

FOCUS



HANDS &
VOICES™
MINNESOTA



Supporting families with children
who are deaf & hard of hearing

Air Traveling Tips for Deaf or Hard of Hearing Individuals by Brenda Hommerding

Whether it's for a holiday, family vacation or upcoming summer camp, many families travel on airplanes. If it is your first time flying with a Deaf or Hard of Hearing child or as a Deaf or Hard of Hearing person yourself, it is always good to know what accommodations can be requested and what to expect.

Passenger support

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has guidelines for people with disabilities. One guideline that can be beneficial for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing is around passenger support. This provides you with a passenger support specialist as you navigate the airport. This support can start as soon as you arrive at the airport, until your plane is in the air. To request this support, contact TSA Cares by calling 855.787.227 or by filling out the form on their website (tsa.gov/contact/contact-forms.)

Going through security

When going through security, the requirements may vary at each airport. In general, if you are over 18 you will need to show some form of identification – typically a passport or driver's license. When traveling within the United States, children typically do not need to show ID. The TSA and most airlines do not require children under age 18 to provide ID when traveling with an adult companion who has acceptable identification; however, every airline has its own rules about minors and identification. It is advisable to contact your airline a few days before your trip to know exactly what you need to bring.

For international travel, minors under the age of 18 must present the same travel documents as the adult. All children need some form of government-accepted identification in order to travel internationally, if you intend to return to the United States. The Department of Homeland Security notes that "all children, even infants" need a passport or other Trusted Traveler Program (<http://dhs.gov/>) document to enter the United States

Once you have shown your identification, the next step is going through scanners and having your luggage scanned. Many airports will require you to remove your shoes, belts, jackets, anything from your pockets, liquids and technology, typically computers and tablets. You will be asked to put your luggage on the conveyor belt

along with items to be removed. You may have to put the smaller items in bins as well. Next, you will be asked to stand inside of a scanner and put your hands above your head for 3 seconds while the machines scan your body. If you wear hearing aids, you can wear them through the scanner. If you have Cochlear implants, it is best to check with your audiologist to verify. Various sources say that the scanners at airports do not affect cochlear implants, but if you don't want to risk the technology affecting cochlear implant programming, you can ask to be privately "wanded" instead of going through the scanner. You can check with your audiologist and see if they can provide you with a card that explains why you don't want to go through the scanner.



On to the gate Brenda on a plane while traveling, with her daughters, her sisters and niece. Now that you have cleared security and all items have been scanned, you can collect everything and navigate your way to your gate. If you don't have a passenger support specialist helping you navigate, you can venture to the nearest Flight Information and Airport Display Board to find out if your flight is on time and where your gate is located. It may be helpful to have the airline's app downloaded on your phone to get updates as well.

Air Traveling Tips continued to the next page.

Air Traveling continued from the front page.

Overhead signs in the airport will help you navigate to where your gate is located. Upon arriving at your gate, it is always important to let the attendants know that you are deaf or hard of hearing, so you are not missing pertinent information when they are calling passengers to board the plane.

Boarding the plane

You can request to board the plane first if you are not able to hear or see what classes or zones are boarding. It is also helpful to ask the gate attendant to let you know directly if the flight is delayed or moves to a different gate. Again, having the airline app downloaded on your phone can be helpful to receive instant updates.

Airlines may also have direct opportunities for you to request access needs. For example, through Delta airlines you can specify your access needs by indicating that you are deaf or hard of hearing on their app when booking a flight. To what does that entitle you? Well, be prepared for various accommodations. A flight attendant may check in with you after you are seated to ask how they can accommodate you. They may do this by typing their message on their phone and showing you if they don't know how to communicate with you otherwise. This was my recent experience. After seeing the message from the flight attendant, I explained that for example, I can hear that an announcement is being made overhead, but I cannot understand what was being said. I explained that they need to let me know directly if there is an emergency. If the airline you are traveling with has screens allowing you to view movies and other information while flying, you might be offered headphones. Most Deaf or Hard of Hearing people that use hearing aids or cochlear implants cannot use headphones, but many of the movies have closed captioning options.

Having screens on the back of the seats is also another way to get more access to the safety instructions as they are given with captions as well. If there are no screens, flight attendants may give you the safety instructions card to review along with watching the flight attendants visual demonstrations. During the flight, you are not allowed to move from your seat unless the above "seatbelt" sign has gone off. You may be offered snacks and drinks during your flight.

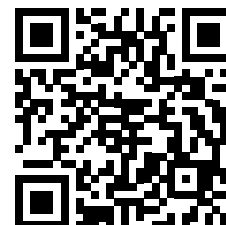
Arriving at your destination

As your plane arrives at your destination and you exit the plane, you might find a person with a wheelchair ready to assist you. This has happened to me and many of my Deaf and Hard of Hearing friends, too!

More education is needed to explain that not all Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals need wheelchair access just because they can't hear! However, access is improving for Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals who choose to travel by flying. Dr. Michelle Hu from MamaHuHears.com recently shared about the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower lanyard and how it is used for airport staff and employees to recognize those people traveling that have non-visible disabilities. You can also find other tips and information on MamaHuHears.com, such as "How to navigate the airport and How do you...? Friday? Travel with Hearing Loss?"

Hopefully these travel tips help you enjoy the ride and have safe travels!

For more information on travel, go to U.S. Department of Homeland Security by using this QR code.



MN Hands & Voices Welcomes Yodit Amare

Yodit and her family have been utilizing MNH&V as a resource since 2013. Their 11-year-old daughter was born with congenital sensorineural hearing loss, and MNH&V played an important role in giving them the confidence to be her number one advocates. Yodit has now joined MNH&V as a Metro Parent Guide in the hopes of being a part of the journey and support system for other families as they navigate parenting a child with a hearing difference.

Yodit was born in Ethiopia and moved to Minnesota when she was 7 years old. Yodit is fluent in English, Amharic and continues to improve her ASL skills and knowledge. She and her husband have five kids and a large extended family. They live in the east metro and love spending time with each other. Yodit is also a nurse with a wide range of experiences. She loves to cook while listening to audiobooks, spending one-on-one time with each of her kids, and volunteering. Her days are filled with activities with the kids, managing her 11-year-old's care, and running a busy household.



Pictured above; Metro Parent Guide Yodit Amare

Minnesota Lions Hearing Foundation

The Minnesota Lions Hearing Foundation was founded in 1973 to fully promote the advance of research and programs concerned with hearing health and communication disorders. The Lions Children’s Hearing and ENT clinic was started in 2005 with a generous grant from the Lions Hearing Foundation. The goal of the clinic is to “offer a comprehensive state-of-the-art facility connecting providers & resources for children with hearing disorders”. In 2011 the clinic opened at its current location in Minneapolis. The Lions club members continue to provide generous support for the clinic.

The Lions Children’s Hearing and ENT clinic at the MHealth Fairview Masonic Children’s Hospital is a clinic where children can be seen by audiologists, otolaryngologists, and a speech language pathologist who specializes in aural rehabilitation. We also work closely with professionals in genetics and infectious diseases to determine the causes of hearing loss. Our providers collaborate with other specialists in the hospital to ensure patients have holistic comprehensive care.

IN YOUR CORNER

with Jordan Krentz

“Knowledge is the currency of the universe.”
Giorgio A. Tsoukalos



Pictured above; Lions Children’s Hearing and ENT Clinic Team

Our team works to identify hearing loss and help children who are deaf or hard of hearing reach their full potential. We believe that all children should have the opportunity to learn language and understand the world around them. It is our privilege to work with families every step of their journey. We provide a variety of services including:

- Auditory brainstem response (ABR) testing,
- Newborn Hearing Screening
- Aural rehabilitation
- Bone-anchored hearing aids
- Cochlear implants
- Diagnostic-hearing evaluations
- Otoacoustic-emission testing
- Hearing aids
- Lions Hearing Aid Loaner Bank

At the Lions Children’s Hearing and ENT clinic we also participates in research studies. Currently we are involved in the NIH funded Cochlear Implantation in Children with Asymmetric Hearing Loss or Single-Sided Deafness Clinical Trial and the Database of Infants and Children seen at the Lions Children’s Hearing Center Study.

More information can be found on our websites:
5mhf.org/



Jordan also serves on the MN Hands & Voices Advisory Committee.

For more information on the Lions Children’s Hearing and ENT Clinic use the QR code.

..... CONTACT

- 651.265.2435
- mnhv@lssmn.org
- mnhandandvoices.org
- [@MNHandsandVoices](https://www.facebook.com/MNHandsandVoices)
- [@mnhandsandvoices](https://www.instagram.com/mnhandsandvoices)

DEAF EXPERIENCE

with Leslie Carnegie-Hilde

What are you doing this summer? Have you ever gone to Deaf Camp? There are camps in Minnesota and across the United States for dhh kids and their families. Some camps are week long, some are just for a weekend and others are virtual.

At Deaf Camp you have the chance to meet other deaf or hard of hearing kids and their families just like yours. You get the chance to make new friends in an environment where language and communication is not an issue.

It's a camp! That means it's going to be fun. You will play games, maybe swim in a lake or go on a boat. Perhaps you will stay up late, roast marshmallows and make smores.

I experienced Deaf Camp with my daughters at a weekend family camp at Camp Sertoma near Brainerd MN. My oldest daughter, Shawnae who has a profound unilateral hearing loss was 13 years old at the time. My youngest daughter, Sheyenne was 7 years old.

The weekend was filled with new connections for all three of us. I was able to connect with other parents while both girls met kids like them, either having a sibling with a hearing loss or having hearing loss them self.

The camp staff kept us busy with a variety of activities like riding in a glass bottom boat, playing games and sliding down the biggest slide the kids had ever been on. We made memories and friends that weekend that we will never forget.

My advice to you when considering going to a camp is gather information about the camps. See what they have to offer and pick what works the best for you. Often there is a cost to these camps but ask about scholarships. Deaf Camp was a good opportunity for our family to gain support, make connection and build lifelong friendships.



Pictured left to right Sheyenne Hilde and Shawnae Hilde at Camp Confidence

2024 DEAF CAMPS

There are online and in-person camps available. Registration information is listed with each camp.

JUNE

Camp Onomia - Deaf and Hard of Hearing Family Camp (Onomia, MN)
mndhffcamp@gmail.com
camponomia.org/summer-family
TEXT: 507.384.7575

Camp UBU (Sioux Falls, SD)
campubu@gmail.com
campubu.com

Summer Youth Camps
Gallaudet University
gallaudet.edu/youth-programs/

Wilderness Inquiry
info@wildernessinquiry.org
wildernessinquiry.org/

JULY

Camp Sertoma (Brainerd, MN)
greatplainscampsertoma@gmail.com
campsertoma.com

AUGUST

PACER'S E.X.I.T.E. Camp (Online)
(Exploring interests in Technology and Engineering)
pacer.org/students/recreation-and-sports.asp

Kids on Campus rit.edu/k12
Rochester Institute of Technology

Minnesota Conservation Corps hires 15-18-year-old deaf and hard of hearing youth from all over the United States to do environmental work in state and national park.
conservationcorps.org
651.209.9900

Comité de Consejeros Latino

El Comité de Consejeros Latino de Hands and Voices es un grupo de madres Latinas con hijos sordos o sordos parciales dedicado a expandir los esfuerzos existentes apoyando a las familias Latinas para distribuir recursos, proporcionar liderazgo con compasión y formalizar apoyo innovador. Cada miembro del Consejo enriquece los esfuerzos a través de sus experiencias, ideas y estrategias para servir mejor a las familias Latinas.

El pasado Octubre, el Comité de Consejeros Latino asistió a la Conferencia Nacional de Hands and Voices en Grand Rapids, Michigan en una asamblea general titulada "Conviértete en Líder: Liderazgo en Pequeñas Dosis", los miembros del Comité compartieron en el panel de discusión sobre como ha sido su experiencia como líder en su comunidad, cómo se iniciaron como líderes y cómo ellos mismos usan sus estrategias para guiar a otros padres a ver al líder dentro de ellos.

El Comité se reúne mensualmente y abre su foro para Profesionales y Familias. Para mayor información favor de comunicarse con Ana Brooks Ana@HandsandVoices.org o visite nuestra página web Hands & Voices (handsandvoices.org)

LATINO CULTURES

with Elena Miranda

Hands & Voices Latino Council

The Hands and Voices Latino Council is a group of Latino mothers with deaf and hard of hearing children dedicated to expanding existing efforts supporting Latino families to distribute resources, provide compassionate leadership, and formalize innovative support. Each Council member enriches the efforts through their experiences, ideas and strategies to better serve Latino families.

This past October, the Latino Council attended the National Hands and Voices Conference in Grand Rapids, Michigan for a general assembly titled "Becoming a Leader: Leadership in Small Doses," committee members shared in the panel discussion on What has been their experience as a leader in their community, how they began as leaders and how they



Pictured is Elena Miranda and the Hands & Voices Latino Council

themselves use their strategies to guide other parents to see the leader within them.

The Committee meets monthly and opens its forum to Professionals and Families. For more information please contact Ana Brooks Ana@HandsandVoices.org or visit our Hands & Voices website (handsandvoices.org)

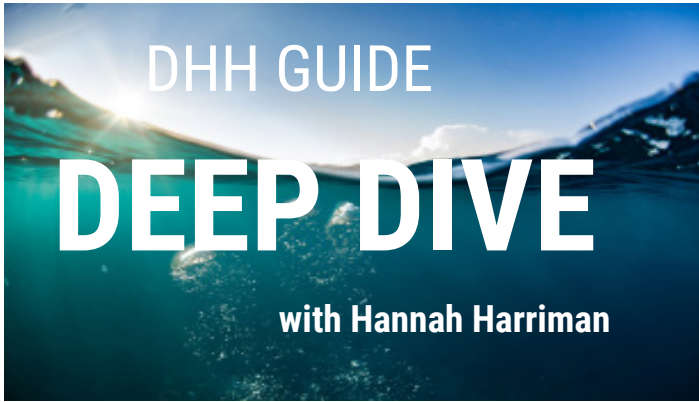
MN Hands & Voices Welcomes Lee Vang

Lee met Minnesota Hands & Voices (MNH&V) in 2023 which inspired her to join MNH&V in September 2023. She serves as the SE Asian Community Parent Guide throughout the state. Her passion is supporting, sharing, and connecting Asian community families with MNH&V services.

Lee is currently in school for her Health and Human Services degree. She works as a mortgage auditor and a personal care assistant. Lee has an 8-year-old son who has unilateral, profound hearing loss. In her free time, she loves cooking, fishing, spending time with her family, and giving back to the community by volunteering to pack food at Feed My Starving Children Foundation and Neighborhood House.

Lee currently lives in St. Paul Park, Minnesota. She is the youngest of 8 siblings (five sisters and two brothers) and has 28 nieces and nephews. Her son is the only one who has Unilateral hearing loss within her family.





My name is Hannah Harriman, and I am a Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Guide with Minnesota Hands and Voices. I am totally blind with unilateral hearing loss in my left ear. Additionally, I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Relational Communication from Bethel University.

Overcoming obstacles, raising expectations, and breaking down barriers is something I am passionate about.

“Meet positive role models who share their own experiences about growing up.”

However, I do not limit this drive and determination to the classroom or the workforce. I enjoy many outdoor activities with my family. This includes hiking and fishing. While I value participating in these activities independently as much as possible, like all teamwork scenarios, hiking and fishing involve collaboration with those I trust.



Pictured above is DHH Guide Hannah and her dad fishing.

One of my family's favorite travel destinations is Colorado. One of the activities we traditionally engage in is hiking. As we climb, I used the sighted-guide technique, holding the arm of one of my family members. They take turns walking with me. I use my cane to feel where the next uneven step is and also use my cane

to measure the incline. Most importantly, I listen to my family members' descriptions. As we climb, my dad, mom, or sisters are on my right side so that I can hear them most clearly.

Typically, our visits to Colorado include going down Alpine Slides. My dad will describe the scene and visual surroundings while one of my sisters goes down the slide first. Once I get the all-clear, I go down the slide next, where my sister will be at the bottom, ready to provide visual assistance. We then cheer on and applaud the rest of our family who will come down behind us. There is one more thing that makes our travel experiences impactful, going beyond my family's fabulous descriptions. Some national parks and other sight-seeing attractions have tactile maps where an individual can feel a replica of the given attraction or historical site.



Braille is also labeled on the replica, indicating what the tactile markers represent. We seek these out, and we can't leave the area before my sister snaps a picture of the replica, proudly documenting our delight in finding something that enhanced the experience for me. My adventurous spirit extends beyond those times when we travel out-of-state.

Another activity my family and I enjoy is fishing at our lake. This is an activity my dad and I enjoy together. As I cast the line, I wait to feel a tug. Once I feel that tug, I set the hook and reel the line in. My dad then provides visual assistance to determine if I caught a fish or caught weeds instead.

Recently, I went zip-lining with a group of students at my church as part of a youth retreat. Again, teamwork and collaboration were essential components for the success of this adventure. Furthermore, I trusted each individual involved in this process. Once I was strapped in, I listened to instructions, as the instructor stood on my right side, insuring that I could hear clearly. Once I reached the other end, I received visual assistance and instructions on how to properly and safely clear the area.

We all seek to climb mountains that sometimes seem insurmountable at times. We can overcome our fears and perceived limitations. Independence, drive, and determination are key, but I have learned that it is also important to have a team who you trust and will support you in every step you take.

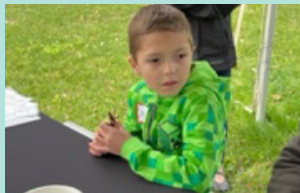
•• Family Get-Away ••



•• Dia de los Muertos ••



••• Severs Corn Maze •••



••• Farmer Johns •••



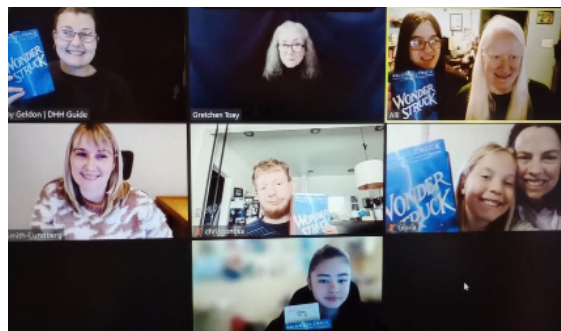
Find a current list of MNH&V Family Events online, more information and registration scan QR Code below



MNH&V EVENTS

STATEWIDE

Book Club "Wonderstruck"



PBL Trunk or Treat



••••• EVENTS •••••

IN-PERSON

- Farmer Johns Pumpkin Patch - Austin
- Severs Corn Maze Shakopee
- Dia de los Muertos St Paul
- PBL Trunk or Treat Brainerd
- Family Get-Away Rochester

ONLINE

- Book Club Wonderstruck
- THANK YOU for helping make these events possible!
- Carl & Verna Schmidt Foundation, Shakopee Lions Club, DHS, Paul Bunyan Land, Central Lakes College PAH ASL Club, Brainerd High School ASL Club, Scholastic Books, MN Corn Growers Association



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709 University Avenue West
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NEWSLETTER



Minnesota Hands and Voices
is a program of Lutheran Social
Service of Minnesota

FOCUS | Supporting families with children who are deaf & hard of hearing

January 2024

Metro Roller Skating!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2024

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Use the QR code below to register
for the Roller Skating Event



Back by
popular
demand!



Let's
ROLL!



IN PERSON FAMILY EVENT
FREE FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

Great opportunity for families to meet and have fun!
MN Hands & Voices Parent Guides, DHH Guides, and Adult Role Models will be
on hand to visit with families and join in the fun.

Enjoy roller skating and a slice of pizza with MNH&V.

To view more events from MN Hands & Voices go to;

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/minnesota-hands-amp-voices-also-9882223703>