

Georgia Hands & Voices

Guide By Your Side™ Program

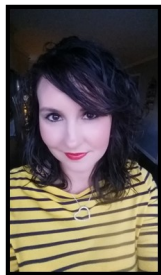
Providing unbiased, emotional support and resources to families of children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing by trained Parent Guides.

Meet Your Parent Guides:



Kelly Cashion
Parent Guide

Scarlett Giles
GBYS Director



Lupita Huerta-Rodriguez
Diversity Parent Guide

Laila Lawrence
Parent Guide



Janne' Sharpe
Parent Guide

Beth Flaherty
Parent Guide



Julia Williams
Parent Guide

Parent Guides:

- are specially trained parents of children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- work directly with families in need of the unique support that comes from someone else who has walked the path him/herself
- provide emotional support at the time of confirmation of a hearing loss, as well as provide a continuity of support to families throughout the child's life, especially at times of transition
- offer resources, information, encouragement, and an opportunity to network with other families.



"Our Guide was outstanding in every aspect. She made us aware of programs and gave us support to pursue them."

-Parent of GBYS program

Guide By Your Side Provides:

- a Parent Guide to listen and share resources, one-on-one
- unbiased support - listening without judging
- compassion and knowledge from parents who also have a child with hearing loss
- workshops, trainings, and events for parents and children
- networking opportunities with other families
- referrals to other programs that serve Deaf or Hard of Hearing children.

Who is eligible for the Guide By Your Side Program:

- Georgia families and families receiving services here
- Families who have a child with hearing loss

This is a free service to families!



"Parents reporting social networks with other parents of children who are deaf were associated with less isolation, greater acceptance of their child, and improved interactional responsivity."

(Hintermaier, M., 2000)

For more info please contact: Scarlett Giles
Georgia Hands & Voices GBYS Director
sgiles@doe.k12.ga.us or 470-991-9187

Hello!

I am a mother of two children who both have hearing loss. I am also the Director of the Georgia Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side Program. Georgia Hands & Voices is a parent-driven, non-profit organization providing resources and support to Georgia families of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) children, regardless of your family's communication choice(s). Guide By Your Side (GBYS) Parent Guides are all parents of children who are D/HH and Deaf Plus who live throughout the state. We work alongside Early Intervention services to guide, support and provide resources to families of children with hearing loss.

Our message to your family is the "3 C's": Connect, Communicate, & Commit.

Connect...Social Interaction!

As parents of children who are D/HH, we can relate to your family and understand the important need to connect with other families that also have children with hearing loss. Parents need other parents for advice and for some empathy. Children should also have the opportunity to meet other children that have hearing loss so they can feel an identity bond and gain confidence. Social media has made it possible for us to connect all over Georgia and beyond. See links below and join the connection:

Georgia Hands & Voices website– www.gahandsandvoices.org

Hands & Voices website– www.handsandvoices.org

Georgia Hands & Voices Private Facebook Group: www.facebook.com/groups/gahandsandvoices/

Georgia Hands & Voices Instagram– @gahvgbys

Georgia Hands & Voices Twitter– follow @GAHandV

Georgia GBYS Blog – www.gagbys.blogspot.com

GBYS Social Events– We plan social events throughout the year and throughout the state.

Communicate...Literacy is Key!

Language is so important! Literacy is so important! You must get language into your child starting at birth in order to prevent delays. The Georgia Pathway to Language & Literacy project focuses on language acquisition and literacy for D/HH children birth through 8 years. Check out at www.georgialiteracy.org. The majority of children who have hearing loss are born to parents who hear. Sometimes it is hard for parents to initially grasp the reality of hearing loss, because it is not our personal reality. One of the most important needs between a parent and child, besides love, is to communicate. Our Guides are happy to talk with you about any issues or concerns you may have about your child. We work to find resources to help answer your questions, but mostly we are here to listen. Ultimately, we hope to help you find more clarity and perspective in your own journey. Check out www.gahandsandvoices.org/Resources.

Commit

The third "C" we want our GBYS families to remember is to "Commit." If you are like us, you might feel overwhelmed with all the information, choices, and changes in your life. We are here to support you, but we are also here to encourage you to take action and commit to your D/HH child's future. We can help you learn about/enroll in Early Intervention services like GA PINES, help you look for D/HH school programs & educational advocacy support. We do have an advocacy program-GA H&V ASTra: www.handsandvoices.org/astra/index.

And Lastly...Breathe. Parenting is hard, but worth it. This new journey will open your eyes to so many life lessons and experiences. I know this is a lot of information, but knowledge gives us the power to move instead of standing frozen. I look forward to walking and talking with you on this journey.

Sincerely, Scarlett Giles
sgiles@doe.k12.ga.us