

MYTH BUSTERS

HANDS & VOICES EDITION



HANDS &
VOICES™

Think you know Hands & Voices? Let's bust some common myths and set the record straight. HV is a community of families working together to support children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (D/HH) – of all ages, backgrounds, and communication styles.



MYTH: H&V only supports families with young children or new diagnoses.



FACT: H&V supports families from birth - high school. Our Guide By Your Side (GBYS) Program, Advocacy, Support, and Training Program (ASTra), Fostering Joy, O.U.R. Children's Safety, and our chapters, provide support to families with DHH children of all ages..



MYTH: H&V only serves families who sign.



FACT: We support families regardless of how they communicate with their DHH child – spoken language, sign language, cued speech, bilingual/bicultural, total communication– Our motto is: *"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."*™



MYTH: H&V only serves "oral families."



FACT: We support families regardless of how they communicate with their DHH child – spoken language, sign language, cued speech, bilingual/bicultural, total communication– Our motto is: *"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."*™



MYTH: Some H&V Chapters don't follow the mission & just do their own thing.



FACT: All Chapters are united by the same core mission and values. Local programming may vary based on funding or needs of the community, but the heart of H&V – parent-driven, non-biased, inclusive support – remains consistent.



MYTH: H&V only serves families; professionals and educators aren't involved.



FACT: Supporting families and family engagement is at the heart of what we do at H&V. That said, we collaborate with professionals and educators; we believe we are stronger together!



MYTH: H&V only supports families with hearing parents.



FACT: H&V supports all families with DHH children, including families with parents who are DHH themselves! These families may face different challenges than those with hearing parents, but H&V recognizes that DHH parents need support too—and we are here for you!



MYTH: H&V is just for families who are outspoken or “advocate-y.”



FACT: Leadership comes in many forms. You don't have to be loud to make a difference. Listening, showing up, and supporting others are all powerful leadership traits.



MYTH: Dads aren't involved.



FACT: Dads are here — leading, mentoring, and supporting and H&V is working to engage more fathers in our chapters and leadership.



MYTH: H&V is a fully-funded organization with a big HQ and tons of staff.



FACT: H&V is a grassroots nonprofit fueled by volunteers, part-time staff and passion. Our HQ isn't a fancy building—it's laptops at kitchen tables. Most of our staff are part-time. While we may have job titles—it's truly, “other duties as assigned” here at HQ.



MYTH: H&V Leaders are all hearing parents.



FACT: H&V Leaders are usually parents, as we are a parent-led organization, but some parent leaders are DHH themselves! H&V is committed to infusing DHH lived perspectives into the work we do! Check out our amazing H&V HQ DHH Advisory Council!



MYTH: H&V Chapters are brick-and-mortar centers.



FACT: H&V is a community, not a building. We meet families where they are — in person, online, on the phone, and at our conference.



MYTH: If my family is not in crisis, H&V isn't for me.



FACT: H&V is for every family, in every phase – whether you're celebrating milestones or fighting for an IEP placement– family support is always available for you at H&V.



MYTH: We don't need H&V because we already have a great clinic or school.



FACT: H&V offers something unique: emotional support, connection, and real-life lived experience from parents who have walked the same path as you.



MYTH: H&V Leaders are "done" with their journey.



FACT: Our Parent Leaders are parents still living the journey – whether their child is 3 or 23. The passion to make a better world for our children and all DHH children is what drives the work.



MYTH: H&V leaders all look the same.



FACT: Diversity is a priority—and a work in progress. We are committed to uplifting and reflecting all families on our staff, in our chapter leadership, presenting at conferences and more.

FACTS:



H&V is powered by parents.



H&V is inclusive of all communication opportunities.



H&V is for all families, at every stage.



H&V is a community,



H&V works best when we work together.



FINAL MYTH: You have to do this alone.



FACT: You don't. And you shouldn't. That's what we're here for. Reach out to your local chapter to get involved!