

Guide By Your Side



Guide By Your Side™ (GBYS)* is a program for families with infants and young children who are deaf or hard of hearing. GBYS gives families who recently learned of their child's hearing loss an opportunity to meet with another parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child. The program is free to all Michigan families with children up to age 6.

What does GBYS offer?

- Unbiased information about communication options.
- An ongoing supportive relationship with another parent of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing.
- Answers to questions and information about local, statewide and national resources.
- Collaboration with *Early On*®, Intermediate School Districts and other service providers.
- Information about other parent support opportunities.

Who are Parent Guides?

Parent Guides understand the unique needs of infants and young children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Currently, there are 13 wonderful parents in our program who have been trained to provide support to families throughout the state. Parent Guides use varying approaches to communication from American Sign Language to Auditory-Verbal. Parent Guides are trained to offer unbiased information and support.

What parents are saying...

"Finally, someone understood what I was feeling because she'd felt this way, too. After I met Susan, I just started reconnecting to the world again."

"This program is the best resource!"

"Talking to another parent who's 'been there' is very helpful."

How can I sign up?

Enrolling in Guide By Your Side™ is easy, confidential and free. Anyone interested in meeting a Parent Guide can call (517) 335-8273 or fill out a GBYS brochure. Parent Guides work with families to find the best time to visit with the family in their home or at another convenient location. Parent Guides make every effort to contact families within 48 hours and to make the first visit with the family within 10 working days. For more information, contact Laura Scott, EHDI Parent Consultant, at ScottL5@michigan.gov or at (517) 335-8273.

**Guide By Your Side™ is a Michigan Hands & Voices program that is funded and coordinated by the Michigan Early Hearing Detection and Intervention program.*