



**HANDS &  
VOICES™**

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



**Family  
Leadership in  
Language &  
Learning  
(FL3)**



**Save The Date  
Registration Now Open**

**The Hands & Voices 2020  
Leadership Conference  
September 18-20th, 2020  
Franklin, Tennessee**

**Our Chapter Hosts this Year:  
Kentucky Hands & Voices  
Tennessee Hands & Voices**

**For more information and to register  
[Click Here.](#)**

**FAMILY VOICES**

Leadership in Family and Professional Partnerships

**Virtual Series  
Register Now-Time Sensitive**



Dear Family Leaders, Family-Based Organizations, EHDI Program Recipients and Stakeholders, and National Partners:

As announced in March, Hands & Voices is excited to continue the work of the Family Leadership in Language and Learning (FL3) Center through the new funding award from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). This new award capitalizes on the foundation built in the past 3 years and provides continuity into the new funding period of April 1st, 2020 - March 31st, 2024.

The purpose of the FL3 Center is to provide technical assistance to national, state and territory, and local Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) systems of care in order to increase family engagement and leadership, and to strengthen family support for families, parents, and caregivers with newborns, infants, and young children up to 3 years of age who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH).

As a technical resource center for family leaders, family-based organizations, and EHDI program recipients and stakeholders, the FL3 Center work will focus on several key areas:

- Technical assistance to EHDI program recipients and its stakeholders including family-based organizations and family leaders

## Leadership in Family and Professional Partnerships

The Leadership in Family and Professional Partnerships convening from Family Voices brings together family leaders, Title V professionals, and other stakeholders to discuss successful strategies and best practices on how to improve engagement of families, particularly those from medically underserved populations.

The sessions also cover emergency responsiveness in times of crisis; organizational development; assessment of family engagement; and more.

In place of an in-person convening, eight online Zoom sessions are scheduled from April 21 to May 19.

There is still time to join for the final four webinars and gain valuable information.

[Read more and register](#) .

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### FL3 Conducts Surveys with FBOs and EHDI Programs Information Gathered Through 2019 Surveys Available Now

In 2019 the FL3 conducted 2 separate surveys: one with EHDI designated Family-Based Organizations (FBOs) (in July) to obtain information about the work of their FBOs, programs and services provided, numbers of families served, leadership training provided, etc. To learn more, [download the FBO survey here](#).

The other survey was with EHDI Coordinators (in December) to collect information about the kinds of data collected by EHDI Programs and/or FBOs around families referred and enrolled in family to family support services and families referred and enrolled in deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) adult to family support services. In addition, we asked about the kinds of programs EHDI offered that utilize D/HH adults to serve families. To learn more, [download the EHDI Survey here](#).

- Training and education for parents and caregivers of children who are D/HH, including those from underrepresented populations, to serve as family leaders in the EHDI system
- Creation, compilation, and dissemination of relevant resources, tools, and innovative practices
- Partnership building and national leadership with EHDI system organizations, stakeholder groups, family-based and Deaf-based organizations
- Communication through multiple channels such as monthly emails, quarterly electronic newsletters, social media platforms, and website
- Evaluation of family engagement, leadership, and family support in state/territory EHDI systems

Hands & Voices is honored and motivated to lead the FL3 Center and work alongside and in partnership with all the very dedicated family leaders and EHDI systems of care professionals to improve the lives of families and the outcomes of their children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to the [FL3 Team](#).

In partnership,  
Lisa Kovacs  
FL3 Center Director



### COVID 19 Resources Available on the H&V Website

Hands & Voices has developed a [dedicated page](#) to support our Chapters and Programs, Family Leadership in Language and Learning Family-Based Organizations (FBOs), families and caregivers of children who are deaf or hard of hearing and our stakeholders.

On this dedicated page you will find topical headings with informative links of resources for families in the areas of Family Support, Education, E-Learning and Accessibility, and links to other organizations COVID-19 resources page.

Throughout this turbulent time of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic we want to provide support and resources to everyone in our community. We know this is impacting all of us at many levels in our daily lives. We are grateful for the immediate resources being developed by our partners in supporting families who have children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Please share across your networks, and if you have items to share, please send to [Hands & Voices](#).

[Click here](#) for Other COVID-19 Resources Related to Providing Services to Children with Disabilities and/or Special Healthcare Needs

Stay healthy out there and take care of yourselves and your families!

**WE ARE COMMUNITY, WE ARE FAMILY, WE ARE STRONG!**

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[Click here](#) for Critical Updates On  
Newborn Hearing Screening during  
COVID-19 from the AAP.



## SPOTLIGHT ON **SUCCESS**

### **"Stronger Together"**

By

**Amanda Hvass, Oregon Hands & Voices**

Hands & Voices of Oregon (OR H&V) has been working to intentionally grow community among families and providers. With support and encouragement from the Oregon EHDI program, the Guide By Your Side program (GBYS) has focused on seeding community and doing the work a little differently- hosting more in-person live events and casual meet-ups, Facebook live events, texting families, and family camp. Participation and parent feedback is tracked and reported back to the EHDI advisory committee quarterly. Because of this, when COVID-19 began to hit the US hard, Hands & Voices of Oregon (OR H&V) responded quickly and found success in collaboration.

With the full support of the EHDI team, the GBYS program created a video for Facebook, asking parents what they needed most. Besides getting great parent feedback, Regional Programs saw the post, asked what parents wanted, and offered to collaborate. One way GBYS was able to help immediately was by educating parents about providers trying to contact them, helping them realize the providers weren't telemarketers, and explaining the importance/benefits of their services.

Another outcome was creating a variety of networking opportunities for parents, children and providers. Through brief captioned videos texted and shared on Facebook to families, they were invited to Facebook Live events and closed Zoom groups offering the following:

- Children's Play Dates: Children connect with other DHH children around a theme led by the GBYS coordinator
- Activities: Parents interact with their children in activities led by a Hands & Voices Parent Guide and her toddlers
- Deaf Liaison: Parents and their Deaf child could meet with a Deaf interpreter and hearing interpreter to provide communication clarification without cost to the family
- Trainings: Led by Early Interventionists and an audiologist regarding how to communicate in the home and technology tips and tricks during COVID-19
- Parent Connections: Tea Time in the afternoon and Parent Cocktail Hour so parents could unwind from the stress

While many of these opportunities were a big success, some of them fizzled over the weeks. To stay current with the ever changing needs of families during this pandemic, the GBYS team met weekly and has communicated more than ever with the EHDI team to collaborate, share their activities and remind providers how family leaders support families.

When the OR EHDI team, Regional Programs and OR H&V started saying "let's do this together" it spurred on stronger relationships and empowered parents, creating an engaged community- despite a pandemic.

Oregon EHDI Coordinator Heather Morrow-Almeida offered "heartfelt gratitude for the leadership and genuine

care given to community building and support for families of children who are D/HH by the Oregon Guide By Your Side team. Their work is powerful and moving, and is an amazing complement to audiology and early intervention services."

[Website](#) [Resources](#) [Contact Us](#)

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## **Hands & Voices FL3 Project**

[FL3@handsandvoices.org](mailto:FL3@handsandvoices.org)