



## **Nevada Hands & Voices Report, March 2022**

### **Language Acquisition Services (provided by NVHV DHH Guides)**

A program of Hands & Voices, Nevada Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side (GBYS) DHH Guides are a diverse group of DHH adults who compliment the work of Parent Guides by working alongside them. DHH Guides share with children and families their unique life experiences, use of technology, how they navigate social situations, how they developed their personal identity, etc. DHH Guides undergo similar trainings as Hands & Voices Parent Guides and all Guides are under the supervision of Nevada's GBYS Coordinator as well as provided opportunities for ongoing training and networking through Hands & Voices Headquarters.

### **Program Highlights**

- 3 out of 4 DHH Guide positions have been filled, ensuring the representation of the diversity of the EHDI population (e.g., Deaf culture, hard of hearing, communication mode, cochlear implant and hearing aid users, cultural diversity) as well as location of Guides throughout Nevada.
- 2 day in-person training conducted with Parent Guides, including "Role of DHH Guide", "Supporting Families Without Bias", "DHH Guides Working with Parents", and local level systems
- DHH Guides hosted and/or presented at NVHV's monthly online webinar series called "Keep Calm and...", with topics including "Meet the DHH Guides", "Learn About Transition", and "Raise a Self-Advocate"
- DHH Guides have been present at 4 out of the 5 NVHV in-person events, including each of our monthly ASL Family Story Times, in partnership with Las Vegas-Clark County Library District
- All DHH Guides scheduled to attend EHDI Conference in March and have scheduled tables/booths at several upcoming DHH community events
- To date, 4 new clients/families have received DHH Guide services, with each of those clients scheduled for ongoing services. 3 additional new clients are scheduled for services.
  - Data from a recent service by a DHH Guide shows that a referral was made by a NVHV ASTra Educational Advocate, as the mother was looking for the perspective of a Deaf adult who communicated using ASL and has lived experience in Deaf culture and education as her son's IEP team is considering a placement change. Discussions included social motional skills, both positive and negative aspects of a transition to mainstream, accommodations, and importance of Deaf identity.

### **Program Challenges**

- Learning curve to begin a new program, train all staff given the low number of hours each DHH Guide work per month while ensuring full access to our staff internally within NVHV and with our clients
- Many postponed meetings between DHH Guides and clients due to COVID, additional illnesses, and client issues outside of DHH Guides' control (i.e., child getting CI)
- As many of our NVHV services involve working around parents' schedules and often during school hours, DHH Guides are meeting directly with DHH children, and evenings and weekends



**Continued Goals for DHH Guide Services:**

- Increased direct service for families
- Visiting students at the schools, meeting with them, and giving self-advocacy presentations relating to their own experience (i.e., getting accommodations in different setting) at the request of teachers and parents
- Connect with families at NVHV Events
- Attending events held by schools and other community organizations (at the request of teachers, parents, and the organization)
- Collaborating and connecting with other DHH professionals
- Presenting about our program to DHH communities and universities
- Increasing NVHV DHH Infusion by beginning a diverse DHH Adult Role Model program to ensure more diversity at events and opportunities for DHH children to connect with DHH adults