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What works for your child is what makes the choice right!

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Join Texas Hands & Voices Today!

Texas Hands & Voices is a Chapter of the National **Hands & Voices** Organization. By becoming a member of **Texas Hands & Voices** you will get membership privileges that include the *National Communicator* Quarterly Paper mailed to your home or place of business. Your annual dues help us defer the cost of mailings and give us a small budget to continue our Texas efforts to support Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, their families and the professionals that serve them, in the state of Texas. It also allows us to create resources, training materials and a Texas specific website.

[JOIN NOW!](#)

Dear Friends,



GUIDE BY YOUR SIDE™

I am so excited to share an exciting development for **Texas Hands & Voices!** In partnership with the Educational Resource Center on Deafness, **Texas Hands & Voices** is bringing **Guide By Your Side** to Texas! Watch for more news to learn how this valuable resource can support families of children with hearing loss and the professionals that serve them. Now, we are looking for some good people to help us build this program of family support so please review the job postings below, pass the information along to anyone you think may be interested, and join us as we prepare to serve families in Texas!

If you would like more information about the **Texas Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side** program or are interested in applying for a Guide position, please contact Deborah Kopp at atgbys.ercod@tsd.state.tx.us or 512-462-5738.

What is "Guide By Your Side"?

Guide By Your Side (GBYS) is a model family support program that embodies the mission of Hands & Voices, which is to provide unbiased support to families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Currently there are approximately 15-20 states that either have implemented this program or are in the process of doing so.



Share the message of ***Hands & Voices*** with your family, friends and professionals!

[Forward this message](#)

Texas Hands & Voices is a chapter of the nationwide non-profit organization dedicated to supporting families and their children who are deaf or hard of hearing, as well as the professionals who serve them. We are a parent-driven, parent/professional/community collaborative group that is unbiased towards communication modes and methods. Our diverse membership includes those who are deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing impaired and their families who communicate orally, with signs, cue, and/or combined methods. We exist to help our children reach their highest potential. Whether we're at work locally or nationally, ***Hands & Voices*** continues to be driven by the need to improve the educational outcomes and quality of life for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

GBYS provides support through specially trained parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing who work as "Guides" directly with families who have just learned their child has a hearing loss or those who have older children and are in need of the unique support that comes from someone who has walked this path him/herself and can share from direct experience and wisdom. The ***GBYS*** program in Texas will also include an option for families to receive information from Deaf/Hard of Hearing Guides (DHH Guides) who are specially trained to provide support to families.

Job Posting: Parent Guides

We are currently recruiting Parent Guides throughout the state for the ***Texas Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side Program™ (GBYS)*** with positions available immediately! A Parent Guide must be a parent/guardian of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing. ***GBYS*** is a support program for parents of children who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf/blind, or deaf with additional disabilities. The goal of the program is to provide parents of children with a hearing loss, ages birth to twenty-one, the opportunity to establish a supportive relationship with a trained and experienced fellow parent. Connecting with other parents greatly benefits the whole family as they navigate the challenges and joys of raising their individual child.

Guides provide other parents with:

- Unbiased information regarding communication opportunities for children.
- Emotional support, encouragement, and guidance.
- Assistance in understanding the unique educational needs of infants and youth who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Information regarding early intervention, elementary and secondary education services.
- Resources or referrals available locally, regionally and statewide.

In addition to providing direct parent-to-parent support, Parent Guides will increase ***GBYS*** program awareness in their communities, encourage parent involvement, and assist parents as they make decisions that effect their child's educational, social, and emotional

growth. Perhaps you, because of your experience and personality, would make a good candidate!

The Parent Guide is a part-time paid contract position through the Educational Resource Center on Deafness (ERCOD). We are looking for regional Parent Guides, bilingual Parent Guides (Spanish-speaking), Parent Guides of children who are deaf/blind, and Parent Guides of children who are deaf with additional disabilities. Interpreters will be provided upon request for the interview process. Parent Guides must attend a weekend (Fri-Sat) training, tentatively scheduled for Feb. 25-26 or March 4-5, 2011, in Austin, TX.

For more information and an application, please visit our website:

[TX H&V GBYS](#) Information and Application

Job Posting: DHH Guides

We are currently recruiting Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH) Guides throughout the state for the *Texas Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (GBYS)* program with positions available immediately! **GBYS** services include Parent Guides, who must have a deaf or hard of hearing child, and DHH Guides, who do NOT have to have a deaf or hard of hearing child. DHH Guides are trained to provide a positive and hopeful perspective drawn from their day-to-day real life experiences as a person who lives with deafness or hearing loss. DHH Guides provide support to families with newly identified babies, young children, or teenagers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

DHH Guides provide parents with:

- An invaluable perspective that comes from direct, personal experience.
- Exposure to a variety of communication opportunities.
- Awareness of and sensitivity to issues faced by individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- A safe place to ask questions about hearing loss or deafness.
- An important link for extended family members who do not have direct contact with service providers, but need to increase their understanding of the unique needs of a family member who is deaf or hard of hearing.

- A mechanism for the skills, abilities and experiences of adults who are deaf or hard of hearing to influence the development of more effective programs and services for children and families.

In addition to providing direct parent support, DHH Guides will support Parent Guides activities across the state. This may include resource collection and distribution, planning of family events, and general outreach to the community. DHH Guides do NOT provide services such as teaching sign language or sharing oral training techniques. Instead, they provide helpful examples drawn their life experience. DHH Guides must attend a weekend (Fri-Sat) training, tentatively scheduled for Feb. 25-26 or March 4-5, 2011, in Austin, TX. Perhaps you, because of your experience and personality, would make a good candidate!

For more information and an application, please visit our website:

[TX H&V GBYS](#) Information and Application

TX H&V GBYS Coordinator and Lead Guide

Texas Hands & Voices is pleased to announce the leadership positions for the *TX H&V GBYS* program and congratulate Deborah Kopp and Kellie Berger on their new roles! Deborah will be responsible for the oversight of all the Guides across the state as our *TX H&V GBYS* Coordinator. Kellie Berger has accepted the position of Lead Guide and will be assisting Deborah as we launch the *Texas Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side* program!

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