Texas Guide By Your Side

April 2013

Texas Guide By Your Side is a parent & family support program that embodies the mission of Hands & Voices, which is to provide support in an unbiased manner to families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- Part of a nationally coordinated program that has been tried and tested over time
- 19 Programs and 6 Start Ups around the country and Canada.

www.txgbyso.org
GBYS Program Coordinator

Christine Moody

- Works with Texas Hands & Voices Executive Director and ERCOD
- Is the first point of contact for parents and stakeholders requesting Guide services
- Sees to the day to day operations of program

Why Families Need Support?

- 95% of all children who are deaf or hard of hearing are born into hearing families (Mitchell & Karchmer 2004)

- 90% of these families have no background in deafness or connections to the deaf community (Center for Demographic Studies 1984)

“The key to a successful integration of hearing loss into a family is the degree to which parents are able to integrate hearing loss into their lives” (D. Luterman, 2006)
HINTERMAIER, M., 2000

Parents reporting social networks with other parents of children who are deaf were associated with less isolation, greater acceptance of their child, and improved interactional responsivity.

“STRESS INDICATORS DECREASED”
The Family is at the Center

- **Supported families** are emotionally healthy, and ready to face their responsibilities

- **Informed families** have the resources to make good decisions, take ownership of decisions and outcomes, and are better partners with professionals in the process

- **Modeling by other families** – family’s learn best by seeing other families in action

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GBYS Program Goals

**Goal 1**: provide parents with the opportunity to **establish a supportive relationship** with an experienced parent of a child who is d/hh soon after they learn of their child's hearing loss and/or at other times throughout the child’s life when a family is in need of support.

*Photo by Widex*
GBYS Program Goals

Goal 2: Provide an understanding of the unique needs of infants and youth who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Goal 3: Share information in an unbiased manner regarding communication options, educational placements, etc.

Goal 4: Link families to resources locally, regionally, and statewide.

Goal 5: Ensure that families are linked to their county Birth to 3 Program or local school district.

Goal 6: Ensure that families are connected to other parent-to-parent resources.

Goal 7: Ensure that families have an opportunity to create context for their own child’s life by connecting to Adult Role Models who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing.

Goal 8: Ensure that families’ voices are heard in the systems that are serving them.
Who We Serve

Texas Guide By Your Side serves:
Parents & Families (including extended family members) with children who are deaf or hard of hearing:
- Living in the state of Texas
- From the age of birth through 21
- With any degree of hearing loss
- Attending any kind of educational setting
- Using any type of communication mode
- Wearing any or no amplification

“What Works For Your Child Is What Makes The Choice Right”

Your Texas Guides

PARENT GUIDES:
- Angie Lopez          El Paso
- Iris Teasley         San Antonio
- Kathy Welch          Houston area
- Jamie Gordon         Corpus Christi
- Jennifer Campos      Houston area
- Jennifer Peterson    Austin area
- Melissa Duron        El Paso
- Yuliana Trujillo     Abilene

DEAF/HH Guides:
- Pamela Farley        Austin area
- Jason Williams       Austin area
- Lisa Mann            DFW area
Job Description Parent Guide

A Parent Guide must be the parent of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing. They will undergo specialized training to provide support to families with children who are D/HH. They must support the mission and philosophy of Hands & Voices.

Job Description: DHH Guide

A Deaf or Hard of Hearing Guide must themselves be Deaf, deaf or Hard of Hearing. They may or may not also be a parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child. They will undergo specialized training to provide support to families with children who are D/HH. They must support the mission and philosophy of Hands & Voices.
DHH Guide...

- Their role is to provide helpful examples drawn from direct experience of life as an individual who is deaf or hard of hearing.
- Their role is NOT the provision of service- (ie., to teach sign language or to share oral training techniques)

Reasons to include D/HH Guides

- To provide exposure to invaluable, direct personal experiences of DHH adults sharing different life experiences and communication choices
- To increase awareness of and sensitivity to issues faced by individuals who are DHH
- To create a safe place where parents and children can ask questions about hearing loss of deafness to a DHH individual
- To provide a mechanism for the skills, abilities, and experiences of DHH adults to influence programs and services
- To provide first hand information regarding Deaf culture and the Deaf community.

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What We Do.....G.U.I.D.E.

- **Give** our time & attention. Connect with parents. Introduce ourselves, explain the program, offer support.

- **Understand** the family dynamics & issues. Listen, dialogue, get to know the parents & family.

- **Individualize** services, resources, & information. Share experience, knowledge, research, referrals.

- **Determine** another date & time to connect. **Develop** a relationship through follow-up with further contact, more services, support.

- **Encourage and Empower** parents to become knowledgeable partners with professionals in order to make informed decisions regarding their child.

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Plus: Outreach and Events

- GBYS Guides host Social Events
- GBYS Guides host Educational Events
- GBYS Guides do Outreach around the state
**What We Do Not Do**

- **Influence/Sway** (Instead, we provide information in an unbiased manner.)

- **Lecture** (Instead, we listen and encourage.)

- **Counsel** (Instead, we share our personal experience.)

- **Teach** (Instead, we help families learn how to find resources and information)

- **Fight “battles”** (Instead, we inform parents of their rights and emphasize collaboration)

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**How to Refer?**

- On-line form to request services. Parents can self-refer. Professionals can also request services for staff or families they serve.

  English: [http://www.formstack.com/forms/GBYS-request](http://www.formstack.com/forms/GBYS-request)

  Spanish: [http://www.formstack.com/forms/GBYS-requestSP](http://www.formstack.com/forms/GBYS-requestSP)
Spread the Word

- GBYS program information cards

Find More Information

Contact the GBYS Program

Christine Moody –
Texas GBYS Program Coordinator
512-462-5738 (voice)
512-410-1198 (videophone)
512-462-5661 (fax)
CMoody@txgbys.org
www.txgbys.org

The Value of Perspective

“The Guide talked to us like hearing loss was normal.
I want to be like that.
I just knew after talking with the Guide that everything was going to be okay.”
We appreciate your support and interest...

Thank you for your time!!