“What works for your child is what makes the choice right”

WI Families for Hands & Voices was very busy this summer!

“SUMMER PICNICS” were held at: Lakeview Community Park/Splash Pad in Middleton on Sunday, June 29, 2014 and at Seymour Town Hall in Eau Claire on August 10, 2014.

About 50-60 people attended each picnic. Meat was provided and each family brought a dish to pass. We had great opportunities to meet & learn from one another and the kids all had a blast!

THANK YOU to Karen Manning & Laurie Nelson for coordinating the Middleton picnic and to Dawn & Rod Koplitz in Eau Claire

The first “MOMS NIGHT OUT” for Moms of Kids with Hearing Loss was held Sunday, July 20, 2014, 4-7 p.m. at the Manning/Ulrich residence in Madison.

We relaxed on the patio (THANKS AGAIN Karen Manning for hosting!), and each person brought either a beverage or dish to share with the group. We shared the thrills and challenges of raising our incredible children, and everything else, too! We had sooo much fun that we decided to do this again. Keep watching for the date for the next Mom’s Night Out.
PARTNERS IN LISTENING  BY MARCY DICKER AND BEV TEEER

Wisconsin Educational Services Program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Outreach (WESP-DHH Outreach) is pleased to announce a new program, “Partners in Listening.” The mission of the program is to empower families and professionals to feel competent and confident in the collaboration and partnership role each plays in supporting children with hearing loss as they develop their ability to listen and talk. Universal newborn hearing screening along with early appropriate fitting of hearing technology has increased the access to auditory information needed to develop spoken language skills. These advancements have created opportunities for children with hearing loss to develop spoken language through listening at a rate that is commensurate with their hearing peers. Increased understanding of targeted auditory skill development, however, is crucial to the success of effective listening and spoken language skills. Families and professionals must acquire knowledge and techniques in facilitating listening skill development, in order to effectively support the spoken language development in children with hearing loss. (Source Joint Committee on Infant Hearing (JCIH): Supplement to the JCIH 2007 Position Statement http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2013/03/18/peds .2013-00082full.pdf).

This will be accomplished through a unique multifaceted learning experience for families, professionals, and future professionals to gain the skills, side by side, each need to grow in the role they play.

The goals of the program are:

- To align best practices for development of listening and spoken language skills with best practices in early intervention and early childhood development.
- To increase parents’/families’ feeling of competence and confidence in their ability to become their child’s primary language learning model.
- To increase awareness of current practices and skills of professionals statewide to ensure children with hearing loss, and their families, who are developing listening and spoken language abilities have access to the services they need.
- To build networks of families and professionals that can serve as resources and support for others with similar goals.

Partners in Listening will be offered twice per year. Professionals will attend a three-day workshop, with families joining for a one- and-a-half day workshop. The families and professionals will learn new skills from experts, and the children will participate in activities, make new friends, and have fun! Partnering is the theme and emphasis of every aspect of the program. We know that children achieve their greatest success when they are supported by a team of people who share a common goal and work together to achieve it. To promote this theme of partnership, teams of families and professionals will be encouraged to attend together. In addition, first priority will be given to those attending as partners.

The Partners in Listening workshops are open to families with a child who: 1) has a diagnosed hearing loss with access to sound via hearing technology; and 2) is between the ages of birth to six years old. Families must have a goal of developing listening and spoken language abilities in their child and a desire to learn how to be a partner in working toward that goal.

Professionals who participate must currently be working with at least one child who has hearing loss (and their family), between the ages of birth to six, whose goal is to support the development of listening and spoken language skills (such as d/hh teachers, speech and language pathologists, birth to three providers, educational audiologist, early childhood providers etc.).

For more information about partnering to support the listening and spoken language skills of young children, or the Partners in Listening program, contact Bev Teeter at beverly.teeter@wesp-dhh.wi.gov or 715-286-2363.

BOARD MEMBER HIGHLIGHT – MATT BIESER

Matt Bieser graduated from the University of Wisconsin Parkside in 2009 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Sociology/Anthropology with an emphasis on Cultural Anthropology.

While at Parkside, Matt was the administrator for their student government where he trained student leaders to run their organization in accordance with Wisconsin state statute and UW System policies and procedures. Matt, his wife, and two boys live in Elkhorn. His youngest son was diagnosed with bilateral hearing loss due to a genetic mutation of Connexin 26. Matt decided to join the board of WI Hands & Voices to give back to the community and help families like his.
WISCONSIN FAMILIES FOR HANDS & VOICES
SUMMER FAMILY PICNIC
LAKEVIEW COMMUNITY PARK
MIDDLETON
JUNE 29, 2014
WBDTAP PARENT SUMMIT: HOPE FOR THE FUTURE  
BY JODI ANDERSON

On August 15 and 16th, the staff of the Wisconsin Deafblind Technical Assistance Project (WDBTAP) hosted 17 families with children who have combined vision and hearing losses from around the state of Wisconsin in Warrens, WI at the Three Bears Lodge.

The purpose of this summit was to discuss the educational successes and challenges encountered in the school system and state programs and how WDBTAP can better support our families. Families were able to give firsthand feedback on the resources most useful for their child and generate ideas on what programs they would like to see put in place to meet the needs of this unique population.

The information collected will be used to develop goals for the next several years and determine the best use of the federal grant for the project. Along with the informational sessions, there was time for family networking and fun in the water park.

DEAF INFUSION  
BY JENNIFER KOHN

Hello! My husband and I are Deaf and we have three children who are also Deaf. Our oldest child is Emily and she attends the Wisconsin School for the Deaf. Our two boys are now 4 1/2 years old and 14 months old. When the two boys were born, they passed the hearing screening test. Now that they are a little older, we have noticed our oldest son’s (Brady) speech is not improving and he does not always look at us when we call his name. We took Brady to Milwaukee Children’s Hospital for a hearing test. From that test, we learned he has a moderate to severe hearing loss. Our 14 month old Avery, was due for a hearing test since he had his first hearing test done at three weeks of age. So, on the same day that Brady had his hearing aid fitting, Avery had his hearing test. We learned from the result that Avery has a moderate hearing loss. When our audiologist informed us that our youngest son, Avery had a hearing loss, we were OK. In fact, we were happy. Not a reaction for an audiologist to expect. She replied, “Well, you made my day!” It’s not that this happens in her field of work. Usually parents become emotional once they learn their child has a hearing loss. Instead, my husband and I were thrilled to find out that we are now a full Deaf family.

Our Mission:
Wisconsin Families for Hands & Voices is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting families statewide who have children who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind without bias around communication modes or methodology. We are a parent-driven organization providing families with the resources, networking 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, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind children to reach their highest potential.

2014 Hands & Voices WI Membership

Please circle one of the following
Parent of a deaf/HH child $25.00
Deaf/HH Adult $25.00
Student $25.00
Professional $40.00
Organization/agency $75.00
Additional Donation $_______

Name___________________
Address________________
_____________________
_____________________
Phone ________________
E-mail_______________

Method of Payment
Check ____ Scholarship _____

Become a Member/Renew Online!

Credit Card Payment NOW Accepted!
Please Visit: http://www.handsandvoiceswi.org/

Or clip and mail to:
WI Families for Hands & Voices
PO Box 9644
Green Bay, WI 54308

We are never really happy until we try to brighten the lives of others ~ Helen Keller