



Kelly Cashion, GA H&V Guide By Your Side Parent Guide

Hi! My name is Kelly Cashion and I am very excited about my new role as a Parent Guide for Georgia Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side Program. My main job for the last 15 years has been mom of three wonderful kids. I have a 15 year old daughter, a 13 year old son, and a 6 year old son. My husband and I moved from North Carolina to Newnan, Georgia 11 years ago.

My 13 year old, Caleb, was diagnosed with hearing loss at age 4. Although we love the community we live in, I felt at a loss trying to connect with other parents of hard of hearing/deaf children. I have worked in the counseling field for many years, so I understand the importance of support and empathy. It wasn't until a couple years after Caleb's diagnosis that I came across Georgia Hands & Voices and finally found what I had been searching for. Georgia Hands & Voices has been a support community for me. Having

other parents who can relate to challenges of having a hard of hearing child, answer questions or give feedback based on their experience has been invaluable. Now I get to be a part of that outreach to other parents!



Scarlett Giles, GA H&V Guide By Your Side Parent Guide

Scarlett Giles lives North of Atlanta in a suburb city, Woodstock, Georgia. She is a former high school science teacher and her husband is an educator in Cobb County. They have three children, Colin (8), Kendall (6), & Amelia (4). Two of their children carry the Connexin 26 gene for hearing loss. While Colin has high frequency, bilateral, sensorineural hearing loss, Amelia has mod-severe, bilateral, sensorineural hearing loss.



Lupita Huerta-Rodriguez, GA H&V Guide By Your Side Diversity Parent Guide

Lupita is married to Josh Rodriguez, a big fan of the Chicago Bulls and Chicago Cubs!! She also has two children, Isabella 15 years old and Alan a rumbustious 7-year-old. Her daughter Isabella was born with left Microtia and bilateral Aural Atresia which resulted in a moderate to severe conductive hearing loss. Isabella has been wearing a bone conduction hearing aid since the age of 4 months and throughout the years Isabella has under gone several surgeries to make an ear canal and to make a more typical looking left ear. Isabella is a former GA PINES child, and is currently a sophomore in high school and enjoys playing sports and is eager to learn American Sign Language.

Lupita is a native of Mexico City, Mexico and has a bachelor's degree in Marketing with a Post-graduate in Quality Control from a private University in Mexico City. Lupita moved to the USA in 1999 where she has worked in different companies in the areas of advertising and marketing. She is fluent in both Spanish and English.



Sara Price, GA H&V Guide By Your Side Parent Guide

Sara Price is married to her high school sweetheart and is the mother of 2 children, Rilynn and Kellan. Her son Kellan was born with an unexpected gift! At 15 months, Kellan was diagnosed with a profound bilateral sensorineural hearing loss and shortly thereafter, was diagnosed with CHARGE Syndrome. For Sara, the hardest days were not the long nights in the hospital or receiving yet another diagnosis—the hardest days were the lonely days. Her son was surrounded by the best doctors and therapists, family and friends loved them well and God was always faithful, but there were many days she craved a conversation with a mother who understood. Her hope is to connect with families through the common thread in our stories and provide them with the support and resources needed to make their journey a little easier.

Beth Tokarska, GA H&V Guide By Your Side Parent Guide

Our family is the perfect size for us: One mom, one boy, one cat, and one dog! I have been teaching science for 19 years; mostly middle school and some high school. My son, Wyatt, is 6 years old and just finished 1st grade. He enjoys swimming, cars, and anything to do with construction sites. He enjoys meeting new people and finding out what kind of car they drive!



Wyatt is completely deaf in both ears and wears bilateral cochlear implants. He was diagnosed rather late, 2 years and 9 months. He was implanted 3 months later and activated just one week shy of his 3rd birthday. We don't know the cause of his deafness, but, in hindsight I think he may have been born deaf and just not caught. He did not have language for the first 3 years of his life. We are currently trying to pour as much language into him as possible, whether it is speech or sign. We use both at home. He also attends speech therapy five times a week. We live in Richmond County and Wyatt attends a "center" type of school where most of the deaf children in the county attend. He started there for pre-K3 in a DHH class. He now spends most of his time mainstreamed with an interpreter. He loves school and enjoys making friends.

Hands & Voices was that lighthouse of hope when I first learned of Wyatt's hearing loss. I really was in a sea of darkness, scared and alone. The people who came to me from H&V helped me feel like I was not alone. They gave me the resources and encouragement I needed to help Wyatt. There is usually at least one article in every quarterly newsletter that brings cathartic tears to my eyes. Wyatt and I are no longer alone in this journey.