

www.idhandsandvoices.org  
Facebook: Idaho Hands & Voices

PO Box 9617, Boise ID 83707  
Email: idahohandsandvoices@gmail.com

*Even though it's not obvious yet, the days are growing longer and we can look forward to spring (and IEPs, for many of us) and summer vacation. It takes a little while for everyone to get re-started after the holidays, so be sure to check our Facebook page and website for upcoming activities that haven't found their way to our inbox in time to make it into this newsletter. If you're not quite ready to see the last of the holidays, check out the links in the next two articles:*

## Signing Santa Claus Honored

For nearly twenty years, ISDB graduate Sonny Cabbage has been donning white beard and lots of red and white fur to be Santa Claus for young Treasure Valley kids. This year his "chief elf" Jill Muir nominated him for recognition by Boise station KTVB channel 7 as "Seven's Hero." The regular preschool class at River Valley swelled by the addition of a number of small visitors, their parents, and a film crew from Idaho Power, which also provided the Santa suit. Read all about it, and watch the television report here:



[www.ktvb.com/on-tv/sevens-hero/Signing-Santa-brings-holiday-cheer-to-deaf-kids-236963381.html](http://www.ktvb.com/on-tv/sevens-hero/Signing-Santa-brings-holiday-cheer-to-deaf-kids-236963381.html)

Santa was also seen signing in Twin Falls, and perhaps elsewhere around the state (we don't know whether Sonny was his helper in all cases or not; as Sonny says, Santa needs lots of helpers.) Thank you to Santa's helpers everywhere!

## IESDB Foundation Leads Furniture Fundraising Drive

What would your chairs and sofas look like if you'd had twelve children using them for more than twenty years? It's no surprise that the living areas at the IESDB campus cottages are looking a bit...worn. The IESDB Foundation has initiated a fundraising campaign at [www.indiegogo.com/projects/iesdbf-deaf-blind-cottage-furniture-challenge](http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/iesdbf-deaf-blind-cottage-furniture-challenge); any money they raise will be put in a fund to refurbish seven sofas, three loveseats and fifteen chairs. As a bonus, you can enjoy a delightful holiday video--it's never too late for Santa.

## Recipes Needed!

Idaho Hands & Voices is considering a number of fundraising activities to pay for another Family Camp and provide scholarships for families. One possibility is a cook book--we'd like both recipes and pictures from families around the state! Please help us make this happen by sending stuff to our post office box or email address (at the head of this newsletter.)

))) ))) ))) ))) )))

**One more resource** for parents of students who utilize interpreter services is a brochure from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), shared with us by Joelynn Ball, Idaho's Interpreter Education Coordinator. Entitled "Standard Practice Quick Reference: How to work with Educational Interpreters," the brochure is designed for an interpreter to hand to a teacher or administrator who is new to the experience of having a student using an interpreter, but will also help parents understand what an educational interpreter does, in addition to interpreting. We've reproduced most of the content on the following page:

The fundamental role of the interpreter is to effectively and impartially facilitate communication between people who are deaf and hard of hearing and people who are hearing. Interpreters will:

- Interpret in a mode that reflects the student's language use
- Work with the classroom teacher to adapt classroom activities to promote student participation
- Ensure incidental information is interpreted
- Position themselves to assure visual access to educational content
- Model social strategies to encourage interaction with those who use sign language

Qualifications: Professional sign language interpreters develop their specialization through extensive education, training and practice over a long period of time. In addition to recommended credentialing and degree requirements, educational interpreters should:

- Be able to communicate and adapt, as a member of the educational team, on matters regarding interpreting and communication
- Be fluent in various forms of communication including ASL or the sign mode determined by the educational team.
- Produce accessible language and understand child signers
- Possess an understanding of the stages of child development particularly as they relate to language development
- Have knowledge of grade specific academic content

A Few Ways Interpreters Enhance Daily Productivity:

- Prepare for upcoming classes
- Work on lists of classroom vocabulary for substitutes
- Review student's IEPs
- Preview uncaptioned videos or search for captioned equivalents
- Develop evaluation forms for the teacher and student to evaluate your services
- Observe and rate your student's independence, interpreting competencies and language skills
- Read educational interpreter books, articles, and professional website content

Fundamental Professional Practices:

- Follow the student's IEP or 504 Plan
- Maintain confidentiality – information is only shared with the educational team
- Maintain professional boundaries, respect the privacy of students and foster independent student learning
- Engage in professional development activities
- Prepare for classroom academic content, including previewing text books, teacher's lesson plans or electronic presentation slides
- Research technical educational vocabulary, as needed
- Preview educational films, as necessary

There is an expanded version of this at the RID website:

[http://www.rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/Standard\\_Practice\\_Papers/K-12\\_Ed\\_SPP.pdf](http://www.rid.org/UserFiles/File/pdfs/Standard_Practice_Papers/K-12_Ed_SPP.pdf)

And now that IEP season is approaching, remember that Idaho requires educational interpreters to demonstrate a certain skill level, as assessed by examination. If you have a question about interpreting or your child's situation, contact your local IESDB Educational Specialist; if you don't know who that is, call Paula Mason at 208-934-4457, or email her at [paula.mason@iesdb.org](mailto:paula.mason@iesdb.org).

## Upcoming Events

**Tubing Time Again!** Tubing at Bogus Basin is set for 1:00 to 3:00 pm Saturday, February 22. Cost is \$12.00 per person (tubers must be at least 36 inches tall) with a special price of \$6.00 for members of Idaho Hands & Voices. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, you must register and pre-pay by February 14. A flyer with further instructions will be distributed soon, but if you miss it, you can register and pay either by mail or email/PayPal (see webpage for more details or call Diana at 208-789-9652.) Because we must reserve tubes a week in advance and pay for all the tubes we reserve, there will be no refunds.

**Magic Valley Hands & Voices** is in the beginning stages of planning an event in March. We're considering doing a combination kids' fun activity with an informative gathering for parents--not quite a workshop, but something in between a workshop and a social event. Watch for emails, postcards, fliers, etc. in February.

**Idaho Parents Unlimited Webinars** will be offered the 4th Tuesday of each month, at three different times of the day. You can just listen in, or join the discussion and ask questions, all from your home computer. The January 28th topic is "Families are Important: An Early Childhood Curriculum." This training curriculum describes the early intervention process (for children ages 0-3) and the family's role in developing an Individualized Family Service Plan. Pick the time that works best for you and click on the link to register:

10:00 - 11:00 am <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/632282782>

1:00 - 2:00 pm <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/886092518>

6:00 - 7:00 pm <https://www3.gotomeeting.com/register/924582606>

**Parent Education Series:** Elks Hearing & Balance Center monthly parent education sessions for 2014 are currently being scheduled. Contact them for more information: [hearingandbalance@elksrehab.org](mailto:hearingandbalance@elksrehab.org), or 208-489-4999.

**Legislative Breakfast Meet and Greet** on January 30, 2014 from 9 am to noon, on the fourth floor rotunda in the Idaho Capitol Building. This event is sponsored by the Idaho Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing as a means of introducing companies and agencies to legislators. It's also a great way for you, a parent, to meet and become aware of different agencies and services. Idaho Hands and Voices will be there, too. Come in and say hello, and check out the beautiful Capitol Building while you're at it.

))) ))) ))) ))) )))

*At our last board meeting, I was worrying about how to round out this newsletter, since I had no feature article lined up for it. One of our other board members suggested that I could just do a "rerun" of something from an earlier issue, since I've been doing this for ten years. Here's something pretty timeless, and of most use to those readers who weren't even parents yet when we first printed it. And the book is still available as used copies from used booksellers on Amazon, for as little as \$4.00 (basically the cost of shipping.)*

## BOOK REVIEW

***Kids can Cooperate: A Practical Guide to Problem-Solving* by Elizabeth Crary**

Once upon a time I had two squabbling children. I knew that they could communicate with each other, but often the younger hearing one resorted to screaming at the older deaf one—I quickly realized that this was a ploy to involve Mom in the dispute, since it was hardly effective in any other sense. A Deaf mother recommended this book to me, and I must say I've made more use of it than any other parenting book. Perhaps this was due to its limited scope—it didn't try to solve all my parenting problems in one thick tome—or because it gave me some alternative strategies to use when time and circumstances didn't allow me to go the entire perfect parenting route. I noticed some astonishing results; we went quickly beyond screaming fits to "best friends," and perfect strangers remarking on how well they got along for a brother-sister pair. Maybe it was the technique, or maybe it was "we'd better not bring Mom into this or she'll make us sit down and do that annoying discussion thing." The book is unfortunately out of print, but used copies are available for very little through Amazon.

The basic principle is simple enough that I will go ahead and outline it here. Simply, a parent can help children, as a pair or in a group, work through a dispute while at the same time teaching negotiation skills. The first step is to get all parties to calm down (with my two hotheads, this sometimes took the form of a couple of minutes of "time out," to be followed by "time in.") Then have each child define the problem as he sees it and how he feels about it--no blaming, name-calling, insults, etc. Next, ask each child for possible solutions to the problem. This can be treated as a brainstorming session; silly ideas are allowed. Then have the children evaluate the ideas—what will be the probable outcome of putting each into practice, and which solution will make all parties happy? Throughout, you as the parent serve to keep the process on track and help them remember what they've said, serving as a kind of human blackboard. When dealing with a hearing and a deaf kid, I also made sure that both were having their communication needs met—in their case, that meant signing and keeping eye contact. What you don't do is to make suggestions of your own or impose solutions. Eventually the goal is for your kids to work out their differences completely on their own.

The book describes and illustrates variations on this basic process for children of different ages and shows how it can also be applied to some parent-child disputes. It gives you other ways of stopping disputes—ignoring the dispute, removing a disputed item or supplying a duplicate, telling the kids how they will share or take turns, or offering them a choice, which can be "you decide nicely, or I will decide." These all take less time than facilitating negotiation, and are more appropriate when there is immediate danger to one or more children. There are also ideas for teaching social and language concepts that may be needed before a child can understand the negotiation process.

Most children eventually learn to settle differences by seeing others model the process for them. However, deaf and hard of hearing children have less access to this avenue for learning. I can count on one hand the number of arguments my husband and I actually signed in front of my daughter—and those were the minor disputes, because when you're really upset, signing tends to drop out of the "conversation." Nor are conditions ideal for the hard of hearing child to fully understand what is being said. A little deliberate help with this important social skill is definitely called for, and well worth the time in the long run.

*2014 addendum: My daughter (the older original member of the squabbling pair) was visiting us during Christmas this year and recalled how she and her brothers "hardly ever fought." I remember now that I never really had to sit down with them after the third child came along--I suspect they taught him how to settle differences by example. I asked my daughter whether learning these negotiation skills had helped when dealing with other adults--yes, definitely.*

))) ))) ))) ))) )))

Our next issue will be coming out in early to mid March. For this one, I'd like for parents who've attended or sent their child to any kind of summer program for deaf or hard of hearing children or their families to tell me about your experience. There are a lot of camps and other programs nationwide, some specializing in a particular sport, the arts, math and science, or other areas of interest. You may also know of activities or classes in your area that have proved to be particularly accessible and friendly. How do you keep your child busy and socially connected during the summer? What benefits have you seen? What are some helpful hints you can pass on to other parents?

Please contact Lorna Irwin at 324-7544 or niwri2@msn.com. I'll take your ideas, incorporate them into an article, or possibly write an article just about your experiences (subject to your review.) You're also welcome to write articles or call me with ideas for other articles at any time! (Please try to do this by mid-February, as I will be without email or telephone service later that month.)