

**EHDI Workgroup Meeting**  
**August 16, 2006**  
**Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**  
**Minutes**

**Attendance:** Ruth Frierson, Jennifer Hutson, Dana Yarbrough, Pat Wiley, Debra Holloway, Casey Morehouse, Jackie Meeks, Ann Hughes, Missy Colley, Pat Dewey

Minutes from the July 12 were reviewed.

**Announcements**

Pat Dewey shared information about the Infant Hearing Guide, a CD-format tool developed in Arkansas and recently distributed by the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM), the national technical assistance center for EHDI. A personal copy can be ordered for free from NCHAM. For bulk orders, the cost will be \$3 each. Workgroup members were encouraged to order a copy and review. VDH and Virginia GBYS staffs will decide if this is something that can be used by the Parent Guides and/or given to new parents?

Pat Dewey also shared information about the CVS Charitable Group. Applications are accepted from May to June of each year. Only not-for-profit entities can apply. There is funding available under two categories: 1. Health programs that serve children with disabilities and address accessibility and health and rehabilitative services; 2. Public schools that are expanding programs promoting inclusion.

Pat Dewey reported that Phyllis Mondak advised that if the GBYS program supports parents of children from 2 to 6, she can contribute some funding for materials. Pat Dewey will follow up on this.

Pat Dewey reported that a summary of the Virginia GBYS project was included in the quarterly update disseminated by the Infant and Toddler Connection of Virginia, Part C. Also, Beth Tolley placed information about the Work Group and Virginia GBYS on the Part C Web site.

Ann Hughes reported that Missy Colley, Jennifer Hutson, and she attended the national leadership conference of Hands & Voices to learn more about establishing a Guide By Your Side program. A large majority of attendees were parents. Ann Hughes gave an overview of information specific to the establishment of Virginia GBYS. Jennifer Hutson provided additional comments from the parent perspective. Important items included:

- There are no curriculum guides for the training of parent guides at this time
- There are no packaged guides or products at this time; states are responsible for developing their own
- Parent guides must be members of Hands & Voices national or state chapter
- Hands & Voices logo must appear on all printed materials

Casey Morehouse announced that the letter and application for GBYS went out with the VSDB Staunton parent packet for the upcoming school year.

Ann Hughes reported that Virginia Department of Education and Partnership for People with Disabilities are sponsoring a Stakeholders Meeting on Friday, September 22, 2006, 9:30 – 3:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Park South Hotel, 9901 Midlothian Turnpike, Richmond, VA 23235 (804-323-1144). The purpose of this meeting is to identify how Virginia can effectively respond to the eight goals proposed in *The National Agenda: Moving Forward on Achieving Educational Equality for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students* (April, 2005) to improve services for children who are deaf and hard of hearing in Virginia. Invitations were sent to specific persons with expertise in educational services for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Dana Yarbrough and Ann Hughes announced that Jennifer Hutson will be hired by Partnership for People with Disabilities to be the Parent Coordinator for the Virginia GBYS project during the contract period.

#### **Update from Assignments**

- Pat Dewey disseminated July 12 meeting notes.
- Applications and cover letter were finalized and sent out to members and all interested parties on July 21.
- Ann Hughes, Dana Yarbrough, and Pat Dewey continue to refine the budget. Total budget for the GBYS Project is \$60,000 and will come from year two of the Health Resources and Services Administration grant award to VDH.
- Ruth Frierson reported that two complete applications have been received; an additional 6 received are incomplete.

#### **Discussion and Decisions**

- Ruth Frierson will contact applicants to obtain completed paperwork.
- Members will send reminders regarding the application deadline through email lists. Ann Hughes will send an email to Fredia Helbert and Ellen Austin about assisting with recruiting GBYS applicants, particularly in Southwest Virginia. Pat Dewey will send another email to the Care Connection for Children program directors in Bristol and Roanoke, asking for additional help in disseminating the applications.
- Work Group members will review applications at the EHDI Advisory Committee meeting on September 8, at Children's Hospital Richmond. Those unable to attend that meeting but who are interested in participating in the review will be sent copies via mail.
- Jennifer Hutson, Dana Yarbrough, Ruth Frierson, and Casey Morehouse will be on the interview panel; Ann Hughes will conduct second interviews if needed.
- Interviews will be conducted on the week of September 11<sup>th</sup> of the 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Members decided to use what Wisconsin developed for the interview questions with modifications.

- Interviews will be completed by the 15<sup>th</sup>. Jennifer Hutson will send out a summary to all the workgroup by the 18<sup>th</sup>.
- Letters of acceptance will be mailed out on the 19<sup>th</sup> and a call placed to those chosen.
- Jennifer Hutson and Ann Hughes will write the acceptance letter.
- Members discussed the need for the previously scheduled conference call to finalize applicant selections. Decisions will be made by the interview panel and announced to the Workgroup. Conference call set at the last meeting was therefore cancelled.
- Work group members discussed the challenges around conducting non face-to-face interviews. The two most important things are that the parent guide be able to accept all types of lifestyles and be unbiased. That may not be detected during the interview. Obtaining feedback from the family is the best way to monitor this. Jackie Meeks asked how a person not doing the job that is expected would be handled. The group discussed providing additional training to GBYS person not meeting the expectations set.
- Persons who will be trained to be future GBYS trainers are Debbie Pfeiffer, Ann Hughes, Ruth Frierson, Jennifer Hutson, Missy Colley, and Casey Morehouse.
- Jackie Meeks expressed concern that with the requirement for parent guides to be members of Hands & Voices, VDH EHDI could be thought to be endorsing a specific organization and its philosophies. Pat Dewey and Ann Hughes addressed this concern by stating that in order to use the GBYS model (which was from Wisconsin and not the property of Hands & Voices at the time the group decided to adopt it) this was a requirement. This was seen as a business decision and not as an endorsement of a particular association or philosophy other than a desire for families to receive unbiased information as soon as possible. Pat Dewey agreed to bring up the issue for discussion at the EHDI Advisory Committee meeting on September 8.
- Jennifer Hutson will update the parent resource materials and, together with Dana Yarbrough and Ann Hughes, develop the materials to be used by the parent guides and to be given to parents.

### **Next Meeting**

The Work Group will meet at 12 noon (during lunch break at the EHDI Advisory Committee meeting) on September 8 to review the applications. This meeting will be in the auditorium at Children's Hospital, 2924 Brook Road, Richmond, VA. No other meeting has been scheduled.