



HANDS &
VOICES™
ILLINOIS

ILLINOIS E.A.R.S

E.A.R.S = EVENTS AND RESOURCES STATEWIDE



GUIDE BY
YOUR SIDE™
ILLINOIS

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

WHO ARE WE?

The Illinois Families for Hands & Voices mission: A parent-driven, non-profit organization that supports families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodologies.

The Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side mission: Provides free, unbiased emotional support and resources by trained Parent Guides to families with children who are deaf and hard of hearing.

If you are looking for resources, parent support, events or anything else, we want to help! View our contact information on page 29.

MOM'S NIGHT INN

ILLINOIS HANDS & VOICES ORGANIZES OVERNIGHT RETREATS FOR MOMS RAISING CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING. THESE RETREATS INCLUDE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS, BONDING TIME, AND SUNDAY PANELS.

BY: MAIRA NAVA | ILHV VICE PRESIDENT



COMMUNITY

This year, I had the privilege of sharing a supportive space with 40 incredible mothers, each on their unique journey of raising children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Together, we created a community rooted in understanding—where new and seasoned mothers came together to exchange stories, offer guidance, and build lasting connections. Through honest conversations, shared challenges, and moments of triumph, we deepened our capacity for empathy, resilience, and compassion. In this space, we didn't just learn about our children's needs—we learned from each other, found strength in unity, and reminded one another that we are not alone on this path.

INSIGHT

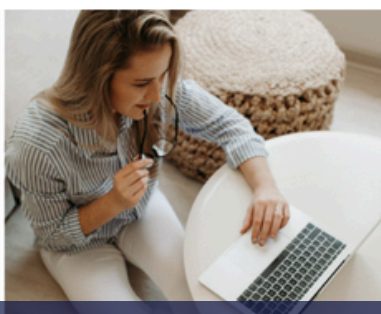
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Our keynote speaker was Carrie Balian, a mother of five whose oldest son was born

Preparedness in Emergency Document Planning

Written by: Maira Nava

Page 12 | Preparing for the Unknown



Recently attended the ENDF Conference in Pittsburgh, PA, where I participated in a

In addition, the presenters recommended establishing an electronic safe haven for

How to Read an Audiogram

Join us for this free event on zoom with two audiologists who will share on how to read and understand an audiogram.

Please register at this link
<http://tinyurl.com/ILHVSigup2025> OR scan the QR code.
A zoom link will be sent to you before the event.

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Events

CAMP LIONS 2025 SUMMER CAMP FOR BLIND & DEAF

JUNE 22nd-JUNE 28th

Youth Week
Camp Red Leaf Village
26710 W Nippersink Rd.
Ingleside, IL 60041

NEW CAMPSITE

JUNE 29th-JULY 5th

Helen Keller Week
Walcamp
32653 E Five Points Rd.
Kingston, IL 60145

JULY 13th-JULY

HoH/Deaf Week
East Bay Camp
24248 Ron Smith Memoria
Hudson, IL 61748

JULY 20th-JULY

LV/Blind Week
East Bay Camp
24248 Ron Smith Memoria
Hudson, IL 61748

JULY 27th-AUGUST

Youth Week
Lake Williamson Cen
17280 Lakeside Dr.
Carlinville, IL 62626



REGISTER NOW!

Page 25-28 | Free Summer
Camps for Kids



Dear Readers,

When our oldest son, Jack, was born deaf, we were shocked. There was no family history of hearing loss, and we had no idea what lay ahead. Like 95% of families with children born with hearing loss, we were hearing parents. Without Newborn Hearing Screening, it could have taken years before we understood Jack's needs. Thankfully, we were able to get him enrolled in Early Intervention, giving him critical access to language and communication during those crucial early years.

For over 15 years, I've served as the Coordinator for Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side—a parent-to-parent support program for families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. I know firsthand how invaluable it is to have other parents to lean on. I wouldn't have known what I needed to know without their support, guidance, and shared experiences.

In 2020, our program partnered with the Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI) program within the Illinois Department of Public Health. This collaboration allowed us to receive automatic referrals of families whose children were diagnosed with hearing loss. We could then connect with them early, offering free, compassionate support from trained Parent Guides—parents who are also raising children with hearing loss.

This vital work is made possible through grants from the CDC and HRSA, and sustained by the dedication of the IL EHDI team. However, recent budget cuts have placed the future of these programs in jeopardy.

I encourage you to reflect on what Newborn Hearing Screening and parent support have meant for your family. Share your story. Advocate for continued funding and support. Together, we can ensure every family has the tools and support they need to thrive—no matter what challenges they face.

Thriving Together,

Carrie Balian
Parent of a son who is DHH
ILHV GBYS Coordinator
HV HQ Region V Coordinator
HV HQ GBYS Program Lead

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Acronyms

So many acronyms!
Start here to learn what
they stand for.



HANDS&
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News from our Illinois
Hands & Voices President,
Amy Keslinke



President's Corner

Happy Summer! I hope this school year is wrapping up well and the excitement of summer is in full swing!

Spring is typically a busy time for us at Illinois Hands & Voices, and this year was no exception! In February, several of us attended and presented at the Illinois Teachers of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing Conference in Naperville. We enjoy attending this conference with our Illinois teachers every year. In March, a group of our board members attended the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Annual Conference in Pittsburgh. These conferences are a great way for us to learn, connect with others in the deaf/hard of hearing community, and present to others about the important work we're doing.

We also held one of our favorite events of the year: Moms Night Inn! In April, we got nearly 40 moms and female caregivers of kids who are deaf/hard of hearing of all ages together for a retreat. The weekend was filled with informative sessions, self-care, and time to connect with other moms who understand each other's experiences. We laughed, cried, made new friends, and can't wait for next year!

Stay tuned for more details on our summer picnic, and have a fabulous summer!

Written By:

Nicole Bersell,
IL Hands & Voices
Guide By Your Side
Parent Guide



IN OUR ITDHH ERA

The 2025 ITDHH (Illinois Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing) Conference brought together professionals, families, and advocates from across the state for a powerful two-day event focused on improving outcomes for children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

Held at the Chicago Marriott Naperville, this year marked the 61st anniversary of the conference. The event emphasized collaboration, innovation, and inclusion, showcasing a wide range of breakout sessions led by experts in the field. Topics included: Early intervention and language development, educational technology and assistive listening devices, supporting students' social-emotional needs, best practices in classroom accommodations and accessibility and family engagement and advocacy.

The conference featured keynote speakers Lindsay Darnall Jr. and Dr. Michelle Hu, who offered powerful insights into Deaf and Hard of Hearing education, accessibility, and advocacy. Their presentations underscored the importance of equity, individualized support, and the need to center the voices of Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals in all areas of education and care.

A strong family focus was present throughout the conference, with six speakers from Illinois Hands & Voices and the Guide By Your Side (GBYS) program. These leaders contributed unique perspectives through sessions that fostered collaboration between families and professionals. Teachers, specialists, and parents connected, shared experiences, and explored resources; a powerful reminder that meaningful change happens when we partner together.

Whether you're an educator, service provider, or parent, the 2025 ITDHH Conference reaffirmed a shared commitment: to ensure that every Deaf and Hard of Hearing child in Illinois has the opportunity to thrive.

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BY: MAIRA NAVA | ILHV VICE PRESIDENT



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INSIGHT

Our keynote speaker was Carrie Balian, a mother of five whose oldest son was born deaf. She shared her unique journey of raising a child with hearing loss, describing how she adapted to challenges while embracing the joys of being a new mom. Carrie began her presentation with some fun facts about herself: she holds a black belt in Budo Aikijutsu, is an ordained minister who has officiated four weddings, and met her husband at the age of 18. Her talk touched on the fears, emotions, decisions, and insights that come with parenting, and she emphasized the vital role of community support for both children and their families.



CONTINUED TO PAGE 7

MOM'S NIGHT INN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

LIVED EXPERIENCE



During Sunday's panel, a group of young Deaf adults shared powerful insights into their lived experiences. They spoke candidly about the challenges they faced growing up, from adjusting to their hearing loss to navigating a world not always designed for them. Their stories reflected incredible determination, resilience, and an unwavering will to persevere. Central to their journeys was the invaluable support of their parents, which they emphasized as a crucial factor in their growth and success. From navigating school to transitioning into adulthood, exploring career paths, and learning the importance of self-care during difficult times, each panelist offered a moving testament to strength, identity, and the power of community and support.

UNITY

We ended our time together in a closing circle—a sacred space that gently brought us back to our “why.” In that moment, surrounded by mothers who deeply understand the journey of raising children who are deaf or hard of hearing, we found a collective pause. It was a time to reset, to breathe, and to draw strength from one another. The circle offered not just reflection, but acceptance—of where we are, of how far we’ve come, and of the path still unfolding ahead. Holding hands and hearts with women walking similar roads, we reminded each other that while this journey can be challenging, we are never walking it alone. There is power in community, and healing in being seen.



ENERGY, INSPIRATION, & INSIGHT

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EHDI CONFERENCE

By Hayley Denna, M.A CED



The goal of EHDI (Early Hearing Detection and Intervention) is simple but powerful: to identify hearing loss, as early as possible, so that babies and their families can access the support they need for strong language, social, and emotional development.

EHDI is a nationwide public health initiative, supported at both the federal and state levels. Its mission is to ensure that all babies are screened for hearing loss by 1 month of age, receive a diagnosis by 3 months, and begin early intervention services by 6 months. EHDI provides guidance to support newborn hearing screening, timely diagnosis, early intervention, family engagement, and professional training. It also helps states improve data tracking, reduce loss to follow-up, and ensure coordinated, family-centered care for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Each year, a vibrant mix of audiologists, early intervention providers, educators, medical professionals, researchers, advocates, families, and students gather at the EHDI Conference. It's a unique opportunity for everyone in the EHDI community to connect, collaborate, and learn from one another.

Through interactive sessions, networking events, real-life stories, and practical tools, the conference offers something for everyone involved in supporting babies and young children who are deaf or hard of hearing as well as their families. It's a space where shared experiences, new research, and best practices come together to strengthen family-centered care.

The 2025 EHDI Conference, held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was filled with energy, inspiration, and insight. Seven board members from Illinois Hands & Voices proudly presented on a range of important topics, including:

- Parent-Professional Partnerships
- Promoting Mental Health in DHH Children from Diagnosis
- Culture and Identity in Culturally Diverse DHH Families
- Special Factors in Education Plans
- Theory of Mind and Its Role in Social Development
- IDEA and Advocacy for Parents and Professionals

This event is more than just a conference—it's a growing community of families, providers, and advocates working together to give every child who is deaf or hard of hearing the best possible start.

The 2026 EHDI Conference will be held March 15–17 in Jacksonville, Florida, and is expected to welcome over 1,000 attendees. We hope to see even more families and professionals there, continuing to connect and grow together.

Illinois Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side

PROMOTIONS

Senior Guide



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Megan Christoffel

Megan is the mother of three children, one who is hard of hearing. Megan and her family live in Will County.



Elsa Huerta

Elsa is the mother of three children, one who is hard of hearing. Elsa and her family live in Cook County.



Hanna Swearingen

Hanna is the mother of two children, one who is hard of hearing. Hanna and her family live in Tazewell County.

www.ilhandsandvoices.org

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

Both Elsa and Hanna promoted through the Lead Guide level and onto being Senior Guides

Board of Director Spotlight

by Andrea Marwah, ILHV Executive Director

TINA GRIECO-CALUB

Tina has been with the IL Hands & Voices Board of Directors for 6 years. Her background in Audiology and Language research is a significant asset to our organization. I had the pleasure of interviewing Tina and getting to know her a bit better, now I share her with you. If you have questions for Tina, you can reach her at the contact information below. Enjoy getting to know her!

Tina.....

-lives with her husband Eugene and children Emily and Tyler in Highland Park.
-is a researcher at the University of Illinois Chicago Department of Psychiatry.
-discovered her passion for audiology and speech pathology as an undergrad, drawn to the technology and objectivity of audiology. Her curiosity about why we do what we do led her to pursue a PhD in neuroscience, where she explored how hearing and the brain are connected. She enjoys combining research, teaching, and collaboration to advance communication sciences and help others.
-would be “Katniss Everdeen” from The Hunger Games and “Rey” from Star Wars if she had to be a fictional character.
-would tell her younger self “do not let fear of the unknown rule your decisions.”
-would ask her older self “about their favorite memories, and their favorite people, and the marks they feel like they have left on the world.”
-frequently starts dancing, especially at the embarrassment of her children, she also pretends to be an amazing basketball player, often showing off her dramatic no-look pass.



Fun Facts about Tina:

- She has broad experiences which allows her to support families by bridging the professional parent continuum.
- She is a member of the United States Masters Swim Program and competes in open water swim events.
- Her go to dance move when no one is watching is the “Roger Rabbit”.
- One bucket list item is to visit her husband’s family in the Philippines.
- If she had a talking pet she would like to have a dog that intelligently speaks in an English accent.
- Tina’s most adventurous thing? Moving to Chicago from a small town in Pennsylvania all by herself as a young woman.
- She chose Creedence Clearwater Revival’s “Proud Mary” as her stage entry song!

Tina’s advice to families: *“Follow your gut!”*

Tina Grieco-Calub
Director for Childhood Hearing Research
tgcalub@uic.edu



Illinois Families for Hands & Voices is a
501c3 Non-Profit Organization, EIN 06-1724201

www.ilhandsandvoices.org

THE DEAFBLIND DIFFERENCE



Sitting Independently

Written by:

MICHELLE CLYNE, ILHV BOARD MEMBER

The DeafBlind Difference: Helping Your Child Learn to Sit Independently

Learning to sit independently opens the door to playing with toys, seeing more of the world, and interacting with family. If your child is Deaf or hard-of-hearing (D/HH), or if your child has a combined vision-hearing challenge (is deafblind), the journey to sitting might look a little different—and that's okay.

If Your Child Is Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing

If your child is D/HH, they usually have full access to visual information even if they do not have typical hearing. Because sitting is mostly a motor skill, your child will likely learn to sit at around the same age as hearing children. If your child also has vestibular (balance) challenges or additional needs, those factors might impact the development of sitting. However, being able to use their eyes to watch you, follow moving toys, and explore the world around them will help your child develop balance and body control. Brightly colored toys and smiling faces can encourage your child to lift their head, reach, and balance—important steps toward sitting up on their own.

If Your Child Is Deafblind

If your child is deafblind (has a combination of a vision and hearing difference), they may need a other kinds of support as well. Without full access to sights and sounds, your child may use information from touch and movement to learn how their body works. They may not automatically reach for a toy just by having it shown to them or sounded for them, which can make learning to sit up a little more challenging. Your child might take longer to learn to sit, but with the right support, they will get there.

You can help by giving your child lots of safe chances to move and explore. Giving your child consistent touch cues when you help them pull to sit, move from your arms to a seated position, or in similar situations help your child anticipate sitting and prepare their bodies. Gentle hand-under-hand support to reach to items nearby can encourage exploring. Creating a consistent, tactile environment will help your child understand their body and how to balance. Sitting your child in your lap, playing movement games, or using toys with interesting textures can make a big difference.

Supporting Your Child's Growth

Every child's path is unique. Children who are D/HH may sit up with just a little extra visual support, while children who are deafblind often benefit from more hands-on demonstration. By noticing what your child responds to and offering the right kind of encouragement, you are giving them the tools they need to grow, explore, and shine.

PREPARING FOR THE UNKNOWN

Preparedness in Emergency Document Planning

Written by: Maira Nava

I recently attended the EHDI Conference in Pittsburgh, PA, where I participated in a session titled "If I Could Go Back: How to Better Prepare for Natural Disasters," presented by Paula Pittman, Kate Ducheneau, and Jennifer Clark. The session highlighted the devastating fires that occurred in Hawaii in 2023, emphasizing the critical need to create an emergency plan for essential documents.

One of the key takeaways was the importance of assembling an emergency bag containing vital physical documents such as passports, birth certificates, social security cards, as well as essential medications and devices. It's crucial to store this bag in a designated location for quick access during an emergency.



In addition, the presenters recommended establishing an electronic safe haven for all important documentation. This can involve creating a dedicated email account for each child, organizing documents into clearly labeled folders. Essential documents to include are assessments, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Section 504 plans, Allergy and Asthma Action plans, medication lists, provider contact information, and audiograms.

Finally, designating a trusted individual who can access these email accounts can greatly facilitate a smoother transition of care during emergencies. This proactive approach can help ensure that families are better prepared for unexpected situations.

Why Socialization Matters:

A Guide for Parents of Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

As a parent, you want your child to thrive—not only academically, but socially and emotionally. For children who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH), developing strong social skills can take more intentional effort due to communication barriers and limited access to everyday interactions. But with your support and the right strategies, your child can build meaningful friendships, develop confidence, and feel a true sense of belonging.

Understanding the Social Landscape – Children naturally learn how to communicate, cooperate, and connect through social interaction. However, kids who are D/HH may experience unique challenges, such as:

- **Missing out on background conversations** that hearing children pick up incidentally.
- **Difficulty understanding or being understood** in group settings.
- **Feeling left out** during unstructured play activities if communication isn't accessible.

These situations can lead to frustration, lower self-esteem, and delays in social and emotional development—but they don't have to.

Why Socialization Practice Is Essential

- **It Boosts Language Development** – Language grows best in social settings. Whether your child uses spoken language, sign language, or a mix, interacting with peers gives them chances to learn new words, understand how conversations flow, and practice expressing themselves.
- **It Builds Emotional Intelligence** – Children develop empathy, self-control, and problem-solving skills through play and social experiences. Learning to read body language, take turns, and handle conflict helps your child relate to others—and prepares them for school and beyond.
- **It Encourages Independence and Self-Advocacy** – With regular social practice, your child becomes more confident communicating their needs, asking for help, or explaining how others can support their communication. These are essential life skills that grow stronger over time.
- **It Promotes Friendships and Inclusion** – All children need friends. When your child has the tools and confidence to join conversations and activities, they're more likely to form lasting bonds and feel part of the group.

What You Can Do as a Parent

Supporting your child's social development doesn't require big changes—just intentional steps. Here's how you can help:

- **Encourage playdates and group activities.** Choose settings where communication can be supported and talk with other parents or leaders about your child's needs in advance.
- **Teach social skills at home.** Practice things like greetings, turn-taking, and interpreting facial expressions through role-playing or games.
- **Use accessible communication at home.** If your child uses sign language or assistive listening devices, make them a natural part of family life.
- **Find D/HH role models or peer groups.** Look for local or online communities where your child can meet others who share similar experiences.
- **Work with teachers and therapists.** Collaborate with professionals to ensure your child's social needs are being met in school and therapy sessions.



Looking Ahead – It's normal to feel concerned about how your child will navigate a world that isn't always designed with them in mind. But with your encouragement and the right environment, your child can develop the social skills, confidence, and friendships that will help them flourish. Socialization isn't just about fitting in—it's about feeling connected, capable, and confident. And with your help, your child can grow into someone who not only communicates well but connects deeply with the world around them.

Andrea Marwah, IL Chapter Executive Director
IL School for the Deaf Special Education Advocate and Trainer

Simple N Informative

SNIPPET

Parent-to-Parent
Education Tools

SNIPPETS are:

- Simple
- Concise
- Easy to read
- Shareable
- Educational
- Information at your fingertips

Languages available:

- English
- Arabic
- Chinese
- French
- German
- Korean
- Polish
- Russian
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

Scan the QR code to
view our SNIPPET
library



Current List of SNIPPET Topics:

- Agency & Program Acronyms *
- Auditory Neuropathy Spectrum Disorder
- Aural (Re)habilitation
- All about ASL (American Sign Language)
- Audiologists
- Benefits of Music
- Bone Conduction Hearing Aid
- CHARGE Syndrome
- Choosing a Daycare
- CMV Prevention
- Common Acronyms
- Communicating with your Child
- Communication Tips
- Conductive Hearing Loss
- Developmental Therapist - Hearing (DT/H)
- Early Intervention (EI) Clearinghouse *
- Fostering Joy
- From Culture to Connection
- Hearing Device Tips
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)
- Microtia / Atresia
- Mixed Hearing Loss
- More Than Hearing Loss
- Navigating Early Intervention (EI) in Illinois *
- Pediatric Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist (ENT)
- Receptive Language
- Recommended Tests
- Sensorineural Hearing Loss
- Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)
- State Funded Resources *
- Unilateral Hearing Loss / Single Sided Hearing Loss
- What is Cytomegalovirus (CMV)?
- What is DSCC? *

*These topics are specific to Illinois (IL)

For more information or to suggest future topics
email ilhvgbys@gmail.com



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08.24 Flier



Get paid for your input!



We need Illinois parents of children who are deaf/hard of hearing to help review parent materials

Review meetings will be held in the evening and some work will be done on your own beforehand.

Only 6 participants needed per session. One session is 3 hours of work during the month.

We are looking to host multiple review committees over the next year. Selection is ongoing, and we will keep all submissions on file to potentially contact for a committee at a later date.



Scan the QR code. It will take you to the google form with more information and to submit your name as a potential participant.

<https://forms.gle/F5q4TC2E58urm5Ph7>

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Guides share with families:

- ▶ Their unique lived experiences
- ▶ Technology tips
- ▶ How they navigate social situations
- ▶ How they developed their personal identity
- ▶ And so much more



NOW

Contact us to get connected for free!

AVAILABLE!

224.343.1873 Voice/Text

ilhvgbys@gmail.com



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What do you do to make sure you don't miss hearing announcements in environments like an airport?



Illinois Sound Beginnings



www.illinoisoundbeginnings.org

Resources for Families

Illinois EHDHI

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention

Everything you need to know about hearing screening, diagnostics to intervention and beyond.

Illinois EHDHI Program
at Illinois Department of Public Health
Phone: [217-782-4733](tel:217-782-4733)
Email: DPH.newbornhearing@illinois.gov



Check It Out!!



CUBS SPECIAL TICKET OFFER

DEAF INCLUSIVE CAP STO

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2nd
6:40 P.M. VS. ATLANTA BRAVES
WRIGLEY FIELD**

On Tuesday, September 2, the Cubs will host Deaf Inclusive Night at Wrigley Field. Tickets purchased through this Special Ticket Offer will include a special-edition Cubs cap and the option to select seats in sections with an interpreter. A portion of the proceeds from each ticket purchased through this page will be donated to nonprofit organizations supporting individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

**Please choose IL Hands & Voices as
your nonprofit organization**



**SCAN
TO SECURE
TICKETS**



**ITEM CANNOT BE REDEEMED UNLESS PURCHASED THROUGH SPECIAL TICKET OFFER ON
CUBS.COM/SPECIALS. ITEM NOT REDEEMABLE WITH SECONDARY MARKET TICKET.**

**To purchase tickets for a group of 15 or more, please call Sydney
Cohen at 773-404-4121 or scohen@cubs.com.**

This event will be provided only in Spoken Spanish.
To access the recording of this event that was in spoken English go to:
<https://youtu.be/w4OALxsUCpM>

10 Cosas Que Desearía Saber Sobre CÓMO CRIAR A UN NIÑO SORDO O CON PERDIDA DE AUDICIÓN



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¡Únase a nosotros en este evento gratuito en Zoom mientras los guías para padres y guías con pérdida auditiva comparten cosas que desearían saber antes, comparten consejos prácticos y también responden preguntas!

Fecha y horario

18 de junio
7:30 PM

Regístrese en este enlace: <http://tinyurl.com/ILHVSsignup2025> o escanee el código QR. Se le enviará un enlace de Zoom antes del evento.



Illinois Hands & Voices is a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization EIN 06-1724201

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

How to Read an Audiogram

Join us for this free event on zoom with two audiologists who will share on how to read and understand an audiogram.

Please register at this link
<http://tinyurl.com/ILHVSsignup2025> OR scan the QR code.
A zoom link will be sent to you before the event.

July 17th
7:30pm



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

Live Q&A

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6TH

8:00 PM

What do you like to do for fun?

Is it hard to make friends?

What advice do you have for my family?

Join us for an opportunity to ask questions and learn more from our team of deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) Guides.

Register through the QR code or at <http://tinyurl.com/ILHVSsignup2025> to receive the zoom link.



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





Calling All Exhibitors!

Please join us on Tuesday, June 24, 2025 for the EI Vision & Hearing Conference. We are looking for the best representation of exhibitors at our conference this year, and we want you! If you are interested in exhibiting to Early Intervention and Early Childhood Providers who work with infants and toddlers with vision and or hearing concerns, this is the ideal opportunity. Our conference will be held at the ISU Alumni Center in Normal. Our typical attendance is 75 participants, but could be as many as 125.

Exhibitors will receive a exhibit table and chair **FREE** of charge. The Exhibit session will be held for 2 hours, each exhibitor will get some mic time to tell the attendees about their organization, company or product. Attendees will sign up for 1 hour sessions, so all attendees will attend and visit your exhibit booth.

Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2025

Time: 12:15pm–2:15pm

Location: ISU Alumni Center

Exhibitor set-up begins at 11:15am, exhibit tear-down is at 2:15pm.

SIGN UP TODAY:

<https://forms.office.com/g/aQxVhTqZ5m>



QUESTIONS: Julie.Grygiel@illinois.gov



Illinois School for the Deaf Outreach
IL Department of Human Services
Division of Rehabilitation



IL SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF OUTREACH
IL Department of Human Services

Register
Today



2025 OFFERINGS

Combined Sessions:

"Understanding and Supporting the Mental Health of our Kids"
"The Early Years Project" "That Makes Sense! Sensory Systems
Besides Vision and Hearing" "Early Intervention Information and
Updates" "Effectively Partnering with Caregivers in Early
Intervention"



8:30AM - 4:15PM



June 23-24, 2025



ISU Alumni Center
Normal, Illinois

Vision Sessions:

"Stimulating Tactile Activities for Young Learners with Vision Loss"
"The EHDI database - can it support young children with visual
differences and their families?"
"Functional Vision Assessments"

Hearing Sessions:

"Children of a Lesser God? Why unpacking matters" "Addressing
Language & Literacy: One Size Does Not Fit All" "Supporting
Speech Intelligibility in Children Who are Deaf and Hard-of-
Hearing"

REGISTER NOW



<https://forms.office.com/g/C2SvmGBHYC>

Hotel Room Block:

Holiday Inn Bloomington-Normal
8 Traders Circle, Normal

Valid block dates:

Sunday June 22 and Monday June 23.

Room rate: \$149, includes breakfast

Must book by June 6, 2025.

Booking link: <https://tinyurl.com/yp934cfw>

Professional Development:

IL Early Intervention Credit: Applied for
ISBE Professional Development: Approved

ADA Accommodations:

All ADA accommodation requests must be
received 3 weeks prior to the event. This can be
done during registration. We will do our best to
meet all of your accommodation requests.

Conference brought to you by:

IL School for the Deaf Outreach | IL School for the Visually Impaired | IL Deaf Blind Project
IL Service Resource Center, ISRC | Foundation for Hearing and Speech Resources, FHSR
ISU Department of Education | Early Intervention DTH and DTV Providers
Questions? andrea.marwah@illinois.gov or 630-697-3544



Illinois School for the Deaf
Outreach
Annual Statewide

Save
the
date

PARENT CONFERENCES

For families/caregivers of children who are deaf/hard of hearing



Choose from
3 statewide locations

Mark your calendar today for the location nearest you:

South of Eighty
Jacksonville
SEPTEMBER 6

South of Seventy
Ina
SEPTEMBER 20

North of Eighty
Oak Forest
OCTOBER 11

All session topics will address

.....

EI, pre-school &
school success



Childcare ages 2-12




Sessions for parents and adult
caretakers, and DHH kids 13+



Registration coming soon

Contact us for more information :
andrea.marwah@illinois.gov



YOUR 2025 GUIDE TO SUMMER CAMP

- Job Readiness
- STEM/STEAM
- Finance
- Sports
- Braille
- College & Career
- Transition to Independence
- ASL
- Family Support

FUN

Educational

CREATIVE

To view the camp list visit: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/15OZbGFhSv-PbJAjjsitiPux4egRjrCiRaliLN31iB9I/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.29xhkidvypj4>

CAMP LIONS 2025 SUMMER CAMP FOR BLIND & DEAF

JUNE 22nd-JUNE 28th

Youth Week
Camp Red Leaf Village

26710 W Nippersink Rd.
Ingleside, IL 60041

NEW CAMPSITE

JUNE 29th-JULY 5th

Helen Keller Week
Walcamp

32653 E Five Points Rd.
Kingston, IL 60145



JULY 13th-JULY 19th

HoH/Deaf Week
East Bay Camp

24248 Ron Smith Memorial Hwy.
Hudson, IL 61748

JULY 20th-JULY 26th

LV/Blind Week
East Bay Camp

24248 Ron Smith Memorial Hwy.
Hudson, IL 61748

JULY 27th-AUGUST 2nd

Youth Week
Lake Williamson Center

17280 Lakeside Dr.
Carlinville, IL 62626



REGISTER NOW!

Go to: www.LionsofIllinoisFoundation.org



2025 LEONES DE CAMPAMENTO CAMPAMENTO DE VERANO PARA CIEGO Y SORDO

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Camp Lions of Illinois is a FREE, week-long, over-night Summer Camp for Low Vision/Blind and HOH/Deaf eligible youth and adults. It offers Illinois residents exciting camp activities and an opportunity to make new friends with peers who have similar vision or hearing loss.

To be eligible, a camper needs to have a visual acuity range of total blindness or a 20/70 vision in both eyes after best correction and/or have an auditory loss which requires daily usage of communication alternatives such as: sign language, lip reading, or the need of a hearing device such as a hearing aid or a cochlear implant. **Each camper must be able to perform their own self-care independently, which includes any vision and or hearing devices.**

Visit us for more information:

<https://lionsofillinoisfoundation.org/camp-lions/general-information/>



Applications Must Include for Final Approval:

- Fully answered application
- Physical Exam
- Signed and dated Physicians Statement
- List of Immunizations
- Images of Insurance Card (front and back)
- \$20 deposit personal spending account check/money order (bring no other cash)

Deadline to submit application is May 15th, 2025.

Registration Information:

<https://lionsofillinoisfoundation.org/camp-lions/camp-lions-registration/>



Registration Form:

<https://formstack.io/9A74B>

If students are 18 or older, please apply to Camp Helen Keller.

Please email camplions@lifnd.org for any application questions or concerns.



USA DEAF SOCCER YOUTH SUMMER CAMP

USADSA Summer Camp provides kids who are members of the d/Deaf and hard of hearing community an opportunity to play soccer and build friendships with kids like themselves

**ALL SKILL LEVELS ARE
WELCOME!**

June 26-29

**Location: Colorado School for the
Deaf & Blind**



OVERNIGHT CAMP

June 26 - 29

Ages 10-18

Sleep in dorms

All meals provided

DAY CAMP

June 27 - 29

Ages 7-18

9am - 4.30pm

Lunch provided

**REGISTER AT
WWW.USDEAFSOCCER.COM**

**For registration or financial
assistance inquiries, please
contact:**

kward@usdeafsoccer.com

ACRONYMS

HERE ARE SOME ACRONYMS THAT YOU MAY SEE THROUGHOUT THIS NEWSLETTER OR IN INFORMATION ONLINE

1-3-6 - Hearing screened by 1 months of age, Diagnostic testing by 3 months of age, and enrolled in Early Intervention and parent support by 6 months of age

AAP - American Academy of Pediatrics

ADA - Americans With Disabilities Act

ASL - American Sign Language

CMV - Cytomegalovirus

DBA - Doing Business as Agreement

DEI - Diversity & Equity Infusion

DHH - Deaf Hard of Hearing

EHDI - Early Hearing Detection & Intervention

IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IDPH - Illinois Department of Public Health

IEP - Individualized Education Program

ILHV - Illinois Hands & Voices

ISRC - Illinois Service Resource Center

GBYS - Guide By Your Side

JCIH - Joint Committee on Infant Hearing

LTF - Lost to Follow-up

L2L - Leadership to Leadership

NCHAM - National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management

PG - Parent Guides (parents of children who are deaf/hard of hearing)

SNIPPET - Simple N Informative Parent-to-Parent Education Tools

Learn more on common acronyms here:

<https://www.illinoisoundbeginnings.com/acronyms>

Illinois Hands & Voices, Guide By Your Side does not support or endorse any specific organization, communication or amplification choice.

The information in this newsletter is to simply share with families and professionals the resources and events available to them.

FIND US HERE...



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@ilhandsandvoices

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Email: DPH.newbornhearing@illinois.gov

Web: www.illinoisoundbeginnings.org

**ILHV GBYS and IL EHDI work together on many initiatives
and call themselves The IL Sound Beginnings Team**