

WYOMING FAMILIES FOR HANDS & VOICES

*"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."*TM

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2019 HANDS & VOICES LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

This year's Leadership Conference was held on the beautiful campus of Gallaudet University in Washington D.C. We were able to see some of the sights in the area.

HANDS & VOICES UPDATE

Here at Hands & Voices we hope that this newsletter finds all of you doing well and enjoying the fall weather. We have been busy trying to finalize dates and the location for our 2020 Parent Training. Plans are also in the works to add some new things in to the training and bring in more amazing speakers. Keep watching for more information. Don't forget to save the date, you won't want to miss this!!

In this newsletter you can read about the 2019 Leadership Conference and some great information from the Outreach Library in Casper. On page 4 there is information about the 2019 Transition Workshop, this is a great opportunity for students 7th-12th grade and their parents. Also, page 3 has ways you can support H&V.

Recently Janine Cole, Supervisor of the WDE D/HH Outreach Services retired. Billie Wortham now fills that position. These ladies played a huge part in our lives when my kids were diagnosed and this helped my kids get to where they are today. At the time Billie was a local audiologist and made sure we received a timely and correct diagnosis. Janine and her Outreach staff visited our homes several times to support our family. You can read more about these ladies in our Winter Newsletter. We are blessed in our state to have great organizations that support families and want what's best for all children diagnosed with hearing loss.

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2019 H&V LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

By Wendy Hewitt

In September Wyoming Directors, Wendy and Mandy traveled to Washington D.C. for the Hands & Voices Leadership Conference. The conference was held on the beautiful campus of Gallaudet University. It was three full days of training and some evening time to see some sights of D.C.

There were pre-session and post-session trainings for H&V directors. They are always a great way to get new ideas and more in depth training on things like grant writing, training new staff, speaking, and adult learning styles. We heard from several panels and learned from the experiences of parents and their d/hh children. Several sessions were focused on the importance of d/hh children having the opportunities to have connections with d/hh adults. That is something we are working on in Wyoming.

One session that really was very motivating for me was the opening keynote speaker, which was Karen Putz. Those of you that were able to attend the 2019 Parent Training know what an amazing speaker she is. She reminded us that as state H&V leaders that we have to remember it is not about us but about the families we are serving. "Take the journey with the family not for them," was a statement that stuck out in my mind! We have to help the family thrive on their journey. There are three things she said should guide us as leaders - kindness, compassion and empathy. Karen also talked about how kids need to be involved in their journey as they get older. As parents we need to support self-awareness in our kids and help build a strong support network for them. It is also VERY important to have high expectations for our kids - this will help build self confidence and independence.

Karen also reminded us as leaders that we do have an impact on families, that the small stuff really does matter, and you never know when you are making a difference. A single thread is very easy to break, but when many threads are woven together they are very strong and much harder to break!

Once again I came away refreshed and motivated with great new ideas. New friendships were made and old friendships were renewed and strengthened. We are so glad to have the support from H&V Headquarters.



H&V GUIDES SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

Earlier this fall, three Guide By Your Side guides had the opportunity to speak to ASL classes at Casper College. Kim Reimann, Betsy O'Neill, and Sarah Nokes told their stories to two very attentive classes. The guides each told their personal story of learning of their child's hearing loss and their journey up to now. The three parents have very unique stories, with unique challenges, choices, and outcomes. Between three families, their journey's include late onset hearing loss, D/HH Plus, progressive hearing loss, hearing aids, cochlear implants, spoken language, sign language, pre-school, public school and the transition to college. One class is in their first year of sign language, and for most of them, have had very little exposure to deaf/hard of hearing culture. Students were given an assignment of coming up with questions to ask the guides, and boy, did they deliver! Extremely thought-provoked questions stumped the guides several times. A big thank you to Gail Schenfisch at Casper College for inviting us! In 2017 Kim Reimann and Wendy Hewitt were also able to present to the ASL classes, the students love learning from a parent's experience.



SAVE THE DATE

2020 Parent Training

June 26 & 27, 2020 in Casper, WY

Don't miss out - It's going to be our best one yet!! 😊



YOUR LIBRARY CORNER

By: Jo Otterholt

We hope this finds all of you well rested and with summer adventures to share with your family and friends. School is well underway and some of you are sharing your child's hearing loss and communication needs with teachers and classmates. We have several books at the Outreach Library, (also known as Wyoming Services for the Deaf Library), that will help your child to understand their hearing loss and not feel like, "I'm the only deaf kid in school". Remember you are the best advocate for your child's hearing loss and needs. We invite you to check these books out:

• **A Screaming Kind of Day**
By Rachna Gilmore (ages 3 – 8 years)

• **Let's Hear It for Almgal**
By Wendy Kepfer (3 – 8 years)

• **Having Hearing Aids**
By Peter Augustine (4 – 10 years)

• **The Elephant in the Room**
By Jim Bombicino (4 - 10 years)

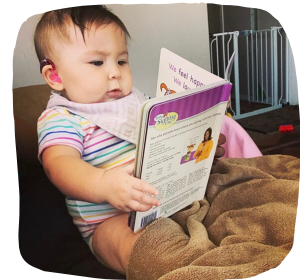
• **Can You Hear a Rainbow?**
By Jamee Riggio Heelan (Ages 4 – 12 years)

• **A Button in Her Ear**
By Ada B. Litchfield (ages 4 – 12 years)

• **I Am Deaf**
By Jennifer Moore-Mallinos (6 – 12 years)



Above: Jo Otterholt



Above: Baby Holland



And my favorite is: *The Mitten String* by Jennifer Rosner. (I identified with the young mother in the story as I did something similar to help alert me when my babies awakened in the middle of the night. I have been an avid knitter since I was 9 years old.)

Fall is baseball season, and here are two books your sport-minded child will enjoy:

• **The William Hoy Story** by Nancy Churnin (5-12 yrs)
• **Rally Caps** by Stephen J. Cutler (8 – 14 years)

Wyoming Services for the Deaf Library (WSDL) or often called Outreach Library, is a specialty public library in Wyoming, with the focus of providing deaf-related materials for deaf students, parents, teachers, and scholars. While there are dozens of Libraries for the Deaf in United States—their circulation is usually restricted to only the students and staff of the School associated with that library. Whereas any person in the State of Wyoming who holds a public library card or WSDL library card can check out materials. And WSDL is a member of Wyoming Library Database (WYLD) system, so you can search through its collection while sitting on your couch at home. Should you choose a book, or several, it will be mailed to either your public library or an address that you specify. When you are finished with the book, simply mail it back to us at Outreach Library or ask your public library to return it to us at https://wyld.ent.sirsi.net/client/en_US/wSDL/

Contact Jo at wSDLlibrary@wyo.gov for more information.

Support Wyoming Families for Hands & Voices every time you shop at Smith's.

Signing up is free and easy!

1. Go to SmithsFoodandDrug.com/inspire
2. Sign into your digital account or choose "Create an Account" and fill in the information.
3. Link your Rewards Card to your Hands & Voices: Enter **90042** or at least 3 letters of your organization's name and click 'Search', select the organization and choose 'Save'.

Then, every time you shop at Smith's with your Rewards Card, they donate 0.5% of your total order to our nonprofit.*

Smith's 
INSPIRING DONATIONS

#1 holiday hack:

When you buy your gifts at smile.amazon.com, Amazon donates.

 **amazon**smile

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Twitter and
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Wyoming Families for Hands & Voices is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization.

What's The Plan? Transition Workshop

Monday, December 9, 2019
9:00 am-3:30 pm
Casper College, Gateway Building,
125 College Drive, Casper, WY

Join us for "What's the Plan?" Transition
Workshop for students with hearing
loss, their providers and parents.

Topics to be covered include:

- Advocacy in college, workplace, and life
- Information about DVR
- Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Discussion panels
- Networking
- Community & Government Resources



Lodging:

Special room rate of \$94.00 + tax at the Holiday Inn Express
4250 Legion Ln, Casper, WY 8260. Call (307) 237-4200 ask
for: "WDE Transition Workshop Block"

\$150 Parental Reimbursement for Local Families
\$300 Parental Reimbursement for Overnight Stay

What's your
graduation
plan?

Are you:

- In grades 7-12?
- A student who is Deaf/Hard of Hearing?
- A parent or provider of a student who is Deaf/Hard of Hearing?

Do you:

- Know what kinds of services are available?
- Need help navigating through school and into "real life"?

Admission is FREE

Register by December 2, 2019 at:
<https://forms.gle/5D3cXY8yDWKrztc6>

Complimentary lunch
.5 PTSB Credit available

Sponsored by:

The Wyoming Department of Education, Deaf/Hard of
Hearing Outreach Team and the Department of Vocational
Rehabilitation (DVR)

For more Information Contact:

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Wyoming Families for
Hands & Voices

**Pizza
Party!**

IN CONJUNCTION WITH
THE WDE TRANSITION
WORKSHOP- HANDS &
VOICES WILL BE
HOSTING A PIZZA
DINNER FOR FAMILIES
OF CHILDREN WITH
HEARING LOSS, &
THEIR SERVICE
PROVIDERS

SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 8, 2019
7:00-9:00 PM
PIZZA RANCH
5011 E 2ND ST,
CASPER

RSVP TO
WENDY AT
307-780-6476