

# Hand and Voices

## Description

Hands & Voices (H&V) is parent-driven organization that supports families with children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing without a bias around communication modes or methodology. We envision a world where children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing have every opportunity to achieve their full potential. H&V houses the Family Leadership in Language and Learning Center (FL3) The goal of the FL3 Center is to increase family engagement and leadership, and strengthen family support in Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI) systems of care in order to enable families to optimize the language, literacy, and social-emotional development of their children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

## Benefits to student

Students and professionals bring critical knowledge and expertise in their professional roles that helps drive the direction of the kinds of support that families need - working beautifully in conjunction with the 'where the rubber meets the road' mindset of parent led thinking. Hands & Voices epitomizes the collaboration that is so needed between parents and the professionals who serve them, including students who are on their way to be a part of the fabric of support.

## Personal Reflection

Learn to become comfortable with being uncomfortable. It's part of being human and being able to grow in your work with families. Families sometimes experience sadness, grief or discomfort. Sometimes it just is that way in an appointment and that's okay. Have the courage to begin uncomfortable and honest conversations when things aren't going well. For example, when there is progressive hearing loss, language gaps or other challenges. Know that families are learning and growing over time, and will make good decisions for their kids when they have the support of professionals. Remember that the journey also brings joy, and support families in their ability to enjoy the journey. - a compilation of thoughts from H&V