



Guide By Your Side Initial training May 2009

Pictured from left to right are Parent Guides: Maria Teresa Hernandez, Andrea Marwah, Sharon Cerda, Cherie Taets, Beth Donofrio, Marcia Koch, Alison Rollins and Janice Knight-Haines

National GBYS trainers: Leeanne Seaver, Candace Lindow Davies

Trainer: Karen Aguilar

GBYS Program Coordinator: Carrie Balian

Not pictured are Parent Guides: Crystal Schwartz, Kristina Rockert and IL EHDl coordinator Ginger Mullin.

Background:

The initiative to start a parent to parent program in Illinois was years in the making. After much discussion on whether Illinois should create their own program or use a program/model that was already developed/used in other states the consensus was that Illinois would adopt a national model. This is how we came to choose Guide By Your Side (GBYS), a program of Hands & Voices. Their national model is reviewed by experts in the field and then revised and updated when changes are needed. It is already successful in many states and there are other states just starting to implement the program as we are in Illinois in addition to the two locations internationally.

Our GBYS program in Illinois is composed of three main partnering agencies: Illinois Hands & Voices, CHOICES for Parents and the Illinois Newborn Hearing Program.

Program Information:

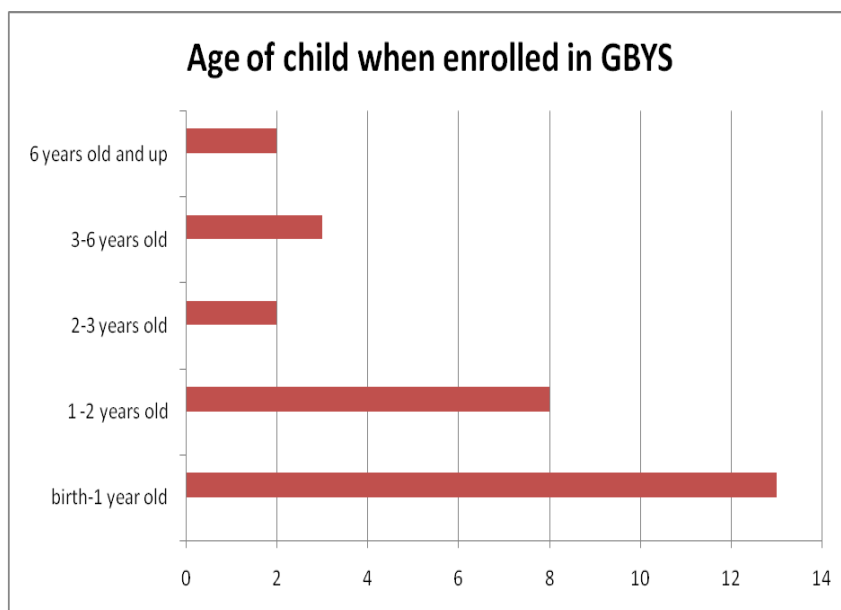
- Initial GBYS training completed May 15-17
- 1 Program Coordinator
- 10 Parent Guides (PG)
 - Located throughout the state
 - Backgrounds vary in communication opportunities, amplification opportunities
 - Spanish speaking PG
 - Deaf PG
 - Hard of Hearing PG

Our Mission:

Guide By Your Side provides unbiased, emotional support and resources by trained Parent Guides to families with children who have a hearing loss.

GBYS is a not for profit organization; there is no cost to the families that participate. Families can be referred to the program from their providers or call us directly to participate.

If you would like to refer a family, request brochures/posters or make a donation please contact the GBYS Program Coordinator, Carrie Balian.



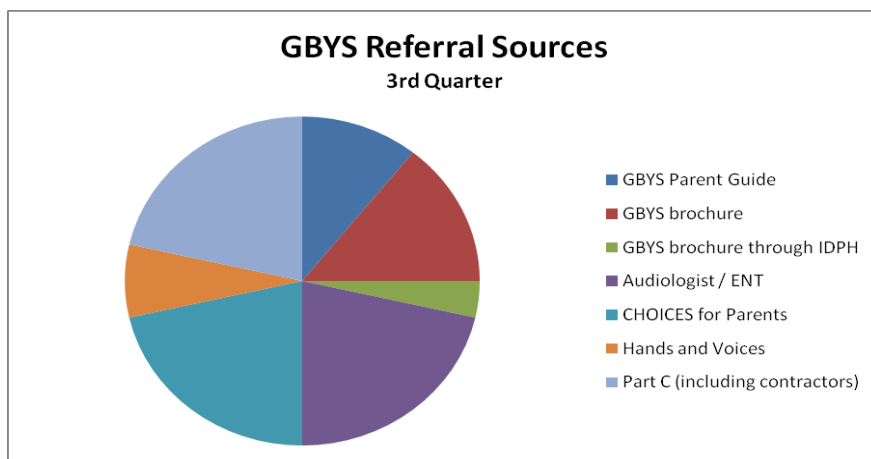


Quarter Reporting for May-September 2009:

- Families referred 29, Families matched 28
- **Gender** of children enrolled in GBYS:
 - 15 male, 13 female
- **Ethnicity** of the families referred:
 - 54% Latino (15 families)
 - 29% Caucasian (8 families)
 - 14% Asian (4 families)
 - 3% African American (1 family)
- **Age** of children enrolled in GBYS:
 - 46% Birth-1 year old
 - 29% 1-2 years old
 - 7% 2-3 years old
 - 11% 3-6 years old
 - 7% 6 years and older
- **Primary Language** in the home:
 - English - 15
 - Spanish - 10
 - English & Spanish – 3
- **Insurance** information of enrolled families:
 - ALL Kids – 15 families
 - Private – 12 families
 - Unknown -1 family
- **Newborn Hearing Screening** results as reported by the parent:
 - Did Not Pass – 19 children
 - Passed – 4 children
 - Not Screened – 5 children
- **Medical History** suggestive of:
 - Syndrome associated with a hearing loss – 5 children
 - Family History of hearing loss – 3 children
 - No known syndrome or etiology – 20 children
- **Unilateral vs. Bilateral** hearing loss:
 - Unilateral – 4 children
 - Bilateral – 24 children

Referral Sources of GBYS families:

- Audiologists/ENT
- CHOICES for Parents
- GBYS brochure
- GBYS brochure through IDPH
- GBYS Parent Guide
- Hands & Voices
- Part C including contractors



What have we accomplished?

Since the start of GBYS we have been matching referred families to Parent Guides. In addition to these matches we are assisting the state EHDI program by sharing information of enrolled families after parental consent. This allows the EHDI program to follow the progress of the enrolled families beyond their diagnosis. We are also collaborating with IL Hands & Voices and other professionals to educate families in the Deaf and Latino communities by providing community events focusing on networking and educational topics. Through GBYS we have been able to inform families about state programs and encourage their enrollment. From partnerships with clinics, school programs and professionals we have been able to assist them in offering a well rounded system of care for their clients.

A family shares...."I'm learning sign language to communicate with my son and I wondered if there were other parents out there who wanted to learn too. My parent guide encouraged me to reach out to other parents and explained ways that I could network with them. I started a deaf coffee chat in my town for people to come together to learn sign language and it's been a great way to meet other parents who have deaf/hh kids!"