

# Colorado Families for Hands & Voices

Annual Report  
July 1, 2004–June 30, 2005

Colorado Families for Hands & Voices is a non profit 501(c)(3) organization

July 1, 2004—June 30, 2005



HANDS &  
VOICES

## Issues of Concern and Involvement Include:

- ◆ Communication Access for Children who are Deaf/hh
- ◆ Deaf Education Reform – Educational Excellence
- ◆ “Medical Home” Initiative
- ◆ Legislative Issues: Hearing Aid Coverage by Insurance Co’s.
- ◆ Parents Accessing Resources Project
- ◆ Universal Newborn Hearing Systems
- ◆ Genetics and Deafness
- ◆ Parent/Professional Collaboration
- ◆ Parent/Consumer Partnerships
- ◆ Parent Advocacy, Education, and Support
- ◆ Deaf Child Bill of Rights
- ◆ Natural Environments and Children who are deaf/hh
- ◆ Parent’s right to make informed communication choices
- ◆ National Expansion of Organization

## “What Works for your Child is What Makes the Choice Right”

On behalf of Colorado Families for Hands & Voices, the children in the state of Colorado who are deaf and hard of hearing, and their parents, we respectfully submit our annual report detailing the activities accomplished in the fiscal year July 2004 through June 2005.

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’re 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.

There were many achievements that were accomplished in this funding period to meet the vision and mission of our organization, providing outreach services to parents of students who are deaf or hard of hearing in the state of Colorado, and to create systemic change for students and families.

## Individual Advocacy and Support

Hands & Voices advocacy experts attended/provided individual support at over 40 IFSP/IEP meetings at the request of families this year, as well as supporting over 125 families 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. Regional Parent Coordinators provide one-on-one support to families in their geographic locations.

Our Spanish speaking Parent Rep., as well as our Unilateral Parent Representative, provide unique support to many families.

## Representation on Statewide Forums & Collaboration with other Groups

Hands & Voices had the opportunity to represent families in the state on issues of importance as members of various boards and committees : CO Parent Engagement Task Force; NCLID Advisory Board, MDHC Advisory Board, Veditz Center/Rocky Mtn. Association of the Deaf Board , CSDB Superintendent Interview Committee, The Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; Deaf Education Reform Task Force; Colorado's Outreach Leadership Advisory Team; ; CO. Newborn Hearing Advisory; Colorado Early Intervention Advisory; National Consensus conf. on Early Intervention; National Unilateral work group; Hearing Aid Funding Task Force/ Hearing Aid Legislation Start-up Committee; presentation at the National Early Hearing and Detection Systems CDC/MCH Family Issues; Deaf Symposium Planning Committee, The DO-IT Center Advisory Board; CHIP Accountability Committee; HCP

Family Advisory Board for El Paso County; Pueblo Community Child Hearing Project; El Paso Newborn Hearing Screening Project Western States Regional Planning Committee; "The Alliance: CRID(Colorado Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf) and H&V—including University of CO, the Do-IT Center ; Pueblo Hearing Consortium.

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

Collaboration with other groups such as: Family Voices of Colorado, El Grupo Vida, the Colorado Association of Audiologists, AG Bell of Colorado, American Society for Deaf Children, Rocky Mountain Deaf School, The Listen Foundation, CSDB, Marion Downs Hearing Center, Part C, Colorado Home Intervention Program, Colorado Dept. of Education, Aspen Camp School for the Deaf, Where Do We Go From Hear? website, LO-DO Sertoma Field of Dream Camp; Colorado Springs Easter Seals Society

### Regional Parent Coordinators

*Connecting ~ Advocating ~  
Supporting ~ Listening ~  
Challenging ~ Educating ~  
Mentoring ~ Validating~*

CO Hands & Voices completed its fifth year with regionalized representation. We were able to build upon a project which included hiring Regional Parent Coordinators to represent and meet the needs of families in geographical locations around the State. To date, coordinators have been established in the Western Slope (2), Colorado Springs, the Denver Metro Area, Boulder, and the Northeastern Region (2) of Colorado. A Spanish Speaking Representative has been established. A representative for Unilateral Hearing Loss has also been realized. Hands & Voices, in collaboration with CSDB, also has one representatives , (rep. position currently open) - specifically for the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind campus in Colorado Springs. The consultants improved their skills by attending many trainings, including Title 1 Parent Involvement; Advocacy Workshops, and the LRP National Institute for Legal Issues for students with Disabilities; Mentor/Coaching Workshop sponsored by CHIP; CO Legal Issues Conference; Strategic Planning Workshop.

### Hands & Voices Database

The database has been increased by over 100 over the current year, to create a current database of over 1700 on the mailing list. (list also deletes old names) This list is shared with CSDB and other agencies for mailings to parents for events such as the State Symposium. The database is maintained on a monthly basis to keep it updated. The database was reformatted in Filemaker Pro 4.0 in order to expand the information available. The entire database of

parents whose children attend CSDB is currently on the database. The database includes the 9 digit zip code in order to more effectively understand the geographic representation of our constituency. A field was added last year to reflect the population of Spanish Speaking Families and date of birth has been added as a field to the database. As a new addition of the database was made available from H&V national to link with almost 3,000 members across the nation.

### Teacher/Professional Pre-service and In-service Training

Hands & Voices participated in a series of in-service trainings for professionals through a series of 5 workshops in the Spring of 2004 sponsored by CDE in: Ouray, Greeley, Denver Metro, Colorado Springs, and Pueblo. The In-service training by H&V consisted of information on the Deaf Child Bill of Rights updating. Pre-service trainings took place at the University of Colorado on Parent/Professional collaboration for undergrad/graduate students in Audi-

ology and Speech Pathology. Presentations were made to audiologists, Deaf Educators, Early Interventionists, Physicians, and other professionals all over Colorado and the United States. A presentation at the Genetics Video-conference on the perspectives of parents was also completed. A presentation was made to the Colorado Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, along with a curriculum for students/interpreters which is being developed through a new work group, the Alliance.

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

## Product Development in this Fiscal Year

- ◆ What Parents Need to Know series produced: Transitions, School Placement, Self Advocacy, Social/Emotional Development
- ◆ Participation in “The Time is Now” Video
- ◆ Updating Parents Funding Toolkit– added to Website
- ◆ Basic Training for Parent Advocates: New series of power points developed
- ◆ CCDHH Minigrant: Parent Advocacy Intensive Academy curriculum
- ◆ Revision of the CO Resource Guide in English and Spanish
- ◆ Quarterly Spanish Newsletters
- ◆ Quarterly publishing of the “Communicator”

## Summer 2004 - Summer 2005

- ◆ Events for Teens; Parent Social Gatherings for parents in the Denver Metro/Colorado Springs/Fort Collins Area: Denver Zoo, Denver Park, Santa’s Workshop; deaf/hh adult role models present. Spanish Picnic; Total Attendance: 85
- ◆ Far Northeastern Picnic Total Attendance: 35

## August, 2004

- ◆ Family Picnic for Newly Identified children who are Deaf/hh and their families. A forum for families to meet and get information in a non-threatening atmosphere. Attendance: 50 (including parents, kids, professionals, and role models)
- ◆ Booth at the CSDB Back to School Day

## September, 2004

- ◆ Unity Fest, attendance 75
- ◆ Deaf Awareness Month, Zoo Day: booth attendance at event of H&V Families 20
- ◆ H&V Open House, Denver, Attendance 15
- ◆ Family Picnic Northeastern Region: Attendance: 15

## October, 2004

- ◆ 5th Annual Hands & Voices Benefit Attendance 350
- ◆ CO Deaf Symposium: Average Attendance of families : 30—40; workshops: Deaf/HH Panel; Kenya Lowe Advocacy Presentation; Parent Strategies in IEP’s; Keynote: DCBR

## November, 2004

- ◆ Family Event, Colorado Springs Attendance 20

## December, 2004

- ◆ Holiday party for families, (jointly sponsored with Pikes Peak COD; Easter Seals) Colorado Springs Attendance 45
- ◆ Parent Workshop, Grand Junction, Attendance 40

## January/February , 2005

- ◆ Parent Survival Kit, Northeastern Region: Topic: Special Education Law: Attendance 30

## March/April, 2005

- ◆ Family Luncheon for Newly Identified Children who are Deaf/hh and their families: A forum for families to meet and get information in a non-threatening atmosphere. Attendance: 52
- ◆ Unilateral Hearing Workshop Attendance 15
- ◆ Colorado Springs IEP Workshop Attendance 25
- ◆ Parent Survival Kit – Denver for families birth—7; parenting issues Attendance 100
- ◆ Northeastern

## May/June, 2005

- ◆ Parent Advocacy Academy (two day training) for parents/consumers/professionals Attendance: 18
- ◆ New Parent Picnic in Ft. Collins Attendance 32
- ◆ Events for Teens (2) Attendance: 26
- ◆ Family Learning Seminar –Hands & Voices sat on the planning committee for the FLS, and helped to plan and implement the entire weekend for families participating, including presenting on Advocacy.
- ◆ Collaborative activity with the LODO Sertoma

Hands & Voices wishes to thank the Financial support of the many organizations and individuals who make our organization a success!!

## FAMILIES FOR HANDS & VOICES

PO Box 371926  
Denver, CO USA 80237

Phone/tty: 303-300-9763

Toll free: 866-422-0422

Email: [familyadvocate@handsandvoices.org](mailto:familyadvocate@handsandvoices.org)

Website: [www.handsandvoices.org](http://www.handsandvoices.org)

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

***We're on the Web!***  
***[www.handsandvoices.org](http://www.handsandvoices.org)***

### Revenue/Expenses

Hands & Voices receives income from a diverse set of sources. CO Dept. of Health, The Denver Foundation, Colorado Commission for the Deaf/HH; CSDB, CDE, Civic organizations, Sertoma, H&V fundraiser, businesses, individual donors as well as in kind support from University of Colorado's Maternal and Child Health Grant. During this fiscal year, Hands & Voices received approximately \$98,000.00 in direct funds.

Expenses fell under five major categories: (figures are approximate)

- Programs: \$72,000.00 (advocacy/workshops etc)
- Administrative Costs: \$10,000.00
- Resources and Publications: \$9,000
- Advocate Training: \$5,000.00
- ♦ Equipment: \$2000.00

## Evaluation

Hands & Voices takes very seriously the expectation that there will be measurable outcomes for the projects it undertakes. An evaluation form 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". A survey for families birth – three was developed and is currently being disseminated via mail and the website. Evaluation tools for Hands & Voices staff and board members is also implemented annually. This year, H&V, in Collaboration with State Dept. of Health, is conducting a Parent Survey of families who have participated in Universal Newborn Hearing Systems. This project is the result of a grant from the Center for Disease Control. Grant Evaluations are distributed to individual funders.

## Resources for Families and Professionals

### Website - [www.handsandvoices.org](http://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. The website received over 325 emails from families and professionals requesting assistance and information. Articles in Spanish are emerging, as well as a donor appreciation section of the web. The H&V website receives over 1200 hits a week. The national website has been reformatted, and CO will have its own specific pages to ease consumer usage.

### Resource Guide

The Colorado Resource Guide has been updated to the 2005/06 version, with extensive revisions and additions. Phone lists, and addresses included in the guide were updated. Transition to Part B and a diagram of the ear was added this year. 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" and was reformatted Last year in order to provide an additional 40% of features, upcoming events, and resources for families.

Circulation has reached 3,000 copies per issue.

The Newsletter was Distributed in Summer; Fall; Winter; and Spring:

- ♦ **Summer/Fall Issue – Marlee Matlin: What My Parents Understood**
- ♦ **Winter Issue – Supporting Families without Bias**
- ♦ **Spring Issue – School Placement Considerations**
- ♦ **Summer Issue—National Deaf Ed Reform Summit**
- ♦ **Spanish Newsletter was disseminated in the Summer/Fall of 2004; spring/summer 2005**

Contribution to the Outreach Network News by the parent team member on the Outreach Board was also disseminated. Additional flyers were mailed throughout the year apprising members of upcoming events.

### Clearinghouse

The Clearinghouse is being maintained and updated per parent request. Books were purchased for families at their request. Every parent advocate received "Wrights law: Special Education" and "From Emotions to Advocacy": New Books added

### Toll Free Phone Number

Hands & Voices has an established toll free phone and tty number for easier access to our organization.