenient for them. Meet this year High Five recipients and the families that nominated them.

Jay Fehrman
nominated by
Amy Rowan

pictured with
LSS of MN President,
Patrick Thueson



"Jay has gone above and beyond to assist our family with the best services and resources available for my son to thrive. He gets to eye level to interact with Clark and has attended our district meeting to provide information on educational options. He is available to communicate outside of business hours to insure information is provided quickly. We are very thankful Jay is part of our team!" - Amy Rowan

Shari Schulze
nominated by
Tanya Alemu

pictured with
LSS of MN President,
Patrick Thueson



"Shari has been working tirelessly to transition from a language facilitator to a Cued Language Transliterater for my son at his school in Prior Lake over the last three years. She has gone above and beyond to be a skilled CST by taking additional classes, participating in camps over the summer and joining the Cued Speech Association of MN board. She is an amazing individual who is kind, caring and fun. My son has excelled at school because of her help!" - Tanya Alemu

Shelly Sunderlin
nominated by
Kyle and Tyler Christopherson
pictured with LSS of MN
President, Patrick Thueson



"Shelly has provided best-in-class support to Harper. She is active in conversations with teachers, educating them on the best communication practices and considerations when working with Harper. She either participates in, or sends detailed feedback and observations in advance of school conferences and meetings we request. Shelly's response time on all communications and emails is exceptional. Her engagement and dedication to the field is making a difference. She is well deserving of a HIGH FIVE Award!" - Kyle and Tyler Christopherson

Julianne Kinney
nominated by
Mike and Becky Brainard



"Julianne was our Deaf Mentor for two years but that ended over a year ago, yet she is still a constant support when we need it. She still sends us resources when she sees some that are relevant to our situation, and I really appreciate her follow through and remaining a source of support." - Mike and Becky Brainard

Kathy Anderson
nominated by
Anne Barlow
pictured with
LSS of MN President,
Patrick Thueson



"Kathy was my son's preschool teacher 30 some years ago and was my first mentor. When my husband and I had different ideas, she gave us grace and space to make our own discoveries about what would work for our son, and guided us along the way with insights and knowledge that had not been shared with us yet, but that were critical to helping us to understanding how choices can impact outcomes. She was truly a supportive person who we trusted, and that trust ended up helping shape our son's future." - Anne Barlow

Email your 2023 High Five Nominations to mnhv@lssmn.org with "High Five Award" in the subject line.

•• Ice Cream Social ••



Find a current list of MNH&V Family events online. For more information and to register scan QR Code below



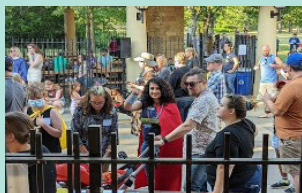
MNH&V EVENTS

STATEWIDE

•• Sibley Park Picnic ••



•• Metro Picnic ••



•• Slumber Party ••



•••• EVENTS ••••

IN-PERSON

- Ice Cream Social
- Sibley Park Mankato
- Metro Picnic Saint Paul

ONLINE

- Virtual Slumber Party

THANK YOU for helping make these events possible!
Oticon, Dairy Queen, Premium Water, Pizza Ranch, and Latinas Network



HANDS &
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MINNESOTA

709 University Avenue West
Saint Paul, MN 55104

FOCUS

NEWSLETTER

FOCUS | Supporting families with children who are deaf & hard of hearing

October 2022



Q & A
DROP-IN SESSIONS
Advocating for your DHH Child/Students



Save the dates!

Sep 12	Dec 5
Oct 3	Jan 9
Nov 7	Feb 6





Hands & Voices **ASTra™** Advocates will answer your questions.

8pm - 9pm EST
7pm - 8pm CST

For Spanish language, contact astra@inhv.org



For more information, contact ASTra Coordinator Shannon Hohrman at shannon.hohrman@lssmn.org or 218.350.0771