



Washington Hands & Voices

What works for your child is what makes the choice right

Summer 2013

Hands & Voices is dedicated to supporting families with children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodology. We're a parent-driven, non-profit organization providing families with the resources, networks, and information they need to improve communication access and educational outcomes for their children. Our outreach activities, parent/professional collaboration, and advocacy efforts are focused on enabling deaf and hard-of-hearing children to reach their highest potential.

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Welcome to the Summer 2013 Washington State Hands & Voices newsletter. Our goal is to inform, involve and inspire families with children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

CDHL: an Innovative Way to Serve Our Children's Needs

Did you know Washington State has 295 school districts all serving deaf and hard-of-hearing kids differently? Are you wondering if your child's needs are being met appropriately?

The questions to ask are:

- How does your child get access to information?
- Is the school district responsive to the child's needs?

In 2009, the Washington State Legislature passed HB 1879 into law. This legislation established a statewide umbrella agency named Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss (CDHL) that includes Washington School for the Deaf. CDHL began gathering information on strengths and gaps in the current service delivery models for deaf, hard-of-hearing and deaf blind children from birth – 21 years old.

Fast forward to 2013...

Through CDHL, Washington State is now a leader in linking children to services, and the nation is abuzz with "the Washington model."

Why so exciting? CDHL offers a Statewide Outreach Team to support school districts in their commitment to provide a free and appropriate education for their deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Currently CDHL has contracts with 40 professionals with expertise in providing services to kids that are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

These professionals are located all over the state and include Audiologists, Bilingual (ASL/English) Specialists, Birth-to-5 Specialists, Certified Educational Interpreters, Certified Listening & Spoken Language Specialists, Counselors, Curriculum & Assessment Specialists, Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Program Administrators, Multiple Disabilities Specialists, School Psychologists, Signing Exact English (SEE) Specialists, Speech/Language Pathologists, Speech-to-Text Transcribers, Teacher of the Deaf/Literacy Specialists, and Transition (18-21 years old) Specialists.

What does this mean for parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing children? CDHL creates a team based on your child's specific needs. Even if your child doesn't qualify for special education, you can ask CDHL to get involved. Additionally, parents can include CDHL specifically in an IFSP, IEP or 504 so that your children's needs can be assessed by experts through:

- **Observation and consultation** with General Education teachers, Special Education teachers, Educational Interpreters, Speech/Language Pathologists, Program Administrators and Family Resource Coordinators
- **Child-specific Services (ages Birth – 21)** with Classroom Observations and Recommendations, Resource

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Interpreter Standards: A Reason to Celebrate

Washington State Legislature passed HB 1144 into law in May 2013. This bill requires the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to adopt performance standards for educational interpreters. It also creates a timeline for educational interpreters to meet certain performance and certification requirements.

That's huge progress—Washington State is now the 43rd state in the US to have these standards. The standards decided upon will take effect in the 2019-2020 school year.

What are these educational standards? They haven't been determined yet.

The PESB has until December 31, 2013 to determine the standards. The recommendation the Board will consider is 3.5 on the EIPA and passing the written EIPA or RID certification and passing the EIPA written test.

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Recommendations, Curriculum and Materials, IEP/IFSP/504 Development and Transition Support, Evaluations: Speech, Academic, Psychological, Language (including ASL), Listening Skills, Audiology/Technology Support

- **Program-specific Services** with ASL/English Bilingual Education, Listening/Spoken Language Education, Signed Exact English Education

In addition to their expertise, these professionals add visibility to our deaf and hard-of-hearing programs at the state level. This means that these professionals can make recommendations based on state demographics.

For example, if your child is in a school district and she's the only deaf child, the professional may also know that the district next to you has 12 deaf kids and a robust program for the modality your child is using and make suggestions based on that.

For more information, please contact the Outreach Team:

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Toll free phone:
(800) 613-4228

Email:
Kris.rydecki@wsd.wa.gov

Website: www.cdhl.wa.gov/outreach/outreachhome.aspx

Child First: Put the “I” Back in IEP

Child First is a national campaign to ensure that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) appropriately addresses the language, communication and educational needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing children. Its goal is to put the “I” back in IEP and is sponsored by the Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools & Programs for the Deaf (CEASD) and supported by the National Association of the Deaf (NAD).

Why change IDEA?

In order to meet deaf and hard-of-

hearing students' educational needs, programs must first address their language and communication needs. However, today implementation of IDEA pays little attention to this issue.

Instead, IDEA implementation often focuses on the *location* where the child is being educated, rather than the supports and services available at that location to meet the needs of the child. Child First reminds us that for the deaf and hard-of-hearing child, the least restrictive environment (LRE) isn't a place. It's the ability to have full access to language and

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Celebrating Washington State Hands & Voices Achievements in 2012

We want to celebrate our successes in 2012! Washington Hands & Voices sponsored a signing Santa event, an overnight adventure at the Pacific Science Center and supported families with our Guide By Your Side program.

Tut-ally Awesome Overnight at the Pacific Science Center

Last Fall Hands and Voices sponsored its 2nd Deaf and Hard of Hearing overnight at the Pacific Science Center. Total overnights were 125 with 55 being Deaf and Hard of Hearing and their siblings.

Participants viewed the King Tut Exhibit and had a chance for hands-on experimentation when they built a pyramid and moved huge blocks using only tools similar to what was available then. Kids had a great time exploring the Pacific Science Center before rolling out the sleeping bags and getting (a little) sleep.

Signing Santa

On December 1st, Washington Hands & Voices partnered with the Tacoma Seratoma Club to host a signing Santa event and received rave reviews.

Families had the opportunity to visit with a signing Santa and interpreters were available for siblings. Each child received their picture with Santa.

We are grateful to the Emerald Ridge High School students and ASL students who volunteered to help with this event, Jennifer Garcia for organizing the event and Thr3e Coffee shop for offering such a great location.

GBYS Supports Families

In 2012, our Guide By Your Side program assisted 25 families in learning about diverse issues related to deafness. Through GBYS, families obtained non-biased information about advocacy, transition to preschool, communication considerations, cochlear implants, sign language, insurance, emotional support, literacy, finding social networks, additional health concerns, audiology and therapies. To learn more about how GBYS can help your family, visit our website at www.wahandsandvoices.org/gbys

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Contribute your ideas: We'd love to hear from you. Please send comments and story ideas to info@wahandsandvoices.org

Reminder to renew membership: It's time to renew your H&V membership and continue access to our Washington State newsletters as well as "The Communicator", the newspaper publication that national Hands & Voices provides.

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communication with peers.

Child First is modality-neutral and believes that access to language is a basic human and educational right. It aims to shift the focus of IDEA back to the individual needs of the child. It will ensure that deaf and hard-of-hearing children's IEPs and educational placement facilitate full language and communication development, which will lead to greater educational success.

How can you learn more and help support Child First?

Website
www.ceasd.org

Email:
nationaloffice@ceasd.org