

Collaboration Between Deaf Mentor Family Services and MN Hands & Voices = Successfully Supported Families

Presented by:

DMFS Director, Emily Smith-Lundberg

MNH&V DHH Guide Program Coordinator, Heidy L. Nazario

MNH&V Guide By Your Side Manager, Brenda Hommerding



Objectives of today's presentation:

- Learn about the Deaf Mentor Family Services Program and the MNH&V DHH Guide Program and what they have to offer to families.
- Collect ideas on how the programs work together to serve families.
- Understand the importance of collaboration between programs.





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Deaf Mentor Family Services

Who do we serve?

- Families that reside in Minnesota, who have children who are deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing.
- Applicants who have children ages 0-6 and live in Greater Minnesota are prioritized. Greater Minnesota is outside of the seven counties of the metro area. We accept families that have children ages 6-21 as well.
- LSS' Deaf Mentor Family Services are funded in part by the Minnesota Department of Human Services Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division (DHHSD). There are no cost to families for these services.





Services



Deaf Mentor Program

- Deaf Mentors, as language models facilitate early language acquisition through ASL instruction using SKI-HI Deaf Mentor curriculum along with supplemental sources.
- Share valuable insight about social emotional development who are Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, and Hard of Hearing.
- Advocate for the children and families that we work with.

Empower! Program

- Empower! consists of eight, one-hour sessions focused on self-advocacy skills for deaf and hard of hearing youth (ages 7 to 21). This is led by Deaf Mentors.
- Introduces your child and family to a Deaf Mentor who is DHH and uses similar communication modalities.
- Offers the opportunity to discuss topics such as peer friendships using technology, self-esteem, identity and thinking about the future.





Deaf Mentors are trained in...



- SKI-HI Deaf Mentor curriculum (primary curriculum), Bravo Video Course, and Signing Naturally curriculum.
- Education for DHH Children
- Learning and Language: Early intervention and language learning
- Best practices in mentoring
- ASL milestones in Deaf Children
- Family centered services
- Culture and communities
- Assistive technology for DHH children



What do Deaf Mentor sessions typically look like?

Our services are a whole family, whole child centered. We welcome whoever the family wants to be part of the learning process, this includes siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, neighbors, friends, etc... The more, the merrier!

- Start the first eight sessions with Bravo video course, a series of 16 videos via Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP).
- Start in person/virtual sessions, using the SKI HI Deaf Mentor curriculum.
- Start with ice breakers based on the child's interest.
- Begin ASL lesson, discuss the lesson concept, learn new ASL signs, sentences, dialogues, activity with family to incorporate the concept of the lesson.
- Discuss early visual communication, Deaf culture, Deaf history, and any questions the family wants to discuss.
- Make plans for the next session, Deaf Mentor completes a progress report in our CRM (database) and the family gets a copy of the report.





Julianne



Jackie



Michele



Mary



Amanda J.



Gloria



Kimmi



Julie



Mig



Mandy



Sammie



Amanda B.



Brandi



Stefjo



Suzanne



Melissa



Sharon



Linda



**Deaf
Mentors**

Stefjo

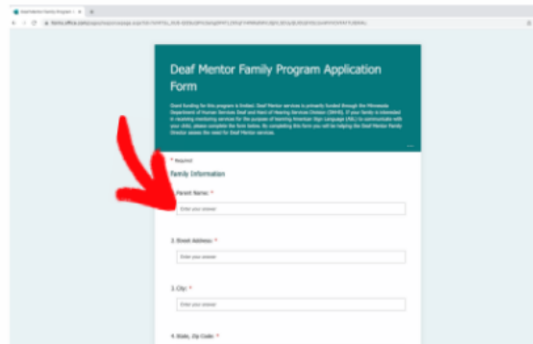


How do families apply?

<https://www.lssmn.org/services/families/deaf-hard-of-hearing/mentor-services>

Applications available in:

- English
- Spanish
- Hmong
- Somali

A screenshot of a web browser displaying the 'Deaf Mentor Family Program Application Form'. The form is titled 'Deaf Mentor Family Program Application Form' and includes a red arrow pointing to the '1. Family Information' section. Below this section, there are four numbered fields: '1. Family Name', '2. Street Address', '3. City', and '4. State, Zip Code'. Each field has a corresponding input box.



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Staff trained to be an impartial resource to families with deaf or hard of hearing children ages 0-21

Parent Guides

8 Parents of deaf or hard of hearing children

Identify a common bond by sharing experiences, challenges, wisdom, and insight. Provide resources

DHH Guides

4 deaf or hard of hearing adults and 1 deafblind adult

Uniquely qualified to provide families with a positive and hopeful perspective from their day-to-day, real-life experiences as a D/HH person living in a predominantly hearing world

ASTra Advocates

3 ASTra Advocates: 2 Parents of DHH children, 1 DHH adult

Provide educational advocacy, support, and resources to families who need guidance through special education law and creating educational plans for their DHH child/ren.





Hannah Harriman



Shelby Geldon



Heidi Nazario



Kelsey Woodward



Sophia Barr

Meet our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Guides!



Why meet with a DHH Guide?

- **Deaf or Hard of Hearing Adults share their lived experience with families allowing for a safe space for a conversation.**
- **Opportunity to learn about resources available for DHH families.**
- **Role models are important!**
 - **Children will look up to a variety of role models to help shape how they behave in school, relationships, or when making difficult decisions.**
 - **Children will often seek role models that they can empathize with, often choosing those that are similar to them**
- **Helps build a support network.**
- **DHH Guides help families navigate common challenges DHH children may experience, as well as their joys.**
- **Our services are free to all Minnesota families with children who are Deaf/ Hard of Hearing**



Where can I meet a DHH Guide?; What else does the DHH Guide Program offer?

In-person and Virtual Visits with families

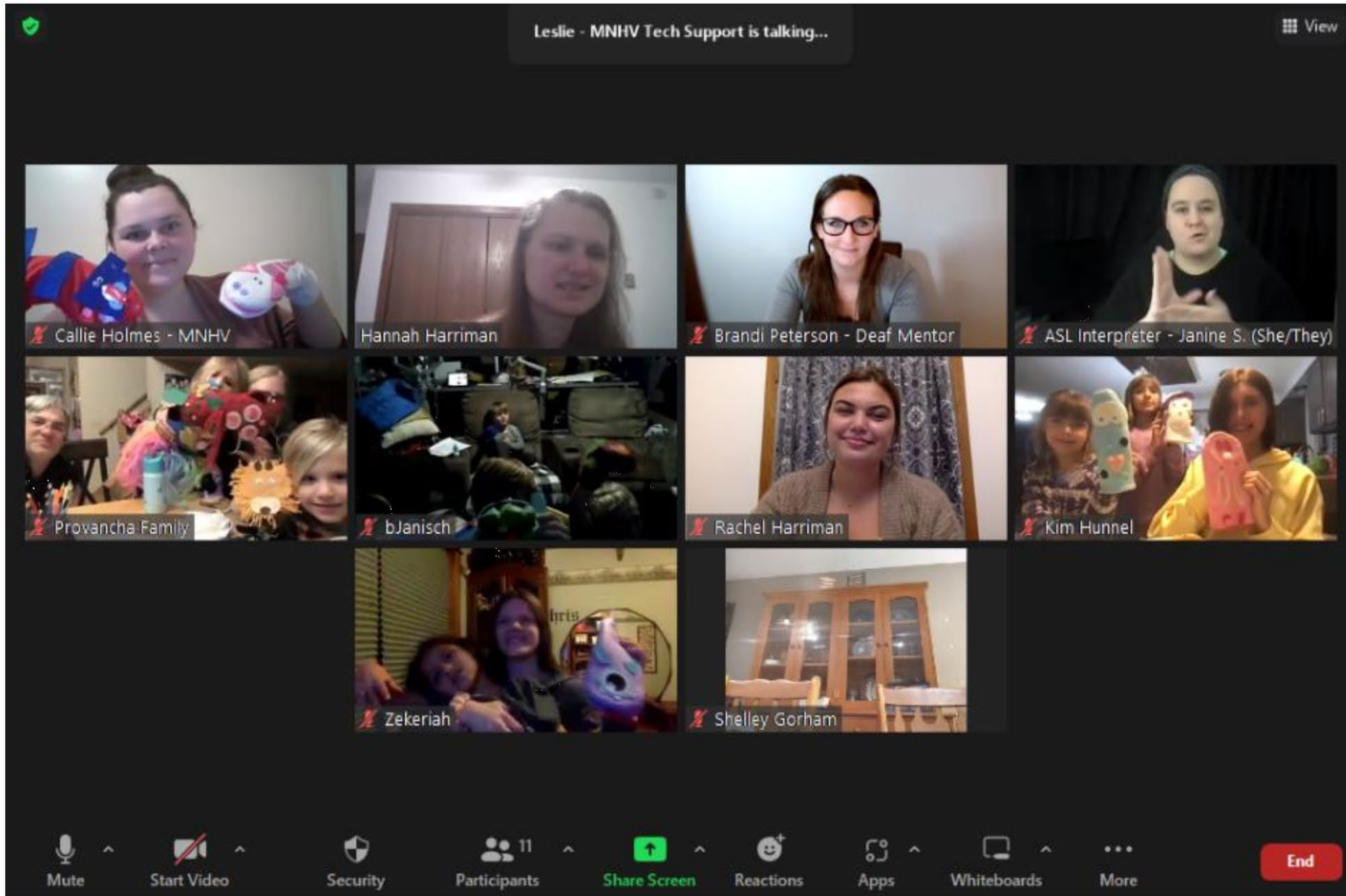
Collaboration with other DHH professionals

DHH-Guide led events

DHH Virtual Book Club

YouTube channel with educational/fun videos, and intros to all our staff

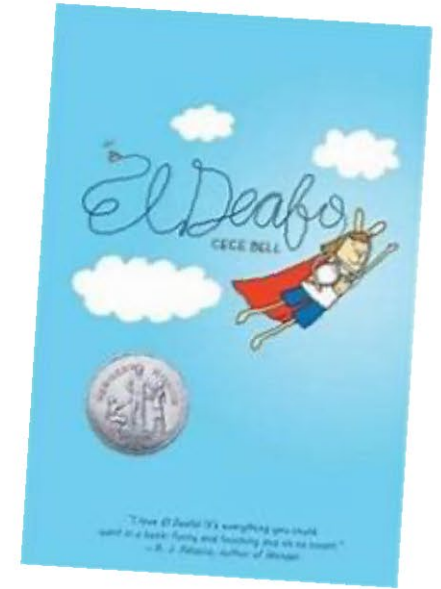
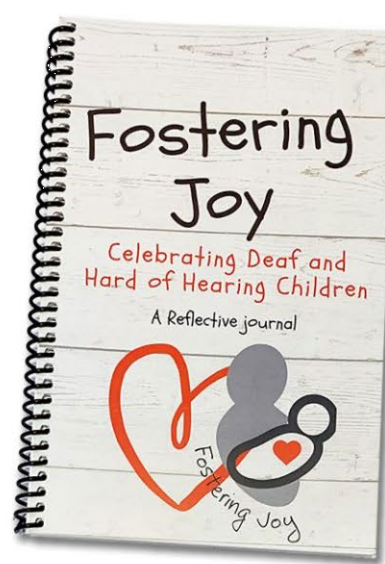




**Virtual Events:
time zone and
location
difference? Not
an issue!**

**In DHH Guide-led
events, support
staff include a
MNH&V Parent
Guide and a Deaf
Mentor Family
Services Deaf
Mentor.**





DHH Guide visits

HANDS & VOICES LEAGUE OF HEROES SUPERPOWERS WITHIN



CREATIVITY

is my ability to think of great ideas and use my imagination to solve puzzles, to share with others, or just to have fun.

ACTION:

I put my hands on my head and wiggle my fingers to make super creative sparks fly!



COURAGE

is not about never feeling afraid. I know others have been afraid before. *Courage* is the power I have to still do something new even though I feel afraid.

ACTION:

My palms face up and my fingers wiggle to make my inner strength glow!



ADVOCACY

gives me the power of confidence to speak up for myself and others. Making sure I, and everyone around me, get to share the same experiences.

ACTION:

I tap my nose with my finger and all my senses: super focused on what's happening around me!



ADAPTABLE

is the power I have to see a problem or an obstacle as an opportunity for me to try an alternate way to fix it or to find a different path around.

ACTION:

I put my palms together then pivot my hands to activate my super clever powers.



RESOURCEFUL

is my power of knowing many different positive ways to solve any problems or to figure out tricky situations.

ACTION:

I pull on my ear lobe to get the gears in my mind moving on to my next best idea.



RESILIENCY

is my ability to bounce and roll! When adversity strikes I still have emotions like anxiety and grief, but I keep on moving and doing the things that are important to me.

ACTION:

With my arms crossed in front of me and my hands on each shoulder I activate a force field.



EMPATHY

is my great ability to understand another person's feelings and the power to view situations from their perspective.

ACTION:

When I place my hand over my heart it charges my super heart making those around me stronger, too.



SPIRIT

is my inner glow, the special power within me that shines to show people that I am one of a kind. I'm super unique!

ACTION:

I stretch arms way up high, then sweep my hands down to my sides, and I soar like a shooting star across the sky.



RESPECT

is the power of knowing how great the world is because everyone is different. This power comes from my appreciation of the differences in each of us.

ACTION:

When I clap my hands together it gives everyone in the world super-powered high fives.



SPARK

is the power inside me that knows I am worth every effort. This *Spark* tells me I can succeed in all the things I set my mind to do.

ACTION:

When both my fists bump together I activate my inner super drive.



Deaf Mentor Family Services

- **Language based program**
- **Goal is to teach families ASL, communication, language, Deaf culture, advocacy, and Early Visual Communication.**
- **Families usually sign up for two years (53 sessions). Families can choose 1 or 2 years.**
- **Deaf Mentors are trained in how to use the SKI-HI Deaf Curriculum.**
- **EMPOWER Program**

- **Supports DHH families**
- **Shares experiences related to being a DHH individual with families**
- **Direct referrals are made to program's general email addresses via CRM**
- **Families have access to both programs at any point of their journey, not having to choose one or the other.**



MINNESOTA HANDS & VOICES™

DHH Guide Program

- **Support based program**
- **Goal is to visit with families who desire connection with a DHH individual with the lived experience they are interested in learning about.**
- **Number of visits depend on the needs and desire of the family.**
- **Models communication and technology being used (if applicable). Does not teach.**
- **SuperPowers- cards given at visits and events**
- **Fostering Joy Journal for Kids**





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MNH&V Referral process to DMFS:

- When MNH&V staff connect with a family and learn that the family would like to be referred to DMFS, they simply check a box in MNH&V's database while they are entering notes under the family profile.

DHH Guide 3rd initial attempt to reach Jane Doe - Unsaved 9/2/2022 Due | 9/2/2022 Completed Date | Open Status | [Heidy Nazario](#) Guide making call

Phone Call

Call Details Description, Intake Questions, and ...

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Discussed technology? Yes, discussed</p> <hr/> <p>Discussed Deaf Mentor Program? ---</p> <hr/> <p>Discussed Deaf/HH Guide Program? Yes, discussed</p> <hr/> | |
| <p>Referrals</p> <p>refer to DHH Guide Program? ---</p> <p>click here to fill out Help Me Grow form</p> <p>refer to ASTra? <input type="text" value="--Select--"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p> <p>refer to DMFS? <input type="text" value="--Select--"/></p> | <p>Education</p> <p>EI/school services in place? ---</p> <hr/> <p>ASTra discussed? ---</p> <hr/> <p>PACER discussed? ---</p> |



MNH&V Referral process to DMFS continued . . .

- Due to both programs being Lines of Service within LSS, we are allowed to share necessary contact information between programs. An email is sent to Emily with the family's name and contact information.



Heidy Nazario

To: Emily Smith-Lundberg

Cc: Heidy Nazario



Hello,

During a recent conversation with their parent guide, a family was referred to Deaf Mentor Family Services. Their available information is below:

Name:

Home Phone #:

Cell #:

Email:

Thank you for reaching out to this family about your program



- MNH&V & DMFS Programs work closely on a monthly basis to track names of families referred to DMFS program, dates they were referred, dates of enrollment into the program.
- MNH&V then takes the necessary information to report back into MEDSS (Grantee's database) of those families that received services from DMFS Program.
- Quarterly joint reports about events/meeting that both programs attended are given to each of the grant holders.



2022 Data:

- **16 events where a Deaf Mentor and a DHH Guide both were in attendance!**

Titles/Topics include:

- **Book Clubs**
 - **Picnics**
 - **Fostering Joy**
 - **Let's Connect**
 - **Accessible Games**
 - **Build Your Own Snowman**
 - **Ho! Ho! Ho!**
 - **Latino Heritage**
 - **Advocacy Roundtable**
 - **Deaf Awareness**
 - **Earth Day**
 - **Reading, Set, Go!**
 - **Building Bee Homes**
 - **Splish Splash Bash**
-
- **48 families referred to DMFS from MNH&V**
 - **42 families referred to DHH Guides from MNH&V**
-
- **Yearly Joint Advisory Board meeting w/MNH&V and DMFS programs**



Referral process to M NH&V Program:

You can go to the Secure online link from our website:

[Refer a Family | Minnesota Hands and Voices \(lssmn.org\)](https://www.lssmn.org/Refer-a-Family)

or scan the QR Code!



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