



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

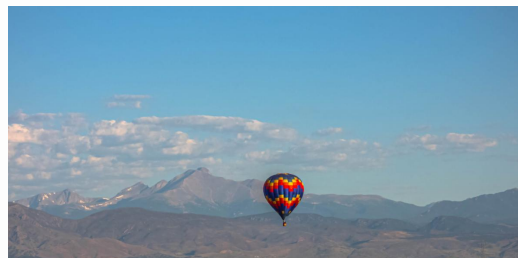


## H&V/FL3

### 3rd Quarter ENEWS

July, August, September 2026

In April, the FL3 Center closed out Year Two and transitioned enthusiastically into Year Three of our five-year funding cycle. Our team would like to take a moment to reflect on the progress we have made together.



Over the past two years, we have continued to strengthen family-to-family support, expand opportunities for family leadership, and deepen partnerships that help families of children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing thrive. Together, we have developed resources, provided training and technical assistance, fostered meaningful connections, and elevated the voices and experiences of families and communities. The FL3 Center exists to increase family engagement and leadership and strengthen family support within EHDI systems of care, ensuring that children and families have the opportunity to optimize language, literacy, and social-emotional development.

What we have accomplished is a testament to the dedication, passion, and collaboration of family leaders, Deaf and Hard of Hearing leaders, family-based organizations, EHDI programs, and countless partners across the country.

As we begin Year Three, we are energized by the possibilities ahead. There is still important work to do, but we move forward with confidence, knowing that lasting systems change happens through relationships, shared learning, and a collective commitment to families. Every training delivered, every partnership strengthened, every family leader supported, and every conversation held brings us one step closer to our shared vision.

To all our partners and supporters: thank you for the expertise, lived experience, and unwavering commitment you bring to this work. The challenges we face are complex, but our community continues to demonstrate that when families, professionals, and Deaf and Hard of Hearing leaders work together, meaningful change is possible.

As we enter this next chapter, we invite you to continue learning, leading, and growing alongside us. Thank you for being part of the FL3 community.

To request support, visit the FL3 Technical Assistance page: [Request Technical Assistance](#)

In partnership,  
Lisa Kovacs – FL3 Center Core Management Team



### **FL3 Office Hours**

#### **What Constitutes Robust Family Engagement in a State/Territory?**

**Thursday July 23, 2026**

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

**(One hour)**

Family engagement is widely recognized as an essential component of effective EHDI systems, but what does “healthy” or meaningful engagement actually look like in practice? Participants will reflect on indicators of strong family-to-family support, system integration, equity, responsiveness, and continuous improvement. We will discuss indicators explored from a research project in 2023 designed to assess certain characteristics of family-based organizations and parent engagement in each state. This conversation is designed to gather perspectives, identify emerging themes, and explore what quality family engagement could look like across diverse EHDI systems and communities.

**Presenter:** Janet DesGeorges (Executive Director, HQ)

FL3 Office Hours is intended for both EHDI program staff and family leaders.  
Registration required.

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

---



### **H&V/FL3 Leadership Webinar:**

#### **Are We There Yet? The Partnership Continuum:**

#### **A Tool for Growing Meaningful Partnerships in EHDI Systems**

**Thursday August 13th, 2026**

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

**(One hour)**

Leading self, leading others, and leading systems: for parent leaders wanting to take the baton, that is the leadership journey. For those who support families with Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) children, family leaders need tools to measure progress in partnership development with organizations in this world of shrinking resources and higher demands. Partnerships don't develop without intention, and they don't all need to reach the same

destination. Yet EHDl programs and family-based organizations are increasingly asked to demonstrate meaningful family engagement, shared leadership, and sustainable collaboration. This webinar introduces the revised Partnership Continuum Annual Rating Tool, a practical framework designed to help family leaders, EHDl staff, and partner organizations assess their current relationships, identify strengths, and set realistic goals (if needed) for growth. Participants will explore the six stages of partnership development, from coexistence to co-production, and examine five key dimensions of effective collaboration: relationship building, communication, data sharing and referrals, decision-making, and sustainability.

**Presenter:** Sara Kennedy (HQ Staff)

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

---



**O.U.R. Children's  
Safety Project**

**Second Tuesday of the month.  
October 2026 thru May 2027  
12 PM ET/11 AM CT/10 AM MT/9 AM  
PT  
(One hour)**

[Check back here](#) for Community of  
Learners sessions to further safety for  
children who are DHH in all their  
environments. See you Oct 13th!



**Hands & Voices  
Forums entirely in SPANISH for  
Parents**

**Forums meet quarterly  
8 PM ET/7 PM CT/6 PM MT/5 PM PT  
(One hour)**

[Check back here](#) for sessions  
resuming in the fall.



Join us in Celebrating 30 Years of  
Hands & Voices, HQ and Colorado Hands & Voices

September 17-19, 2026  
Westminster, Colorado

Many Trails, One Summit: Every Journey Leads Us Home

Important Dates

**Early Bird Pricing Ends August 12th, 2026**

(Prices increase by \$50.00 On August 13th)

[Register Here](#)

**Conference Rates for Lodging End August 15th, 2026**

[Book your room here](#)

[Click Here for Everything Conference](#)

The Seaver Vision Award

Nominations Being Accepted Until August 14th,  
2026

The Seaver Vision Award was established in 2012 and is given annually to a parent, professional, organization, or agency that exemplifies the values and commitment to the Hands & Voices vision.

[Click here](#) for more information and to submit a nomination.



Join us for dinner, a cash bar, celebrations,  
and lots of smiles and laughter as we  
Celebrate 30 Years as a Nonprofit!

September 17, 2026  
5:30-9:30 PM  
Westminster Marriott

[Tickets available here](#) for dinner and entertainment  
for those not registered for the conference. (\$75)

Conference Attendees:

---

## Resources ,Information, and More to Share with Families and Agencies

---



Families often have questions about the why and how of keeping hearing devices on their little ones with hearing loss.

Wearing hearing devices all waking hours helps your baby's brain build connections through sound and interaction – strengthening the pathways they need to listen, talk, read, and thrive!

[Wear Time collection](#) shares simple tools to help you along the way.



### SparkMinds: Now Welcoming Founding Families

[SparkMinds](#) is an app that gives parents of DHH children personalized, day-to-day guidance for turning ordinary moments, like snack time, getting dressed, or a walk outside, into rich opportunities to build listening and spoken language. Every activity recommendation is tailored to the child's specific interests and stage, and grounded in the science of early language and brain development.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the app, creator Uma Soman, Ph.D., LSLS Cert. AVEd. and this opportunity to finalize the app for Founding Families with children under six years of age.



**Let's Eat**  
**ASL for Food & Dining**  
**Tuesday, July 21, 2026**  
**8 PM ET/7 PM CT/6 PM MT/5 PM PT**  
**(One hour)**

Join us for a fun evening of learning, practicing, and building confidence using American Sign Language through one of everyone's favorite topics—food!

In this fun and interactive class, participants will learn signs and conversations related to food, drinks, cooking, restaurants, and everyday dining experiences.



**Free Beginner ASL Classes |**  
**Cursos de ASL para principiantes**  
**en otoño**

**Mondays Aug. 17th- Sept. 7th**  
**7 PM ET/6 PM CT/5 PM MT/4 PM PT**  
**(One and a half hours)**

This beginner-friendly ASL class is designed for individuals and families interested in learning American Sign Language in a flexible, supportive environment.

Instruction will be provided in ASL, with voice interpretation available in

[Register here.](#)

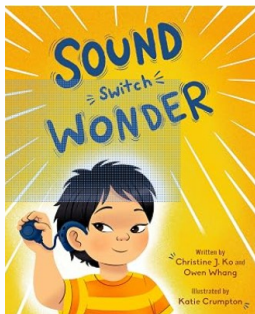
both English and Spanish to support  
multilingual learners.

[Click here](#) to learn more about ASL  
UP Network and all they have to offer.

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

**Skylark Bio**, a gene therapy company has initiated their clinical study called SONIX for children with **GJB2-mediated hearing loss** (*Connexin 26*). This study is evaluating the safety and efficacy of their investigational gene therapy, SKY-GJB2. Information about the study, including an overview, eligibility criteria and active study sites, can be found on the study website, [sonixstudy.com](https://sonixstudy.com). Further study details can be found at [clinicaltrials.gov](https://clinicaltrials.gov).

**Skylark Bio**



What's New in Children's Books

### ***Sound Switch Wonder***

By Christine J. Ko and Owen Whang

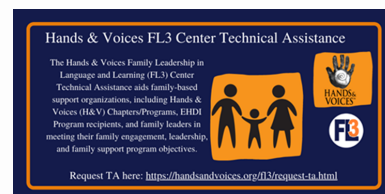
Submitted by Sara Kennedy, Hands & Voices HQ

This book caught my eye because of the writing/illustration team. *Sound Switch Wonder* was written by a mother of a child with a hearing difference, her young son who was born deaf and uses cochlear implants, and an illustrator who also has lived experience growing up with Goldenhar syndrome and unilateral deafness. Christine Ko, who is also a professor of dermatology, was inspired to write this book after seeing a classroom display of differences when her son was in first/second grade. There were no books that they could find featuring a child with hearing differences or cochlear implants other than highlighting hearing technology. She wanted a story. What does it mean to be deaf, to experience silence? The boy likes both sounds and silence. He wonders in the book how to answer his parents' questions about that. He thinks hard about it, because his parents "always answer my questions". Would he find "no sound" in the library? In the museum? The pool? This book, with its brief text and cozy illustrations, invites reflection. The boy understands that he can choose between silence and sound, and that's a wonder. As an enlightening supplement, check out the authors' appearance on a local podcast (**Dateline New Haven**). This thoughtful pair expands upon the book and their personal experience. Christine shares that her son was misdiagnosed ("just being a boy") and his auditory neuropathy was not found until he was older. Owen himself shares his thoughts about his deafness and how he takes brief breaks from listening at school. The authors' and illustrator's personal notes at the end of the book also make for a great read and discussion for an older child, making this book an even better choice for any display of books on differences.

### **How to Submit a Request for FL3 Technical Assistance**

**Requesting technical assistance from the FL3 team is easy!**

[Click here](#) for the online form.





Try email & social marketing for free!