



H&V/FL3

2nd Quarter ENEWS

April, May, June 2026

Welcome to the April 2026 edition of the H&V/FL3 Center eNews

As the season of spring reminds us, growth begins with small steps, fresh ideas, and the courage to reach toward new possibilities. Across our EHDI community, this is a wonderful time to nurture partnerships, strengthen family engagement, and plant seeds for lasting systems change.



The Hands & Voices FL3 Center is here to support you through personalized Technical Assistance designed for EHDI staff, Family Engagement Liaisons, Parent Leaders, and Family-Based Organizations working to enhance outcomes for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families. Technical Assistance is available in many forms, including consultations, training, systems navigation, family leadership development, family support, and collaborative problem-solving.

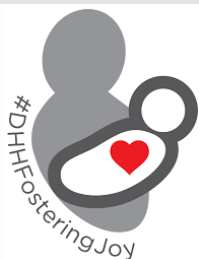
We warmly encourage you to reach out whether you are building a new initiative, navigating challenges, strengthening partnerships, or looking for innovative ways to support families. No question is too small, and no goal is too big when we work together.

The FL3 Center also provides bi-annual proactive outreach from our Technical Assistance Advisors to check in, offer support, share resources and help programs stay connected and reach their family engagement and support objectives. In addition, onboarding sessions are available for new EHDI Coordinators and Family Engagement Liaisons, helping new leaders start strong with guidance, resources, and connection from day one.

This spring, let your work bloom with renewed energy and shared purpose. Reach out, connect, and grow with us. We are stronger together when we learn from one another. #EHDI Together To request support, visit the FL3 Technical Assistance page: [Request Technical Assistance](#)

In partnership,
Lisa Kovacs – FL3 Center Core Management Team

Upcoming Events



Fostering Joy Forum Presents Rooted in Joy: Identity, Access, and Belonging

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

3 PM ET/2 PM CT/1 PM MT/Noon PT

(One hour)

What does joy look like in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) experience? Together, we will explore the power of joy as told through lived experience—by individuals who are D/HH. Registration required.

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



H&V/FL3 Leadership Webinar: Brave Conversations: Turning Conflict into Connection

Thursday April 23, 2026

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

(One hour)

Leaders who support families with Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) children often find themselves balancing mission-driven passion with complex interpersonal dynamics. Whether navigating difficult conversations with board members or staff, addressing tensions with partner organizations, or managing challenges within volunteer-driven environments, these moments can feel high-stakes—and deeply personal. Registration required.

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



O.U.R. Children's Safety Project

Tuesday May 12, 2026

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

(One hour)

Join the O.U.R. Children's Safety Project to debrief the March and April sessions around considerations for children's safety in Deaf schools.



FL3 DHH Office Hours From Information to Empowerment Through Connections

Thursday April 30, 2026

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

(One hour)

When families learn their child is deaf or hard of hearing, they are often met with an overwhelming amount of information and a sense of urgency around early decisions. Research shows that how support is delivered during this period can significantly influence not only decision-making, but also parent confidence, engagement, and long-term outcomes for children. Registration required.

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



Hands & Voices Forums entirely in SPANISH for Parents

Tuesday May 19, 2026

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

(One hour)

Small Changes, Big Achievements

We will also consider new books and videos for the [book and video lists](#), discuss topics and strategies for the next school year, and ideas for the monthly meetings from October 2026 to May 2027.

Past presentations [available here](#).
[Register here](#).

Join the [H&V Latino Council](#) as they explore how implementing small, meaningful changes in our children's daily lives—such as assigning chores, fostering advocacy skills, and nurturing a strong sense of identity—can pave the way for significant achievements in their independence, confidence, and resilience. Registration required.

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hands & Voices Releases Genetic Testing Resources Centering Informed Choice

April 15, 2026

Hands & Voices announces the completion of a comprehensive, multi-resource project supporting families and professionals in navigating genetic testing in the context of childhood hearing differences.

The project resulted in several key resources offering practical guidance for discussing genetic testing with families in respectful, balanced, and accessible ways. Perspectives from the Deaf/Hard of hearing (D/HH) community, diverse cultures, and families with children who are DHH Plus (with additional disabilities) were included.

[Click here for Press Release](#).

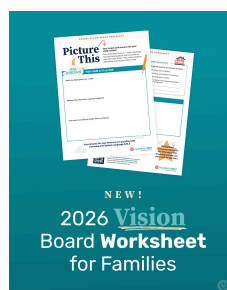
Resources and Information to Share with Families and Agencies



Hearing Habits to Optimize Device Wear Time

The [Oberkottor Foundation](#) has announced a new funding opportunity and is seeking proposals for projects that promote the use of hearing devices during all waking hours in infants and young children.

[Click here](#) for more information.
Read the full [RFP](#) here.



Parent Vision Board and Goal-Setting Worksheet

Your hopes and dreams for your child matter!

[This vision board](#) is made for families to personalize their hopes and dreams for their child, set goals, and celebrate milestones.



How to Help My Baby Say Their First Words

Has your baby started cooing and babbling? These early sounds are exciting signs that your baby may be getting ready to talk and say their first words.

[Click here](#) for an article and video for tips and LSL strategies to support baby's first words.



Top 10 Signs Little Hands Can Say Big Things!

Research shows that early exposure to sign language benefits all children, whether deaf, hard of hearing, or hearing. This resource introduces families and caregivers to 10 everyday signs through engaging illustrations and videos of Deaf signers. It offers a simple, fun way to begin signing with your baby or toddler.

[Click here](#) to start practicing the signs!
PDF available [here](#).

[Click here](#) to learn about Bilingual Stories Bookshelf app.



Supporting Success For Children with Hearing Loss

2027 Virtual Conference
January 15 – March 31, 2027
Registration opens June 15, 2026

"Many Voices, One Mission"

Our theme, "Many Voices, One Mission," reflects our belief that the children and families we serve are best supported when the full range of professional expertise and lived experience is at the table — audiologists, speech-language pathologists, Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, researchers, and educators representing diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Call for session proposals is now open.
[Submit here](#). Deadline May 26, 2026



**Registration Now Open
For the
2026 -2027
Year Long Virtual
Language & Literacy Symposium
May 1, 2026 - April 30, 2027**

This online symposium, hosted by the [ASL Up Network](#), brings together families and professionals who are committed to strengthening language and literacy outcomes for deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind children.

Participants will gain year-long access to recorded sessions beginning May 1, along with two live keynote presentations designed to inspire, inform, and support meaningful practice. Live keynote sessions will take place on April 30 and May 7 at 3-4:30 PM ET. Keynotes will also be recorded for viewing at a later time.

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

Family Outcomes after Newborn Screening Project

See the Pediatrics article [Family- Outcomes-After-Newborn-Screening](#) for an update on identifying 8 possible outcomes for families with diagnosis after a newborn screening result (this includes metabolic, hearing and cardiac screening.)

- (1) families understand their child's condition and treatment options;
- (2) families access medical care and treatments;
- (3) families manage their child's needs and routines;
- (4) families advocate for their child;
- (5) families access community resources, services, and programs;
- (6) families access social support;
- (7) individual family members maintain personal well-being; and
- (8) families feel successful in functioning as a unit.

A survey was launched to further define these outcomes and is currently being analyzed. Look for more on these topics from RTI International.

[ASL Up Network](#) is a nonprofit dedicated to ensuring every deaf and hard of hearing child has full access to language and literacy from the very start. We believe language equity is a human right and that children thrive when families and professionals work together to create rich, bilingual environments in American Sign Language (ASL) and English.

ASL UP NETWORK

Upcoming Events & News

www.aslup.org



2026 H&V Leadership Conference

September 17-19th, 2026

Westminster, Colorado

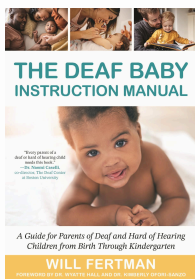
Many Trails, One Summit: Every Journey Leads Us Home

We are excited to celebrate 30 years of Hands & Voices at the Hands & Voices Leadership Conference. In 2026, we return to our Colorado roots for a national gathering of families, professionals, and leaders committed to supporting children who are deaf and hard of hearing (DHH).

[Click here](#) for all things conference.

Check back regularly for updates.

Registration and Agenda will be posted the last week of April!



The Deaf Baby Instruction Manual by Will Fertman

Book Highlight by Sara Kennedy, FL3 Center

In his book, *The Deaf Baby Instruction Manual*, parent and author Will Fertman offers a candid, refreshingly direct, and occasionally irreverent guide for overwhelmed parents navigating the early period after a child is identified as Deaf.

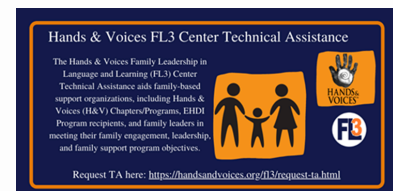
The book reflects a clear ASL-first perspective and takes strong positions on other communication approaches. Within a world where differing perspectives exist and families must make decisions within complex systems and widely varying levels of access, Fertman's work brings an accessible and unapologetically prescriptive voice to conversations about language, development, and early decision-making.

“My experience of that first year was anxiety... I regret not just enjoying him more as a baby,” said Fertman. That “don’t panic, but use this time wisely” message drives the book, offering information he wishes he had known from Deaf researchers, educators and lived experience. The book features a “Quickstart” section, designed to get the sleep-deprived parents through the first hurdles, and then dives into a ringside seat to vignettes of family life, (including an older sibling who doesn’t always want to sign in the moment). Practical tips are offered about how to start signing, dealing with hearing tech, how to share books and start playgroups, and even reminders about reconnecting as a couple while navigating the occasional nonhelpful professional or extended family member’s comments.

Sprinkled throughout are Deaf professionals across many different lines of work or ethnicities, a brief overview of deaf education in the U.S., and explanations of concepts like dinner table syndrome, alongside honesty and humor (including encounters with faith healing.) Fertman balances the urgency of language access in the critical early years with veteran parent’s perspective. “Look at your baby as an adult”, Will reminds us. What will they need to get a date, get a job, and perhaps move out of the basement? That perspective—seeing your child as the adult they will become—offers families much to explore as they find their footing in these early years.

How to Submit a Request for FL3 Technical Assistance

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



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