



HANDS & VOICES™ ILLINOIS

ILLINOIS E.A.R.S

E.A.R.S = EVENTS AND RESOURCES STATEWIDE



GUIDE BY YOUR SIDE™ ILLINOIS

"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."™

WHO ARE WE?

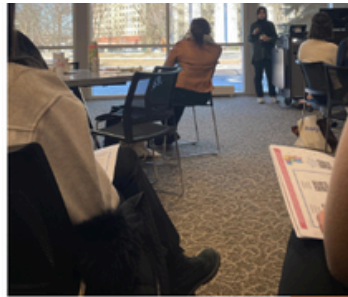
The Illinois Families for Hands & Voices mission: A parent-driven, non-profit organization that supports families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodologies.

The Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side mission: Provides free, unbiased emotional support and resources by trained Parent Guides to families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing.

If you are looking for resources, parent support, events or anything else, we want to help! View our contact information on page 30.

Insights from the ILAA Annual Conference

Written by Sara Siddiqui



The Illinois Academy of Audiology (ILAA) hosted its annual conference this past January. ILAA brings audiology professionals and hearing healthcare providers together. The 2025 conference, located in Naperville, Illinois, brought professionals from across the state. Various presentations from experts in the field were featured focusing on audiology practice, advocacy, and development.

Illinois Hands & Voices was represented during two impactful presentations. Anna Tess and Andrea Marwah spoke about Supporting Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (DHH) Students with Hearing Loss and Classroom Placement. Ginger Mullin, Kate Jordan, Carrie Balian, and Sara Siddiqui discussed Bridging Gaps Through Partnership with Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI). These presentations showcased their expertise and contributions to the profession. They also initiated reflective conversations and the need to collaborate from an audiological standpoint.

Throughout the conference, those who attended explored advanced technology within the field, discovered new products, and met with exhibitors. The event also provided professionals with the ability to further their skills through continuing education and

Page 12 | Reflecting on the ILAA Conference

10 Things I Wish I Knew About RAISING A DEAF/HARD OF HEARING CHILD



Page 21-26 | Zoom events for all!

HANDS & VOICES™ ILLINOIS GUIDE BY YOUR SIDE™ ILLINOIS

Welcome

NEW MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM

Anna Tess, Manager Parent Guide
Christy Samuel, Parent Guide
Tara Day, Parent Guide
Sara Siddiqui, Parent Guide
Sara Siddiqui, Parent Guide

Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (H&V GBS) provides free one-on-one support and resources to families with children who are deaf/hard of hearing (DHH). We have a team of Parent Guides who are parents raising children who are DHH. All Parent Guides live in IL and in addition to their own experience they receive additional and ongoing training from our program so that they are aware of resources and tools to use with the families that they work with.

Our goal is to have a variety of experiences and perspectives within our team. By doing so we can connect families with guides who can relate to their needs by sharing tips and resources from their experience and training. To connect with a guide email dsiddiqui@gmail.com.

Illinois Hands & Voices is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization 501(c)(3) organization. "What works for your child is what makes the choice right."

FLYING FAMILIES Page 6 | Welcome New Guides

Exploring Nature's Beauty and Creating Lasting Memories at No Cost

BY: MAIRA NAVA

Did you know that our children are eligible for the America Beautiful Access Pass? This pass provides free access to national parks and federal recreational lands. It is a lifetime pass available to U.S. citizens or permanent residents who have been medically determined to have a permanent disability. This does not need to be a 100% disability; it can include physical, mental, or sensory impairments that severely limit one or more major life activities, such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.



White Sands National Park

Get Your's Now

To obtain an Access Pass, visit store.usgs.gov/access need to upload an ID (such as a driver's license, passport or birth certificate) and proof of permanent disability processing fee. The ID must be in the applicant's name. You can also get an Access Pass in person at a participating recreation site. For a list of these sites, see: <https://www.dhs.gov/identityservices/obtain-pass-loc>

Page 10 | Free Access to National Parks

The Gateway Arch National Park

Dear Readers,

When my son was young I remember feeling like there was a constant “to do” list. Calling doctors, making appointments, practicing what therapists recommended on top of cooking, cleaning, sleeping and living.

If you feel anything like what I just described, please know you aren’t alone. However, I’m going to ask you to “save the date” to squeeze in something you won’t regret.

On page 5 you will see two upcoming events that we will be hosting. The first one being Mom’s Night Inn. This is a wonderful overnight retreat for moms and female caregivers. It’s an opportunity to meet many other moms who are navigating similar journeys while taking some time for pampering and enjoying meals you didn’t have to cook or clean up! This is a once a year event and a fan favorite! The other event is a family event, our SuperHEARo 5k! The 5k is a chance for parents, children and siblings to meet others just like them while enjoying a morning of fun activities and community! Bring friends, family, neighbors, because there is something for everyone!

If distance is a factor then I encourage you to join one of our zoom events. You can find these on pages 21-26. Why are these opportunities so important? These events provide parents and their children time to meet others and to hear their stories. This is incredibly important so kids don’t feel like they are the only one.

I remember when my son was young hearing stories that children with a hearing loss thought that their hearing loss would go away by the time they grew up or they thought that they were going to pass away because they didn’t know of any adults living with hearing loss. That left an impact on me and spurred me to make sure that my son had opportunities to meet others and find a community that he could relate too. We can provide that opportunity at our events and through interactions with our DHH guides.

I know it may be a struggle to find time for the “extras” I mentioned above, but those extras provide new friendships, experiences and memories that you will never regret!

See you soon,

Carrie Balian
Parent of a son who is DHH
ILHV GBYS Coordinator
HV HQ Region V Coordinator
HV HQ GBYS Program Lead

TABLE OF *contents*

4

President's Spotlight

A word from our IL Hands
& Voices President.

6

New Guides

See who has joined our
team!

7

Team Recognition

Annual recognition of
years of service.

9

DeafBlind Difference

Suggestions for children
who have vision and
hearing loss.

11

IL H&V Wrap-Ups

Check out what
has happened the
past few months!

13

All Things SPED

Information and support
for all things Special
Education.

14

Resources For All

Information about free
online and local
resources.

21

Events For All

From in-person to virtual,
there are events for all!
Check out all the pages
so you don't miss out!

29

Acronyms

So many acronyms!
Start here to learn what
they stand for.



HANDS &
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ILLINOIS

News from our Illinois
Hands & Voices President,
Amy Keslinke



President's Corner

The new year is in full swing, and we at Illinois Hands & Voices are looking forward to a great year!

This next couple of months tend to be "IEP season" in our schools. If you have questions, or just want to soak up some information related to advocating for your DHH child in school, our region hosts monthly Q&A Drop-In calls with a group ranging from seasoned advocates to parents with children transitioning to preschool from Early Intervention. For dates and more information, go to ilhandsandvoices.org/astra-drop-in/.

Spring holds some of our biggest and favorite events of the year, including Moms Night Inn and our Annual 5K.

Moms Night Inn is a yearly retreat for moms of kids who are deaf and hard of hearing. On Saturday, April 5, we will have a day of learning, connection, and relaxation, with speakers, crafts, and a delicious dinner! Attendees can choose to spend the night in our hotel or attend only for the day. On Sunday, April 6, we conclude our event with a panel discussion that is open to all (not only moms). We are planning to host the event in the Schaumburg area, and details will be coming soon. Moms Night Inn was one of my first ILHV events, and I have never looked back. You don't want to miss it!

Our Annual 5K will be on May 3 in Aurora. Not only is this a vital way that our organization raises funds to do what we do, but it's a super fun way to connect with other families while enjoying some movement in the (hopefully!) beautiful spring weather. We put a lot of time and effort into making this event the best it can be, and we would love to see you there.

As always, if you have any questions, you can always email me at amy.keslinke@ilhandsandvoices.com. I can't wait to see you at some of our events this year!

SAVE THE DATE



Schaumburg Area APRIL 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			



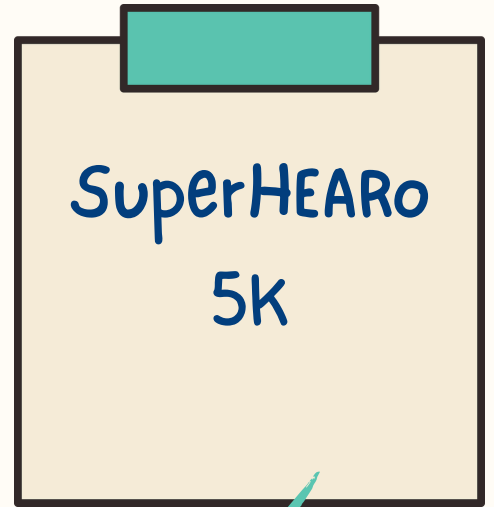
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ILLINOIS

Aurora Area MAY 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



Registration information coming soon!

Welcome

NEW MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM



We are excited to welcome the newest Parent Guides and DHH (Deaf/hard of hearing) Guides joining our team!



Anna Contreras
Bilingual Parent Guide



Christy Manuel
Parent Guide



Erum Baig
DHH Guide



Nicole Bersell
Parent Guide



Max Rollins
DHH Guide

Illinois Hands & Voices is a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization EIN 06-1724201

"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."

Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (HV GBYS) provides free one-on-one support and resources to families with children who are deaf/hard of hearing (DHH). We have a team of Parent Guides who are parents raising children who are DHH. All Parent Guides live in IL and in addition to their own experience they receive additional and ongoing training from our program so that they are aware of resources and tools to use with the families that they work with.

Our goal is to have a variety of experiences and perspectives within our team. By doing so we can connect families with guides who can relate to their needs by sharing tips and resources from their experience and training. To connect with at guide email ilhvgbys@gmail.com.

FUELING FAMILIES

Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (HV GBYS) is here to connect families to support. We provide one-on-one support from both Parent Guides and DHH Guides. I, Anita Cervantes Bowen, have been with H&V GBYS for a long time and work alongside Carrie Balian, ILHV GBYS Program Coordinator. I have two roles within our GBYS program. One is as a Senior Parent Guide and the second as a Lead Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) Guide. I graduated from the National H&V Leadership to Leadership (L2L) program in 2023 which provided me with skills to lead our DHH Guide program. Aside from myself, we have four other DHH guides. Most recently Erum Baig and Max Rollins were hired to join our DHH Guide team. Parents whose children are deaf and hard of hearing benefit from meeting with and learning of the experiences of DHH guides. Here is what Sara had to share about her experience in supporting families as a DHH Guide.

As a DHH Guide, I have come across many families, each having unique perspectives. This process can be an overwhelming and stressful time for parents. My parents expressed the emotions they experienced in the first couple of years I was born, feelings of high pressure and weight on their shoulders. 20 years later, parents today can still relate to those feelings. In my experience interacting with families, I get asked many questions, but the questions families ask me, no matter how minor they seem, are always critical and they are not just questions, they lead to so much more. These questions showcase involvement and hope. I once spoke with a mother who did not feel like she was doing enough as a parent, which could not be further from the truth. After a few meetings, I received this feedback, "Sara helped me learn how to support my daughter as a child living with hearing loss. She always listens and affirms the things I am doing right as a parent and I learn so much from her just by listening to her and her family's experiences. Words can't say what she means to me." This journey can be challenging, but utilizing your resources and having a foundational system can be a way to not only receive support but also meet the incredible folks who are a part of the Guide By Your Side Program here at Illinois Hands & Voices.

Written by Sara Siddiqui, DHH Guide

IL Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side
Team Members

Celebrating
Their

2nd

ANNIVERSARY



HANDS &
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ILLINOIS



GUIDE BY
YOUR SIDE™
ILLINOIS



Corie Fulton



Maira Nava



Megan Christoffel

In November, we recognized our Guides who had celebrated their 2 year Anniversary with IL Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side in 2024!

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our Programs and the families we serve!

Board of Director Spotlight

by Andrea Marwah, ILHV Executive Director

KELLY FULTON-ARMER

Kelly has been with the IL Hands & Voices Board of Directors for 3 years. Her background in Deaf Education is a significant asset to our organization. I had the pleasure of interviewing Kelly and getting to know her a bit better, now I share her with you. If you have questions for Kelly, you can reach her at the contact information below. Enjoy getting to know her!

Kelly.....

....lives with her husband Kaleb and ADORABLE daughter Mallory in Mohamet.

....Grew up in Pesotum and besides her time at ISU, she's lived within 30 minutes of her hometown.

....says Deaf Ed kind of chose her. As an elementary Education major she was asked to choose a room, and ended up choosing the deaf hard of hearing classroom, she found her calling and changed her major to deaf ed that day.

....Kelly taught Deaf Ed for 8 years and saw some systemic issues in early childhood, decided to go back to school to pursue her PhD in Special Education in hopes to make change for students in the future.

....Kelly brings the rural perspective to our board, she lives the farthest south of all members of our team.

....Kelly is proud of her advocacy efforts for families using the Early Intervention research she has done.

Kelly's advice to families:

"Never attend an IEP meeting alone. So much information is shared, bring anyone you want but don't go alone. If you go with someone, they will hear the stuff you may miss. Bring a friend, family member, hairdresser, just someone. Someone you trust and know, never go alone."



Fun Facts about Kelly:

- Kelly has 2 different colored eyes.
- When asked what her go to dance move is, she said swaying all the way, she has a toddler after all.
- Kelly likes her name, but if you see her ask her how Monique, the hairdresser is doing from her childhood pretend play.
- Kelly has a statue of a balloon dog on her desk.
- If Kelly would have a talking pet, she'd have a duck that would be the town gossip.
- Kelly hopes to get to Yellowstone soon.
- If Kelly were a fictional character she would be Joy from Inside Out, solving all the problems.
- Kelly would tell her younger self not to be a people pleaser. As far as what she would ask her older self? What stocks should I invest in? and, will I ever move and break the 30 minute radius?

Kelly Fulton-Armer
PhD Candidate - Special Education
Kelly.fulton91@gmail.com
<https://www.ilhandsandvoices.org/board-of-directors>



Illinois Families for Hands & Voices is a
501c3 Non-Profit Organization, EIN 06-1724201

www.ilhandsandvoices.org

THE DEAFBLIND DIFFERENCE



Learning to Eat

Written by:
MICHELLE CLYNE, ILHV BOARD MEMBER

Eating is an important skill for most children to learn. For parents, it can also be one of the most stressful! If your little one is deaf or deafblind, you might notice that learning to eat looks a little different. Let's explore some of the unique challenges and strategies to help make mealtime a positive experience for everyone.

****The Experience for Children Who Are Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing****

For deaf infants and toddlers, communication is key when it comes to mealtime. When hearing is a consideration, infants and toddlers may rely heavily on visual cues to understand what's happening. For example, they may watch your facial expressions and gestures to know if it's time to eat, how to eat, or when a new food is safe to try. This means parents and caregivers might use speech, sign language, exaggerated facial expressions, or even picture cards to help explain mealtime routines.

Another factor is environmental noise. Children who are hard-of-hearing or deaf might not hear background sounds that can sometimes alert a child to food preparation, like the hum of a blender or the sizzle of a pan. Instead, they rely on direct visual engagement. Showing them the food or letting them touch it before it goes on their plate can help bridge this gap.

****The Experience for Children Who Are Deafblind****

For infants and toddlers who are deafblind, the development of eating may be supported by touch, taste, and smell. This can make introducing new foods a slower process because they need time to explore and become comfortable with the texture and scent of each item before trying it. This can be challenging if new textures are worrisome for a child. Routines and predictability are essential. Consistent mealtime setups—like always using the same plate or arranging utensils in the same spot—help children feel more secure. Hand-under-hand guidance (placing your hands under theirs to demonstrate actions like holding a spoon) can be an invaluable teaching tool.

****What They Have in Common****

Whether your child is deaf/hard-of-hearing or deafblind, patience and creativity are your best allies. All children—regardless of sensory abilities—may experience food aversions, messy meals, and the occasional stubborn refusal to eat. Celebrating small victories, like trying a new food or mastering a new skill, goes a long way.

****Tips to Make Mealtimes Easier****

1. **Use clear communication:** For deaf children, sign or gesture what's happening. For deafblind children, use touch and consistency to help them understand.
2. **Create a sensory-friendly environment:** Minimize distractions and keep mealtime routines predictable.
3. **Make it hands-on:** Let your child touch, smell, and explore their food. This helps build trust and curiosity about eating.
4. **Be patient:** Learning to eat is a skill that takes time, especially when navigating sensory differences.

Remember, mealtimes are about more than just food—they're an opportunity to connect, learn, and grow together. With a little creativity and a lot of love, your child can thrive at the table.

Exploring Nature's Beauty and Creating Lasting Memories at No Cost

BY: MAIRA NAVA
ILHV VICE PRESIDENT & GBYS SENIOR PARENT GUIDE

Did you know that our children are eligible for the America Beautiful Access Pass? This pass provides free access to national parks and federal recreational lands. It is a lifetime pass available to U.S. citizens or permanent residents who have been medically determined to have a permanent disability. This does not need to be a 100% disability; it can include physical, mental, or sensory impairments that severely limit one or more major life activities, such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.



White Sands National Park



The Gateway Arch National Park



Castillio de San Marcos
National Mounment

We love road trips! In December 2022, we stopped to explore Castillo de San Marcos in St. Augustine on our way to Orlando, Florida. To our surprise, the park ranger at the ticket booth noticed Enrique's cochlear implant and asked if he was deaf. I confirmed that he was and inquired why he wanted to know. The ranger then explained the Access Pass and asked if I wanted to sign up. Since we were at an onsite facility, they were able to issue his card that same day.

Thanks to his access card, we have enjoyed visiting many national parks and monuments. Recently, we explored The Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Missouri, and White Sands National Park in Alamogordo, New Mexico, during our family visit over the December holidays in 2024. It's important to carry the physical card with you, as it grants access to these sites. I recommend taking the card on any trip you plan, just in case you're near a national park or monument, allowing you to explore and enjoy the beauty of nature, participate in educational activities, and create lasting memories without any cost.

Get Your's Now

To obtain an Access Pass, visit store.usgs.gov/access-pass. You will need to upload an ID (such as a driver's license, passport, green card, or birth certificate) and proof of permanent disability, along with a \$10 processing fee. The ID must be in the applicant's name.

You can also get an Access Pass in person at a participating federal recreation site. For a list of these sites, see: <https://www.nps.gov/planyourvisit/pickup-pass-locations.htm>.

If applying by mail, submit a completed application, proof of residency, documentation of permanent disability, and the \$10 fee. After verification, a pass with the owner's name printed on it will be issued.

To locate a park or monument near you, please use this website: <https://www.nps.gov/findapark/index.htm>

Let's

Chill



WRITTEN BY: ANITA CERVANTES-BOWEN, IL H&V BOARD MEMBER
AND GBYS LEAD DHH GUIDE

The "Let's Chill" event was held on January 18th and turned out to be a blast even during the icy cold weather. Families with children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) buttoned up and arrived at the Santori Library in Aurora, IL. The children were excited to interact with each other. There were also Deaf adults, Deaf grandparents, DHH Guides, parent guides as well as the President of IL Hands & Voices. The parents, siblings and children with hearing loss all enjoyed learning more about our programs and participating in planned activities.



We provided snacks, beverages, and crafts. The crafts were planned by Emma, Enrique's sister and daughter of one of our GBYS parent guides. They enjoyed making the "snow" and added penguins to their snow art by using their hands.

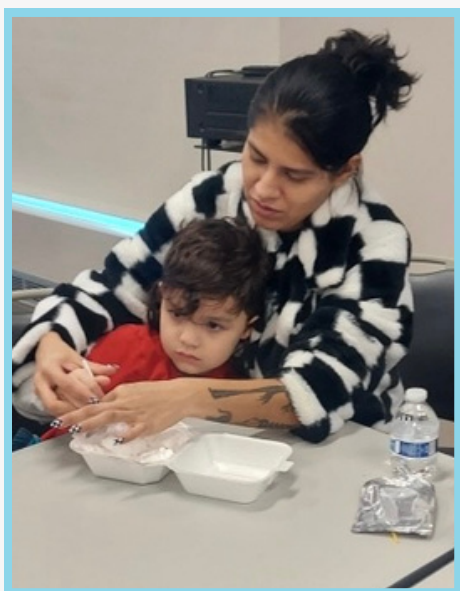
They also enjoyed listening to and watching the "Little Penguin Gets the Hiccups", written by Tadhg Bentley. The story was provided in spoken English and American Sign Language (ASL) by two DHH guides, Sara and Anita.

The children had fun walking like penguins, laughing together until it was time to leave!

Special thanks to the IL H&V Family Engagement Committee members, Anita and Maira who planned and hosted the event along with their husbands who assisted during the event.

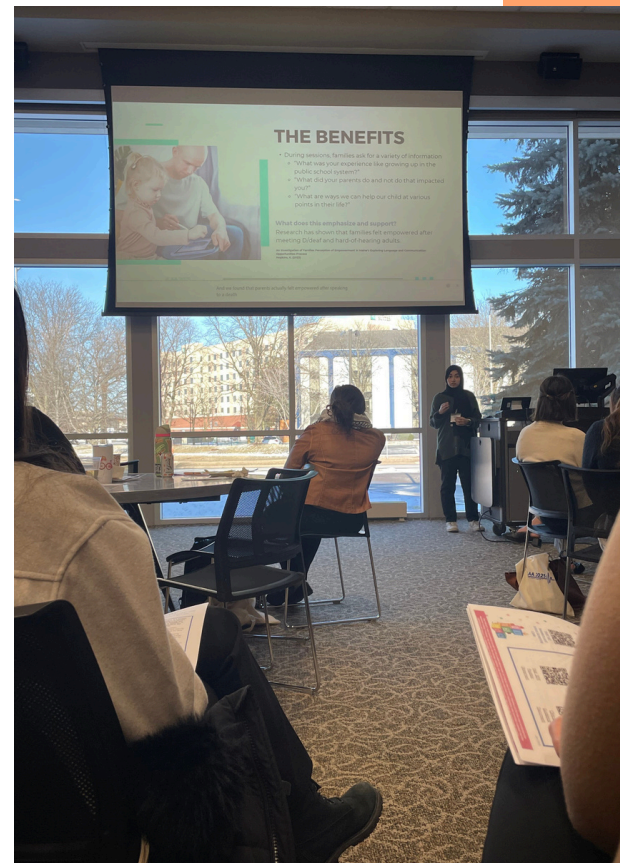
Thanks to DHH guides for attending, participating in the activities, and for sharing their experiences with the families who have children who are DHH. Thanks also to our IL Hands & Voices President who shared about our IL Hands & Voices mission and programs.

We truly enjoyed an afternoon to "chill" and make memories together.



Uniting Professionals: Insights from the ILAA Annual Conference

Written by Sara Siddiqui



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Throughout the conference, those who attended explored advanced technology within the field, discovered new products, and met with exhibitors. The event also provided professionals with the ability to further their skills through continuing education and discussions surrounding trends in the hearing health world.

ILAA continues to serve as a significant event in the community, uniting researchers, practitioners, and leaders to cultivate innovation and growth within the industry. Whether you are an audiologist, a student, an advocate for hearing health, or involved in the industry, ILAA is a great source of knowledge and networking opportunities allowing for an exchange of ideas and lasting professional relationships.



ALL THINGS SPED

Information and support
ALL THINGS SPECIAL EDUCATION

Andrea Marwah is a special education advocate supporting families with children who are deaf/hard of hearing. She is the Executive Director of IL Hands & Voices, Special Education Advocate at the IL School for the Deaf Outreach and national ASTra trainer for Hands & Voices. She is also the parent of a young deaf adult.

Special Factors. Understanding the Special Factors in IDEA will help to ensure your child received the appropriate services. Many teams are not aware of the importance of special factors or how much we should be considering them for our students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or deafblind. In fact, this should take up a good amount of time in your IEP planning meetings.

A few things to note about this important part of the law:

- There are 5 special factors defined in IDEA. The areas we must consider are behavior, Limited English Proficiency, Vision, Hearing, and Assistive Technology.
- Very important for you to know is special factor 4 and 5: 1414(D)(3)(B): (iv) consider the communication needs of the child, and in the case of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child's language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the child's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the child's language and communication mode; and (v) consider whether the child needs assistive technology devices and services.
- We must consider the communication needs. It is necessary that we seek COMPREHENSIVE language evaluations to ensure we are getting a true picture of all facets of language.
- We must consider the child's ability to directly communicate with peers and school personnel AND receive direct instruction in their language and communication modes.
- We must always consider their full range of needs including academic, functional, and developmental. We must always consider how their communication mode is impacted by environments. Our students are at risk of language delays and social emotional issues if we are not meeting their needs from the start.
- We must always consider whether our children need Assistive Technology to access the school environment.
- This is included in the required IEP sections in IL. Make sure your team spends time on the Linguistic and Cultural Accommodations Section of your next IEP.

You can view basic SPED webinars here:

<https://www.illinoissoundbeginnings.com/2019-parent-infant-recordings>

You can request state funded Special Education Advocacy Support through the IL School for the Deaf Outreach Department here: <http://www.illinoisdeaf.org/Outreach/Special%20Education%20Support.html>



SNIPPETS are:

- Simple
- Concise
- Easy to read
- Shareable
- Educational
- Information at your fingertips

Languages available:

- English
- Arabic
- Chinese
- French
- German
- Korean
- Polish
- Russian
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

Scan the QR code to
view our SNIPPET
library



Current List of SNIPPET Topics:

- Agency & Program Acronyms *
- Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder
- Aural (Re)habilitation
- All about ASL (American Sign Language)
- Audiologists
- Benefits of Music
- Bone Conduction Hearing Aid
- CHARGE Syndrome
- Choosing a Daycare
- CMV Prevention
- Common Acronyms
- Communicating with your Child
- Communication Tips
- Conductive Hearing Loss
- Developmental Therapist - Hearing (DT/H)
- Early Intervention (EI) Clearinghouse *
- Fostering Joy
- From Culture to Connection
- Hearing Device Tips
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- Microtia / Atresia
- Mixed Hearing Loss
- More Than Hearing Loss
- Navigating Early Intervention (EI) in Illinois *
- Pediatric Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist (ENT)
- Receptive Language
- Recommended Tests
- Sensorineural Hearing Loss
- Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)
- State Funded Resources *
- Unilateral Hearing Loss / Single Sided Hearing Loss
- What is Cytomegalovirus (CMV)?
- What is DSCC? *

*These topics are specific to Illinois (IL)

For more information or to suggest future topics
email ilhvgbys@gmail.com



08.24 Flier

FHSR

Foundation for Hearing and Speech Resources

The Foundation for Hearing and Speech Resources has free music, community and education programs that serve children with hearing loss. To sign up for our newsletter, please go to FHSR.org

FREE EVENTS

Our events include Bowling with Friends, Cheers for Ears and free community fun days



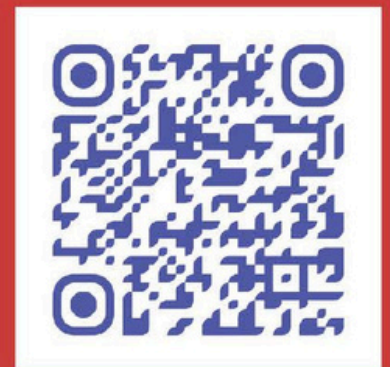
EDUCATION

The FHSR Education Coordinator serves as a resource for parents and their children living with hearing loss to assist in the transition to school, class placement, technology, paperwork, services, and accommodations.



MUSIC PROGRAMS

FHSR provides a year of tuition-free music classes for deaf and hard of hearing children through FHSR's partnerships with leading music schools throughout the Chicagoland area, providing music enrichment classes for children up to four years of age and instrument lessons for children up to 13 years of age





The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), is a supplemental nutrition program focused on healthy eating for moms, babies and kids.

FOOD. EDUCATION. SUPPORT. YOU GOT THIS.

We're here to support your family with:



Healthy Food



Breastfeeding Support



Nutrition Education



Referrals

ALL CAREGIVERS ARE WELCOME.

If you're pregnant, a caregiver, or a mom with child under 5, you can get support for you and your family.

We offer support for:

- ✓ Moms
- ✓ Dads
- ✓ Pregnant Women
- ✓ Grandparents
- ✓ Step-parents
- ✓ Guardians
- ✓ Foster parents

Those that are part of foster care, medical assistance or SNAP are eligible. Caregivers with low to medium income are also eligible.

WIC Income Eligibility Guidelines (Gross Income) Effective July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025						
Family Size	1 Person	2 People	3 People	4 People	5 People	6 People
Annual	\$27,861	\$37,814	\$47,767	\$57,720	\$67,673	\$77,626
Monthly	\$2,322	\$3,152	\$3,981	\$4,801	\$5,640	\$6,469
Twice-Monthly	\$1,161	\$1,576	\$1,991	\$2,405	\$2,820	\$3,235
Bi-Weekly	\$1,072	\$1,455	\$1,838	\$2,220	\$2,603	\$2,986
Weekly	\$536	\$728	\$919	\$1,110	\$1,302	\$1,493

Contact your local WIC office for more details.



YOU'RE BUSY. WE KNOW. 15 CEDA WIC LOCATIONS IN COOK COUNTY.

ALBANY PARK

2754-58 W. Lawrence Ave.
Chicago, IL 60625
Phone: (773) 878-0578

DES PLAINES

400 O'Connor Dr.
Des Plaines, IL 60016
Phone: (847) 294-1802

HANOVER PARK

1515 E. Lake Street
Hanover Park, IL 60133
Phone: (630) 289-3800

MAYWOOD

411 W. Madison St.
Maywood, IL 60153
Phone: (312) 597-2916

OAK PARK

6026 W. Roosevelt Rd.
Oak Park, IL 60304
Phone: (708) 445-3314

CHICAGO HEIGHTS

209 Glenwood Rd.
Chicago Heights, IL 60411
Phone: (708) 754-4576

DIVERSEY

4622 W. Diversey Ave.
Chicago, IL 60639
Phone: (773) 545-7159

HOWARD

1516 W. Howard St.
Chicago, IL 60626
Phone: (773) 338-7334

MORTON GROVE

6421 Dempster St.
Morton Grove, IL 60053
Phone: (224) 534-7433

ROLLING MEADOWS

Eastpark Apartments Office
Building, 1st Floor
2272 Algonquin Pkwy.
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008
Phone: (847) 670-6980

BLUE ISLAND

12940 S. Western Ave.
(entrance off High Street)
Blue Island, IL 60406
Phone: (708) 371-5728

HARVEY

53 E. 154th St.
Harvey, IL 60426
Phone: (708) 339-3614

IRVING PARK

3948 N. Lowell Ave.
Chicago, IL 60641
Phone: (773) 685-1507

OAK LAWN

5535 W. 87th St.
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
Phone: (708) 423-1131

SUMMIT

5818 S. Archer Rd
Summit, IL 60501
Phone: (708) 458-0012

CONTACT US!



Monday - Friday; 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Ask about our Saturday hours!
Walk ins welcome!

(855)WIC-CEDA
(855)942-2332
www.cedaorg.net
wic@cedaorg.net

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877- 8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- email:**
program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. 5/5/2022



DONATE ❤️

<https://tinyurl.com/ilhvdonate>



Double Your Donation!

Help us support IL families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing!



Double your impact! Many employers offer matching gift programs that can double or even triple your donation to Illinois Hands & Voices! Check with your HR department to see if your employer participates.

For more details from IL Hands & Voices, send an email to: executivedirector@ilhandsandvoices.com

Illinois Hands & Voices is a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization EIN 06-1724201
"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."™

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Guides share with families:

- ▶ Their unique lived experiences
- ▶ Technology tips
- ▶ How they navigate social situations
- ▶ How they developed their personal identity
- ▶ And so much more



NOW

Contact us to get connected for free!

224.343.1873 Voice/Text

ilhvgbys@gmail.com

AVAILABLE!



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GUIDE BY
YOUR SIDE™
ILLINOIS

What do you do to make sure you don't miss hearing announcements in environments like an airport?



Illinois Sound Beginnings



www.illinoisoundbeginnings.org

Resources for Families

Illinois EHQDI

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention

Everything you need to know about hearing screening, diagnostics to intervention and beyond.

Check It Out!!



Illinois EHQDI Program
at Illinois Department of Public Health
Phone: [217-782-4733](tel:217-782-4733)
Email: DPH.newbornhearing@illinois.gov



**HANDS &
VOICES™**
ILLINOIS

7:00 – 8:00 PM CST
2/19 and 4/16



**GUIDE BY
YOUR SIDE™**
ILLINOIS

Getting to Know You

Please join us on an informal Zoom meeting to get to know other families with children who have a hearing loss from across the state of Illinois.

PLEASE REGISTER AT THIS LINK

Register at: <http://tinyurl.com/ILHVSsignup2025>

OR SCAN THE QR CODE

A ZOOM LINK WILL BE SENT TO YOU BEFORE THE EVENT



This event is hosted by our Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side program.
All families who have a child that has any type or degree of hearing loss are welcome to join this event.

"WHAT WORKS FOR YOUR CHILD IS WHAT MAKES THE CHOICE RIGHT."®



Join our Fostering Joy zoom meet up

Register to receive a free journal and learn more!

**February 28th
7:30 pm on Zoom**



Register at: <http://tinyurl.com/ILHVSsignup2025>

"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."™

Illinois families for Hands & Voices is a 501c3 Non-Profit EIN 06-1724201

**Celebrating our Children
Focusing on Joy**

Ask an Audiologist

Join us for this free event on zoom with two audiologists who will be available to answer questions and provide tips!

Please register at this link
<http://tinyurl.com/ILHVSsignup2025> OR scan the QR code.
A zoom link will be sent to you before the event.



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March
16th

IL Hands & Voices Ice Skating Event

Brought to you by* IL H&V Junior Board

For Grades 8-12 * \$5 Fee + Raffle, Bring a Friend!!

3*20-4*20 @ Willowbrook Ice Arena

201 63rd St. Willowbrook, IL 60527



<https://tinyurl.com/ILHVskate>

DADS MEETING OTHER DADS



Wednesdays
8-9pm

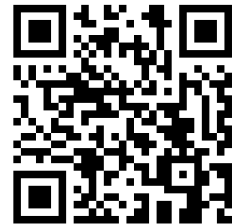
March 19
May 21

Join us for an informal Zoom meeting to get to meet other dads of children who are deaf/hard of hearing across Illinois.

All dads or father figures of children who are deaf/hard of hearing are welcome to join this safe space to talk about you and your kids.



**scan
ME!**



<https://forms.gle/jWnbd1aABGFoqzXP7>

You must register to receive a zoom link to attend the event.

ADA requests must be made within 1 week of the event,
don't delay – register today!



HANDS &
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ILLINOIS

"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."™



GUIDE BY
YOUR SIDE
ILLINOIS

Live Q&A

TUESDAY, APRIL 22ND

7:00 PM

What do you like to do for fun?

Is it hard to make friends?

What advice do you have for my family?

Join us for an opportunity to ask questions and learn more from our team of deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) Guides.

Register through the QR code or at <http://tinyurl.com/ILHVSignup2025> to receive the zoom link.



"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."™



10 Things I Wish I Knew About RAISING A DEAF/HARD OF HEARING CHILD



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GUIDE BY
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Join us for this free event on zoom as Parent Guides and DHH Guides share things they wish they knew sooner, sharing practical tips and answering questions too!

Date & Time

May 28th
7:30 PM CST

Register at: <http://tinyurl.com/ILHVSignup2025> or scan the QR code. A zoom link will be sent to you before the event.



Illinois Hands & Voices is a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization EIN 06-1724201

"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."™

DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE HEARING LOSS?



"It's changed my world...(the Institute) opened my eyes to the diversity of hearing loss."

Do you have questions about communication options, language development, amplification, social-emotional development and school programs?

All of your questions can be answered in one place!

INSTITUTE FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

JUNE 10-14, 2025



Visit <https://go.uic.edu/InstituteVideos> for videos about the Institute's powerful impact on families.



What is the Institute?

The Institute is a free program for parents of children (through age 6) who have a significant hearing loss. Parents and caregivers will learn about hearing loss and their child's individual strengths and needs. Participants will also meet other parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Mission Statement

The Institute provides information and support to families so they can make informed decisions on behalf of their child who is deaf or hard of hearing. The Institute was summarized by one parent as "life-changing. There are people that value you for who you are, and they are only here to help..."

“Finding community here and having my son find community and people who share part of his identity is priceless.”

Who Sponsors the Institute?

The Institute receives support from:

- Department of Human Services (DHS)
 - Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)
- Illinois School for the Deaf (ISD)
- University of Illinois Chicago’s Division of Specialized Care for Children (DSCC)
- Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
- Department of Public Health (DPH)
- Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago

“I felt like I was all alone. And now I feel like I have a community of families that I can call when I need to talk to them about anything.”



More About the Institute

What do children do? Each morning the children go to classrooms with experienced teachers of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Children receive hearing, psychological, speech, language and educational evaluations. Children will also have the chance to play with other children who have hearing loss.

What do parents do? Parents attend daily lectures by experts in the field to learn about raising a child with hearing loss. They also meet in small groups to discuss specific concerns and connect with other caregivers. Parents meet with professional staff to review the evaluations for their child. They also have the opportunity to learn about various communication modes used with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Lecture topics include:

- Child Development
- Language Development
- Types of Hearing Loss
- Parent Rights
- Communication Choices
- School Programming
- Hearing Aids, Cochlear Implants
- Deaf Culture

Where is the Institute? The Institute is at the Illinois School for the Deaf in Jacksonville, Illinois. Jacksonville is 30 miles west of Springfield on Interstate 72.

What about siblings? Brothers and sisters can come to the Institute. They participate in activities for their age group. Siblings also stay with their families in the dorms and go to recreational activities.

What does it cost? There is no cost for families who come to the Institute. Meals and housing are provided at no charge on the campus of the Illinois School for the Deaf. This week is free!

Who works at the Institute? Professionals from all over Illinois come to the Institute. They come from hospitals, schools, colleges, private centers, ISD, DSCC and DPH.

How Do I Get More Information About the Institute?

Contact Division of Specialized Care for Children at (800) 322-3722 or dsccinstitute@uic.edu.

Visit our website: dsc.uic.edu/events/2025-institute-for-parents-of-preschool-children-who-are-deaf-or-hard-of-hearing/



State of Illinois

J. B. Pritzker, Governor

Illinois Department of Human Services

Dulce Quintero, Secretary

DSCC, DPH and DHS/DRS do not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, their programs and activities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Directors are responsible for compliance. DSCC (217) 558-2350 and DHS/ISD (217) 479-4200 (voice/TTY) or <http://illinoisdeaf.org>.

ACRONYMS

HERE ARE SOME ACRONYMS THAT YOU MAY SEE THROUGHOUT THIS NEWSLETTER OR IN INFORMATION ONLINE

1-3-6 - Hearing screened by 1 months of age, Diagnostic testing by 3 months of age, and enrolled in Early Intervention and parent support by 6 months of age

AAP - American Academy of Pediatrics

ADA - Americans With Disabilities Act

ASL - American Sign Language

CMV - Cytomegalovirus

DBA - Doing Business as Agreement

DEI - Diversity & Equity Infusion

DHH - Deaf Hard of Hearing

EHDI - Early Hearing Detection & Intervention

IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IDPH - Illinois Department of Public Health

IEP - Individualized Education Program

ILHV - Illinois Hands & Voices

ISRC - Illinois Service Resource Center

GBYS - Guide By Your Side

JCIH - Joint Committee on Infant Hearing

LTF - Lost to Follow-up

L2L - Leadership to Leadership

NCHAM - National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management

PG - Parent Guides (parents of children who are deaf/hard of hearing)

SNIPPET - Simple N Informative Parent-to-Parent Education Tools

Learn more on common acronyms here:

<https://www.illinoissoundbeginnings.com/acronyms>

Illinois Hands & Voices, Guide By Your Side does not support or endorse any specific organization, communication or amplification choice.

The information in this newsletter is to simply share with families and professionals the resources and events available to them.

FIND US HERE...



Follow us on Social Media:



@illinoishandsandvoices



@ilhandsandvoices

IL Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (ILHV GBYS)

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Andrea Marwah, Executive Director

Email: executivedirector@ilhandsandvoices.com

Web: www.ilhandsandvoices.org

IL EHDI Program

Phone: 217-782-4733

Email: DPH.newbornhearing@illinois.gov

Web: www.illinoissoundbeginnings.org

**ILHV GBYS and IL EHDI work together on many initiatives
and call themselves The IL Sound Beginnings Team**