

Arkansas Hands & Voices

Guide By Your Side Parent Support Guide / ASTra Advocate

(Dual Role Position Description)

Organizational Mission

Mission: Arkansas Hands & Voices is a parent-driven organization that supports families with children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing without bias around communication modes or methodology.

Vision: We envision a world where children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing have every opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Motto: “What works for your child is what makes the choice right.”™

Position Details

The individual selected will be trained and serve as both a **Parent Support Guide (GBYS)** and an **ASTra Advocate**.

The Parent Support Guide must be the parent of a child who is d/Deaf, hard of hearing, d/DeafBlind, or d/Deaf with additional disabilities. The position requires specialized training to provide emotional support, resources, and educational advocacy assistance to families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

This position is under the supervision of the Arkansas Hands & Voices GBYS/ASTra Program Coordinator and is offered through SoundStart DBA Arkansas Hands & Voices. Continued employment is contingent upon grant renewal and satisfactory performance review.

Hours: Average 10–15 hours per month

Start Date: March 2026

Pay Rate: \$18/hour (based on family contact and assigned activities)

Travel: May be required for trainings and events

Residency: Must be an Arkansas resident and authorized to work in the United States

The Program Coordinator may approve adjustments to monthly hours as needed.

Core Responsibilities

The Parent Guide/ASTra Advocate will:

- Provide unbiased emotional support and advocacy assistance to families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Empower families to make informed decisions aligned with their values, goals, and desired communication and educational approaches.
- Describe communication, placement, technology, and educational options objectively and without personal bias.
- Support families from diverse racial, religious, cultural, socioeconomic, and lifestyle backgrounds.
- Assist families in understanding early intervention (IDEA Part C/Birth–3) and public education systems (IDEA Part B).

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- Help parents develop skills to effectively advocate for their children within educational systems.
- Acquire and disseminate relevant resources at the local, regional, and statewide levels.
- Maintain confidentiality in accordance with program protocols.
- Complete required documentation and written updates in a timely manner.
- Maintain regular communication with the Program Coordinator and participate in scheduled meetings.
- Attend Arkansas Hands & Voices family events and provide outreach, support, and follow-up as assigned.
- Participate in and/or provide training to families and professionals related to advocacy and support services.
- Work independently while maintaining professional standards.

If a Guide/Advocate feels unable to support a family due to personal conflict or bias, they must notify the Program Coordinator. Repeated or unresolved unprofessional conduct may be grounds for termination.

Required Knowledge & Qualifications

Candidates must:

- Demonstrate strong self-awareness and the ability to separate personal beliefs from professional responsibilities.
- Understand the impact of hearing loss on children and families.
- Support the Hands & Voices philosophy of unbiased family-centered support.
- Have knowledge of (or willingness to learn):
 - Communication options and educational philosophies
 - Educational placement continuum
 - IFSP and IEP processes
 - Local and statewide resources for families
- Possess strong interpersonal and communication skills.
- Be able to work independently.
- Have access to reliable internet and conduct business via email, phone, Zoom, videophone, or similar platforms.
- Provide their own local transportation.
- Maintain membership in good standing with Arkansas Hands & Voices.
- Have a personal computer and cell phone for program documentation (monthly stipend provided).

Required Trainings

The individual must attend:

- Mandatory initial GBYS Parent Guide training (March 2026)
- At least one additional GBYS training during the contract period
- ASTra Basic Training
- ASTra Level 2 Advocate Training

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Remote participation may be available when applicable.

Preferred Qualifications

- Previous advocacy experience (personal or professional)
 - Experience with IFSP and IEP processes
 - Intermediate proficiency in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Google Suite, and Zoom
 - Post-secondary certificate or degree
 - Fluency in a second language
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Application Information

Applications will be accepted until March 4th or until filled. Interviews are tentatively scheduled for mid-March and attendance is required for qualified applicants.

Submit applications to:

Mandy Jay

executivedirector@arhandsandvoices.org

501.626.4640 (voice/text/FaceTime)