



Hello from the FL3 Center,

January 2024 brings us all in the Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI) system to the final quarter of this 2020-2024 MCHB/HRSA funding cycle. Hands & Voices would like to thank everyone who has supported, collaborated with, and worked alongside us at the FL3 Center.

Together we have increased family engagement and leadership and strengthened family support in the systems of care for families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. We are so appreciative of the partnerships established with all the very dedicated family leaders, Deaf/hard of hearing leaders, and EHDI systems of care professionals including but not limited to the state/territory EHDI Program Coordinators and other national partner organizations.



You will see many family engagement, leadership, and family support upcoming FL3 Center activities included in this newsletter and we encourage you or one of your team members to register and join us in these activities.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the March Annual EHDI Meeting in Denver and launching into future work with you to advance EHDI systems of care nationwide so families get the information and support they need and their children get the services they need...to play, acquire age-appropriate language and be school-ready, with the ultimate outcome of becoming healthy and happy adults.

In partnership,
Lisa Kovacs
FL3 Center Director

FL3 Office Hours

Thursday, January 25th

8 PM ET/7 PM CT/ 6 PM MT/5 PM PT

(One hour)

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Access: Dive into how to provide equity while serving diverse populations of families.

Facilitators: Rosabel

Agbayani, Consultant to Support Diversity and Inclusion Innovations, and **Ana Brooks**, Consultant to Latino Family Supports from Hands & Voices HQ

Audience: Family leaders & FBOs, EHDI Stakeholders

[Register here.](#)

[Click here](#) for summaries of past office hours. Save the date for [Support to Rural Families](#) March 28th.



[Deaf+ Access to Advocacy Program](#)

**Deaf+ Parent Support Group
On-line Meeting**

Thursday, January 25th

1 PM ET/12 PM CT/ 11 AM MT/10 AM PT

(One and a half hours)

Support Group Meeting Topic:

Addressing the social, emotional and behavioral needs of Deaf+ Children

Meeting conducted in English with ASL and Spanish Interpreters. Families outside of California are welcome.

[Click here](#) for more information available in English and Spanish

[Register here](#) for ZOOM link.



Sharing the Journey: A Virtual Conversation with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Leaders

Thursday, January 25th

7 PM ET/6 PM CT/ 5 PM MT/4 PM PT

(One hour)

An opportunity for *parents* of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children to connect with DHH leaders from [ASDC](#), [AGBell](#), and [H&V](#).

Panelists: Jennifer Luce (ASDC), Renee Lucero (AGBell), and Laura Gramer (H&V).

**Registration is limited to
parents who:**

- Have a child recently identified with a hearing difference, regardless of age.
- Reside in states/territories with limited opportunities to connect with diverse D/HH leaders.
- Have not experienced the opportunity to meet and connect with D/HH leaders.

[Register here.](#)
[Click here](#) for flyer.



**DIY Storytelling for Children
with Hearing Loss**



Latino Family Support Community Forum

Tuesday, February 6th

8 PM ET/7 PM CT/6 PM MT/5 PM PT
(One hour)

Raising a Multicultural Child

Do you provide parent support to Spanish-speaking families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing?

Explore the importance and unique challenges Hispanic/Latino parents face as they raise a DHH child, focusing on celebrating, accepting and embracing all the different cultures that foster their child's Deaf Identity and multicultural layers.

Reserve your spot and share this information from the *Hands & Voices Advisory Council for Latino Family Support*.

[Registration available](#) in English and Spanish.

[Click here](#) for flyer with upcoming topics and dates.



Thursday, February 8th

Using Experience Books

Thursday, January 25th

1 PM ET/12 PM CT/ 11 AM MT/10 AM PT
(One hour)

This interactive webinar will:

- Explore experience books and creations
- Highlight why experience books help children with hearing loss
- Define how experience books can grow listening, talking, memory, storytelling, and other critical development skills
- Give parents and families ideas, activities, and strategies for experience books

For more information and to register [click here](#).



PEN Lecture Series in Educational Neuroscience: Gallaudet University

Thursday, February 8th

11 AM ET/10 AM CT/9 AM MT/8 AM PT

Exploring the Role of Visual Language Skills in Reading Development in Deaf Children

Dr. Mairead MacSweeney, Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellow, University College London.

The lecture series focuses on the intersection of the Science of Learning (learning across the lifespan) and Educational Neuroscience (learning across early life). Scientists and researchers who are pioneers in the fields of Cognitive-Educational

1 PM ET/12 PM CT/11 AM MT/10 AM PT
(One hour)

Join The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHTI) virtual panel discussion:

"From Early Identification to Intervention: How to Promote Language Acquisition for Infants Identified as D/HH."

Expert perspectives from pediatric clinicians, early interventionists, audiologists, family/caregivers, and pediatric subspecialists will inform crucial aspects of the EHTI system.

Learn about EHTI partners' roles and discover success stories in supporting language acquisition for children that are D/HH. This event is tailored for pediatric health clinicians, including pediatricians and family medicine practitioners, but open to all EHTI system members.

Panelists: Ginger Mullin (EHTI Coordinator, Illinois), Sarah Honigfeld (Early interventionist), Sarah Delano (Audiologist), Lisa Kovacs (Family/caregiver, family-led organization), Paula Harmon (Pediatric subspecialist/otolaryngologist).

Closed captioning and an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter will be available for accessibility.

[Register here.](#)

Neuroscience, Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, and Child Development come to Gallaudet University's campus to talk about their research.

[Click here](#) for more information, future lectures, and to register.



23rd Annual Early Detection and Intervention Conference
[EHTI Conference](#)

Denver, Colorado
March 17th-March 19th

[Registration](#) now open.
Early bird pricing ends January 31st.



2024 Family Leadership in EHTI Programs Award
Deadline February 2nd.

Nominations are invited for the Family Leadership in EHTI Programs to be presented at the 2024 National EHTI Conference in Denver, Colorado from March 17th-19th, 2024. This is the eighth year for this award and will honor

Hands & Voices
Advocacy Support & Training (ASTra)
Webinar Series

Early Intervention: Advocacy in the Early Years
Sara Kennedy & Elizabeth Shuler-Krause
Nov 9, 2023 11:00am-12:00pm (MST)

Keeping our Students Safe at School: The H&V Safety Attachment for IEP Development
Dr. Harold Johnson, Sara Kennedy & Janet DesGeorges
Feb 13, 2024 10:00am-11:00am (MST)

National Association of State Directors in Special Education (NASDSE) Guidelines Training
Cheryl DeCoudre Johnson
Apr 02, 2024 10:00am-11:00am (MST)

Best Practices When Serving Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Families
Mariana Barquet & Rana Ottallah
Jun 25, 2024 10:00am-11:00am (MST)

Visit registration page for full session descriptions. Questions: astra@handsandvoices.org

REGISTER NOW!

(Click graphic)

ASTra Webinar Series

Tuesday, February 13

12 PM ET/11 AM CT/10 AM MT/9 AM

PT

(One hour)

Keeping our Students Safe at School: The H&V Safety Attachment for IEP Development

Facilitators: Dr. Harold Johnson, Sara Kennedy & Janet DesGeorges

This presentation will bring together key elements of the Hands & Voices O.U.R. Project and the Hands & Voices ASTra program.

[Click here](#) for more information and to register.



Rural Living: Tips for Raising a Deaf/Hard of Hearing Child in a Rural Community

a parent or family member of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) for providing exemplary leadership in their state EHDI system. NCHAM's Family Advisory Committee will review nominations and select the recipient. The award will be announced at the EHDI Conference.

[Click here](#) for more information and to nominate an individual.



**Deadline for proposals:
March 1, 2024**

The American Society for Deaf Children ([ASDC](#)) cordially invites submissions for the 2024 Literacy Conference, scheduled to be held from October 19-21, 2024, at the Francis Marion Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina.

See the conference itinerary, how to submit, and the Fall/Winter 2023 Endeavor issue [here](#).

EARWORM

Podcast

*Dialogues on Hearing Health
You Can't Stop Thinking About*

New [Earworm](#) Podcast:

How will we communicate with our child?

Supporting families as they face key questions when their child is diagnosed as deaf or hard of hearing.

In the latest podcast, Amy Spencer, the coordinator of early intervention and family services at the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing,

Do you live far from services with your d/hh child?

Check out the new resource [**Rural Living: Tips for Raising a Deaf/Hard of Hearing Child in a Rural Community**](#) from the *EHDI Parent to Parent*

Committee, a national committee of parents and professionals creating resources for parents.

Organizations: please share the [document](#) on websites and with teams and families.

Find it on the H&V website [here](#),
Learn more about this guide at the Denver EHDI Meeting.

shares about the critical decisions families of deaf or hard of hearing children face in the weeks and months after diagnosis and how health care providers, early interventionists, audiologists and others can provide meaningful support.

Find the Earworm Podcast streaming anywhere you listen to podcasts; also available [here](#). The podcast is produced through the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management ([NCHAM](#)). [Click here](#) for information on the first five episodes and guest presenters.

COMMUNITY CODE OF KINDNESS

Seven organizations helped to create and adopt the [Community Code of Kindness](#). We take individual and organizational responsibility for adding value and contributing to the ethical

success of this grassroots kindness movement. We accept the personal and organizational commitment to advocate for these agreements by engaging in activities that enhance and spread kindness and compassion. We invite you to see our commitments and agreements. We invite all organizations to adopt this Code of Kindness.

Imagination Storybooks by DCMF (Described and Captioned Media Program)



[Imagination Storybooks](#) by [DCMF](#) creates accessible videobooks of existing illustrated children's books to reinforce children's core values, such as kindness and empowerment, through the creative forces of children's book authors, illustrators, and narrators.

Anyone raising or educating a DHH child is eligible for a [free membership](#) for these reading materials and many other accessible and educational resources.

Spotlight on Success

Better Together in Arkansas
By Nidhi Patel, Kim Scott, and Angelina Myers

"Our mission is to bring awareness to the importance of hearing

rescreening to improve the language acquisition and outcomes of children in Arkansas.”

In the journey of raising a child who is deaf/hard of hearing, families often find themselves seeking support and guidance. Recognizing the importance of such support, Arkansas Hands & Voices and the Infant Hearing Department built a meaningful relationship centered on educating and empowering families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Understanding the value of parent-to-parent support, Arkansas' EHDI Coordinator refers families of deaf/hard of hearing children and families to children in need of a repeat hearing screening to be contacted directly by GBYS Parent Guides at one month and again at twelve months of age. This partnership has allowed 573 Arkansas families to have:

- A place for parents to network with other parents walking a similar path. To learn what works and what does not work, or to ask questions of someone who is a little further down the road of raising their child who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing.
- A place where each family could go to find the latest information about medical, educational, and technological information that pertains to our children.
- To have an opportunity to hear from professionals outside of their professional settings.
- A resource for parents to be trained in how to advocate for their children and how to teach their children to advocate for themselves as they grow and reach independence.
- A group that unifies and amplifies our individual voices to make a “unified collective voice” to advocate change or overcome difficulties faced by our children in the educational systems, and/or political issues.

Arkansas hospitals do a wonderful job screening infant hearing, but following up after a referred screen is severely lacking (80% of infants do not receive diagnostic evaluations by 3 months of age). To gain a better understanding of the barriers to follow-up Arkansas that families encounter, in 2022-23, Arkansas Hands & Voices staff participated in a Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) scholars' program that focused on academic and community partnerships and grant writing. GBYS staff and the Infant Hearing staff surveyed families to gain an understanding of the barriers faced during the newborn hearing screening process. From the families surveyed, four focus groups were created to gain a better understanding of what families have experienced and brainstorm suggestions on eliminating barriers faced. We learned that families want to be educated on “What's Next” after their child does not pass a hearing screening.

As a response to fulfilling the need for education about “what's next”, Arkansas Hands & Voices created:

- An interactive 1, 3, 6 roadmap called [“What's Next”](#) to give families resources at each phase of their child's hearing health journey.
- Short form videos to (1) Spread the 1, 3, 6 message to families and (2) Remind providers about the 1, 3, 6 goals.
 - [Video for Providers](#)

- [Video for Parents](#)

- A packet of educational materials to be given to families with a child that did not pass the newborn hearing screening. This packet includes the [Remember to Rescreen flier](#), a GBYS program brochure, the Importance of [family-to-family support](#), the Importance of [early intervention](#), and questions to consider asking medical professionals.

Arkansas Hands & Voices staff has distributed the educational packets to birthing hospitals, pregnancy centers, and pediatricians to use with families after a failed hearing screening. Our mission is to bring awareness to the importance of hearing rescreening to improve the language acquisition and outcomes of children in Arkansas.

Your state/territory could implement a strategy of similar collaboration by building mutually beneficial relationships with organizations serving families of deaf/hard of hearing children, families themselves, and the professionals that support them. The first step is understanding barriers that parents and professionals face. Once the barriers are identified, consider inviting everyone to the table to discuss solutions. Together, we can build a future where every child can thrive and reach their full potential.

Nidhi Patel, Outreach Coordinator, Infant Hearing Program,
Kim Scott, Child Health Section Chief, Arkansas Department of Health, and
Angelina Myers, Arkansas Hands & Voices GBYS Coordinator



Cydney Crawford and Nidhi Patel from
Arkansas Infant Hearing Department at Zoo
Day 2023.



Angelina Myers, Arkansas Hands & Voices
handing out educational materials at a local
event.



Mandy Jay, Arkansas Hands &
Voices, speaking to families and passing
out educational materials.

How to Submit a Request for FL3 Technical Assistance

Requesting technical assistance from the FL3 team is easy! [Click here](#) for the online form.

Hands & Voices FL3 Center Technical Assistance

The Hands & Voices Family Leadership in Language and Learning (FL3) Center Technical Assistance aids family-based support organizations, including Hands & Voices (H&V) Chapters/Programs, EHDI Program recipients, and family leaders in meeting their family engagement, leadership, and family support program objectives.





Request TA here: <https://handsandvoices.org/fl3/request-ta.html>

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