



GUIDE BY
YOUR SIDE™

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

©2017 HANDS & VOICES



Guiding Principles:

GBYS programs are grounded with Guiding Principles while being adapted to the priorities and administrative structures of the Hands & Voices Chapter and the state/provincial system in which they exist. The following Guiding Principles were developed in order to create a consistent set of standards by which every GBYS program should adhere:

Principle 1

Parent Leadership is required; Deaf/Hard of Hearing specific focus is maintained.

- The GBYS Program Coordinator must be a qualified parent of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing.
- All Parent Guides are parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- All GBYS Parent and DHH Guides include diverse communicators and lived experiences with unbiased attitudes.
- All GBYS Program Coordinators, Parent Guides, and DHH Guides are members of the Hands & Voices local Chapter.

Principle 2

Collaboration is essential.

- GBYS parent leaders and professional partners share peer-level status as collaborators in this family support endeavor.
- Strong, formal relationships exist between GBYS agency/program partners and Hand & Voices.
- All parties agree that the Hands & Voices chapter has philosophical and functional ownership of the GBYS program and documented by M.O.U. signed by all collaborators.

- Hands & Voices HQ promotes collaboration amongst all GBYS programs through a structure of quarterly virtual meetings and facilitating a closed online forum for discussion and sharing of resources.

Principle 3

All GBYS programs will abide by the values of the H&V organization.

- Parent leadership is actualized through program decision making.
- Professional collaboration is an essential element of the program.
- Full range of communication & service options are equitably presented.
- Exposure to Guides who represent diverse models of communication that exemplify the Hands & Voices slogan, “*What works for your child is what makes the choice right.*”
- Flexible program administration designed to meet individual state/provincial needs.
- Full and effective communication access included in all aspects of the program.
- (*See Communication Ground Rules –Online Appendix*)

Principle 4

Cultural representation and sensitivity included as core program values.

- Trainings are not held on days of cultural, religious, or ethnic holidays.
- Program works in collaboration with existing state/province cultural advocates and organizations.
- Materials strive to be available in the language of the GBYS Guides and families whom they serve.
- Programs are encouraged to have Guides who can represent the cultural needs/population specific to their state/province.
- The GBYS Program seeks to institutionalize cultural and linguistic competence in policies, structures, practices, procedures and dedicated resources.
- Deaf Cultural values are acknowledged and respected.
- Sensitivity to the diverse life experiences of all Deaf and Hard of Hearing Adults are honored and respected.

Principle 5

Uncompromised commitment to supporting families according to their unique needs, priorities and values.

- Regardless of geographical location, socio-economic status, communication method or mode, educational choices, or life choices, all families will be offered GBYS family Support.

- Family Support will be provided through GBYS that is consistent with Hands & Voices mission, vision and philosophical alignment.
- GBYS programming will ensure flexibility and be family driven based on the needs of the individual families served.

Principle 6

Cohesion and commonality benefit GBYS programs.

- GBYS programs in each state/province will share a common mission, vision, culture, and stake in each other's success that:
 - Is consistent with Hands & Voices values.
 - Shares in a relationship and in communication with one another.
 - Offers continuous training and quality improvement.
 - Is accountable for evaluation of family satisfaction and outcomes.

Hands & Voices Chapters with GBYS Programs will ensure Cohesion Indicators are followed and minimally reviewed annually and evaluated through the GBYS Program Annual Health Assessment. (*see Online Appendix*)

Principle 7

State/provincial agencies, program partners, and the Chapter have a responsibility for committed and sustainable funding.

- GBYS Parent Coordinator, Parent Guides and/or DHH Guides are paid for their time, including training.
- Flexibility for rate and type of compensation consistent with standard business practices and determined by the H&V Chapter.
- Chapter administration of the GBYS program is included in the annual budget through either a paid chapter position and/or an administrative fee.
- Reasonable expenses are to be considered and included into the budget.
- Program Coordinators attendance to the H&V Annual Leadership Conference will be supported and included in the program budget. Consideration for Guides attendance will be given as well.
- Program Coordinator and Guides Chapter membership dues are included in the program budget.

Principle 8

GBYS Guides are provided initial and on-going training plus support for their participation in Hands & Voices Chapter activities and monitored through the H&V Leveled Recognition Program.

(see Online Appendix for Leveled Recognition Program)

- H&V GBYS basic training curriculum is required at initial training including;
 - Hands & Voices Organizational and GBYS Program Overview.
 - Supporting families without bias and how to share personal stories in unbiased manner.
 - How to share information and resources for the full continuum of communication and educational options.
 - Preparation for providing appropriate emotional support and acceptance of every family's choices around communication options and other life choices.
 - Role playing common questions asked by parents served through GBYS and how to handle questions a Guide may not have an answer for.
 - Confidentiality standards and practices considerations.
 - Functional understanding of formal systems and services available to families and their children in the state/province where they live as well as National resources.
 - Regular and on-going communication within the GBYS program for Guides to exchange information, insights and inspiration.
 - Annual Self-Evaluation and personal goal setting is required.
 - On-going training is monitored annually through the Leveled Recognition Program.