

Colorado Families for Hands & Voices

Annual Report

July 1, 2010 — June 30, 2011



July 1, 2010—June 30, 2011



COLORADO
HANDS &
VOICES

Issues of Passion and Participation Include:

- ◆ Effective newborn hearing screening, identification, and early intervention practices
- ◆ Parent advocacy, education, and support
- ◆ Parent/Professional collaboration
- ◆ Parent/Consumer partnerships
- ◆ Communication access for children who are d/hh
- ◆ Teen Support
- ◆ Cultural Responsiveness
- ◆ Transitions from Part C to B
- ◆ Proactive support to regional programs and school districts
- ◆ Deaf Education Reform ó Educational excellence
- ◆ Medical Home Initiative
- ◆ Legislative issues
- ◆ Educational interpreting services
- ◆ Child Abuse and Neglect prevention and resources
- ◆ Deaf Child Bill of Rights
- ◆ Parents' right to make informed communication choices
- ◆ National expansion of organization
- ◆ Technology Access and Improvement
- ◆ Mental Health Issues for kids who are d/hh

Colorado Families for Hands & Voices....

“The willingness to share does not make one charitable; It makes one free.” -Robert Brault

On behalf of Colorado Families for Hands & Voices, we respectfully submit our annual report detailing the activities accomplished in the fiscal year July 2010 through June 2011.

Colorado Families for Hands & Voices is dedicated to supporting families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodology. We are a parent-driven, non-profit organization providing families with the resources, networks, and information they need to improve communication access and educational outcomes for their children. Our outreach activities, parent/professional collaboration and advocacy efforts are focused on enabling Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing children to reach their highest potential.

Our Board of Directors:

CO-Presidents, Shelley Strickfaden and Stephanie Olson. Secretaries/Treasurers: Cindy Bacher, Dinah Beams; Board Members: Tracy McGurran, Melissa Tumblin, Richard Esparza, Terri Bazalewski-Austin, Lisa Weiss, Shannon Cannizzaro, Lonnie Burkholder, Denise Davis-Pedrie, Cathy Noble Hornsby, and Kristy Murdock

Our Staff:

Executive Director, Janet DesGeorges
Assistant Director, Sara Kennedy

Support Staff: Jeannene Evenstad, Joe DesGeorges, Lisa Eberlein. **Guide By Your Side:** Chresta Brinkman, Jennifer Richter, Katie Greene, Jodi Dietrich, DeeAnn Westfall, Maria Rodriguez, Lyn Bopp, Julie McCloskey, Tracy McGurran, Liesel Thomas, Valerie Walker.

Individual Advocacy and Support

Colorado Families for Hands & Voices advocacy experts attended/provided individual support at over **35 IFSP/IEP** meetings at the request of families this year, as well as supporting over **160 families one-to-one** through phone conversations, home visits, and hundreds of email correspondences.

Families who have newly identified children are given the opportunity to receive a phone call or home visit from members of

Hands & Voices for emotional support as well as resource sharing. The Guide By Your Side programs provide one-on-one support to families in their geographic locations. **62 of these visits** were made this year. GBYS welcomed additional Guides to our ranks this year. Along with the locally based guides, we have statewide: Spanish speaking Parent Representative, a CO School for the Deaf rep., a Deaf parent rep. and two unilateral Parent Representative provide unique support to many families.

Representation on Statewide Forums & Collaboration with Other Groups

Colorado Families for Hands & Voices had the opportunity to represent families in the state on issues of importance as members of various boards and committees, and/or providing support to: The Colorado Interagency Coordinating Council; The NICHQ Learning Collaborative; CO Parent Engagement Task Force; MDHC Advisory Board, HCP-EHDI Regional Hospital visits; Deaf Awareness Month; The CO Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; the Daylight Project; CO Newborn Hearing Advisory; CSDB Outreach Strategic Plan; HLAA OF CO; CSDB Early Childhood Strategic Plan; MDHC Foundation Executive Board; Pueblo Community Child Hearing Project; El Paso Newborn Hearing Screening Task Force; University of CO; CSDB Early Years & the Larimer County ICC;

Boulder County Service Providers Coalition; the O.U.R. Children's Safety Project; Family Leadership Training Institute; CO Spanish Forum.

We continued our Collaboration with other groups such as: Family Voices, El Grupo Vida, the Colorado Association of Audiologists, CO Autism Society, AG Bell of Colorado, American Society for Deaf Children, Rocky Mountain Deaf School, The Listen Foundation, The Colorado Oral Preschool, Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, Marion Downs Center, CO Assn. of the Deaf, Early Intervention Colorado (Part C), Colorado Home Intervention Program, Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado Dept. of Health, the Aspen Camp School for the Deaf, KidPower, Parent 2 Parent of CO, and the PEAK Parent Center.

Colorado Families for Hands & Voices takes pride in collaborating with other organizations and agencies

Guide by Your Side and Ambassador Program

CO Hands & Voices celebrated its tenth year as a national model for the H&V GBYS program. Regional Parent Coordinators represent and meet the needs of families in geographical locations around the State. To date, coordinators are established in the Western Slope (2), Colorado Springs, (2) the Denver Metro Area (2), Boulder, and the Northeastern Region (1) of Colorado. Spanish Speaking Representatives (2) Unilateral Hearing Loss (2) and an ASL Deaf Parent. Hands & Voices, in collaboration with CSDB, also has one representative specifically for the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind campus in Colorado Springs. The consultants improved their skills by attending many trainings, H&V in-house training such as Support Without Bias, and CDE Special Education conference; Hands & Voices National Leadership Conference; Natl. EHDI Conference; NCHAM's National Parent Support Conference, and the LRP Legal Institute. The **H&V Ambassador Program** continues its projects around the state, creating new parent volunteers to ensure information dissemination to families. The following document continued to be disseminated: **"Beyond the IEP: Families and Educators Working Together in School Programs"** with an accompanying training option for schools.

Staying Connected: CO H&V Facebook (English and Spanish), Database, Email Lists, and Survey Monkey

In an effort to increase our effectiveness in getting information out to families, efforts continue to ensure that email distribution lists have been developed to reach over 600 parents at this time. **Emails were sent to 4,381 recipients over the course of the year.** Our database reflects an **increase of over 85 entries** over the current year, to create a current database of over 1387 on the mailing list. (list also deletes old names) We use Survey Monkey, Gotomeeting.com and have upgraded our Filemaker Pro program. The entire enrollment of parents whose children attend CSDB is currently on the database as an outreach activity of the school. We track family preferences and evaluations through the Survey Monkey online tool, increasing our ability to get feedback from families. Self-Referrals directly from families continue to increase. Outreach to families who are late-identified, or move to CO from out of state were a priority in our outreach this year. This year we continued two Facebook pages, in English and Spanish.

Presentations

H&V had several training opportunities for professionals this year, including continued travel with the state Health Dept. to various CO located hospitals to participate in forums regarding Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Efforts. Presentations were made to Audiologists, Deaf Educators, Early Interventionists, Physicians, and other professionals all over CO and the U.S. Our staff presented at the Natl. EHDI conference, the CO Association of Midwives, HCP Team Leaders Statewide Conference; Centura Health Maternal-Newborn Conf.

THE Hands & Voices ASTRa PROGRAM

This year, CO H&V trained over 25 parent and professional advocates to support families in their quest for educational excellence through a new program at Hands & Voices. A two day training, funded through the CO Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing prepared participants to understand the law, support the rights of students, and improve the education system for our kids. A yahoo group was created for the attendees.



ADVOCACY
SUPPORT &
TRAINING

Regional Workshops/Events for Parents; Family and Student Support; Product Development

Product Development and Dissemination:

- ♦ **Colorado specific website:**
www.cohandsandvoices.org
- Spanish Section of website has been expanded
- Information developed for Observing Under standing, and Responding to Child Abuse and Neglect
- Parent Funding Toolkit revised and updated
- Parent Roadmaps for Hospitals (56) and Interactive version
- ♦ REVISIED and updated the CO Resource Guide in English 2011 Version; Current CO Resource Guide in Spanish 08/09 Version
- ♦ Dissemination of Beyond the IEP: Families and Educators Working Together in School Programs Booklet and PowerPoint Presentation
- ♦ Dissemination of Bridge to Preschools: Transitions Packet from Part C to Part B Disseminated and presentations delivered;
- ♦ Quarterly publication of the "Communicator" - Summer 10: C.I. Soft Failures Fall 10: A Day in the Life of H&V; Winter 11: What about Deaf Schools?; Spring 11 GPOD Position Statement
- ♦ CO Event flyers sent out throughout the year.
- ♦ Vertical Response E-Newsletters sent out to over 600 at least monthly
- ♦ Additions to other publications (CSDB, CHIP, HCP)

EVENTS (Numbers denote ATTENDANCE)

Summer 2010

- ♦ Five Parent Social Gatherings for parents in the Denver Metro Area: 25
- ♦ H&V National Conference/ME: 115 (5 from CO)
- ♦ Joint H&V/MDHC Spanish Family Picnic: 150

August, 2010

- ♦ Booth at the CSDB Back to School Day: Visited with over 50 parents

September, 2010

- ♦ Family Picnic for newly identified children who are deaf/hh and their families: Colorado Springs: 35
- ♦ National EHDI Webinar featuring CO presenter
- ♦ Spanish Forum: 13

October, 2010

- ♦ 8th Annual Hands & Voices Benefit: 180
- ♦ CSDB Back to School Night; H&V table: 50
- ♦ Denver "Monkey Business" Social Gathering: 25
- ♦ H&V resource table for SEE Workshop: 51
- ♦ El Grupo Vida - presentation delivered in Spanish: 32

November/December 2010

- ♦ Two Joint H&V/MDHC/CHIP Holiday Gatherings Denver: 150
- ♦ Transition for CSDB Bridges Colorado Springs: 20
- ♦ Deafness/Autism Event: 63

January/February , 2011

- ♦ Overcoming Challenges: Workshop and Distance Learning webinar with The Children's Hospital and The CI Consortium Attendance: 250
- ♦ CO staff attend National EHDI Conference: 7

March/April, 2011

- ♦ H&V Table at Douglas District Carnival 100
- ♦ CO H&V ASTRA project training Attend: 28
- ♦ Four Corners Play Group, Durango: 20
- ♦ Communication Plan Training: 10

May/June, 2010

- ♦ Day at the Capitol 50
- ♦ Durango Play Group: 20
- ♦ Family Picnic Windsor: 70
- ♦ Granby Parent Workshop: 15

We wish to thank the many individuals and organizations who, through their financial support, make it possible for CO Hands & Voices to succeed!

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

We're on the Web!
www.cohandsandvoices.org

Evaluation

Hands & Voices implemented ongoing evaluation techniques in this fiscal year. Evaluations through Survey Monkey is given to all participants at events, and is then collated. The information is used to plan future events and to modify our topics according to the needs of individuals. Constituents provide information through the website and a feedback form disseminated through "The Communicator." Evaluation tools

for Hands & Voices staff and board members are also completed annually.

Pre and Post Tests are sometimes given on knowledge and skills for participants in workshops. Quantitative and qualitative evaluation measures are consistently used in the carrying out of Grants. CO H&V staff report to the Board of Directors on day to day activities and the accomplishment of set goals.

Revenue/Expenses

CO Hands & Voices receives income from a diverse set of sources. **CO Dept. of Health, - Special Health Care Needs (HCP) and the MCH Grant; Sprint/Relay, Anschutz Family Foundation, CCDHH, CSDB, CDE, Sertoma, University of Colorado; Civic organizations, H&V fundraiser, businesses, and individual donors** During this fiscal year, Hands & Voices received approximately \$90,000.00 in direct funds. Expenses fell under five major categories (figures are approximate)

- Programs (including staff time for implementation) :
\$73,000.00 (advocacy/workshops GBYS, systems representation etc)
- Administrative Costs: \$7,000.00
- Resources and Publications: 4,000
- Advocacy Training: \$6,000.00

Resources for Families and Professionals

Website - www.handsandvoices.org

Hands & Voices has established a comprehensive, growing website for Families in Colorado, and beyond. Both the English and the Spanish versions of The Colorado Resource Guide have been added to the website, as well as articles and information for families. Upcoming events section is kept active and up to date. Articles in Spanish are available, as well as a donor appreciation section of the web.

Resource Guide

The Colorado Resource Guide has been revised in its new 2011 version, with extensive revisions and additions. Phone lists, and addresses included in the guide have been updated. The resource guide was translated into Spanish, and is currently being disseminated to Spanish speaking families in the state.

Newspaper

The Hands & Voices publication, "The Communicator" is disseminated quarterly. Circulation has reached 5,500 copies per issue nationally, with over 1400 recipients in CO alone.

Highlighted topics included:

Summer 10: C.I. Soft Failures Fall 10: A Day in the Life of H&V; Winter 11: What about Deaf Schools?; Spring 11 GPOD Position Statement
Contribution to the Outreach Network News by the parent team member on the Outreach Board was also disseminated. Contributions to the CHIP newsletter are also included. Additional flyers were mailed throughout the year apprising members of upcoming events.

Clearinghouse

CO H&V continues to maintain and update the clearinghouse per parent request. Books are purchased for families at their request. Comp books are often sent to our office and shared with other families.

H&V National Resources:

Resources from the national level of H&V include: Loss & Found, (A DVD for families who fail the NHS screen) the Book of Choice, (English and Spanish) We are Hands & Voices, the H&V GBYS Guide, and A is for Access.