



Hear the possibilities...

OUR MISSION

Northern Voices, a center for young children with hearing loss and their families, enables students to communicate through the use of listening and spoken language. Through early, individualized intervention and experience we seek to provide all of our students, regardless of income or background, with the skills they need to be fully integrated into mainstream school settings as early as possible. Daily practice with listening and spoken language provides children with self-confidence and independence to open doors for communication.

A Note from the Director



Welcome to Northern Voices, a center for young children with hearing loss and their families.

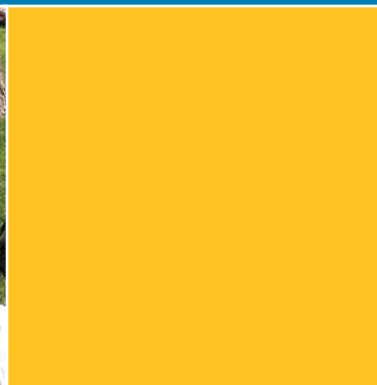
We know that parents everywhere dream that their children will reach their full potential. At Northern Voices, those dreams become reality for families of children with hearing loss. Through early, specialized intervention, we seek to provide all of our students with the skills they need to be fully integrated into mainstream school settings as early as possible. The school's primary goal is to help students fully participate with their hearing peers once they have acquired the listening and language skills necessary to succeed independently.

Students and families are at the center of the Northern Voices community. The faculty and staff of Northern Voices are warm, caring, enthusiastic and energetic advocates for the people they serve. We believe families should have a choice in the communication modality of their children, and that children with hearing loss are happiest and most fulfilled when they share a language with their families. Our goal is to provide a center of excellence for families who choose to open the door of spoken communication.

We also believe that each child has the best opportunity to meet their full potential when families and professionals share a commitment to continuing education, communication and collaboration. We strive to provide children with a warm, supportive environment full of opportunities and laughter and the joys of singing a few more verses of "Wheels on the Bus"!

Listening and spoken language is a choice for families of children with hearing loss. Kids with hearing loss can learn to listen and talk. Please, come in and visit us at Northern Voices. You'll hear the possibilities.

Kristina Blaiser
Executive Director



Our Approach

Today's remarkable technologies are able to maximize access to sound, making it possible to effectively develop spoken language even for children with severe to profound hearing loss. These technologies range from digital hearing aids and cochlear implants to FM systems and Bluetooth®. However, since hearing aids and cochlear implants do not restore normal hearing, appropriate therapy to stimulate the development of speech and language skills is critical. Research indicates that there are significant communication benefits when children are enrolled in early intervention programs by six months of age.

Northern Voices serves young children with hearing loss, from infancy through preschool, by providing:

- a unique educational setting;
- a specialized, research-based intervention process;
- individualized, supportive instruction;
- highly trained faculty.

Children with hearing loss deserve the same educational opportunities as all children. Early intervention and customized instruction provide children with hearing loss the greatest foundation for future personal success, allowing them to participate fully with their hearing classmates in mainstream school settings.

Northern Voices enables students to find their voices, develop listening skills, share language, and experience the joys of self-expression and social interaction.

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DAILY PRACTICE

Daily, individualized instruction is key to the success of our program. The school day includes several periods of highly focused spoken language instruction in small groups of two to four. Groups of this size provide ample opportunity for talking, and also ensure that the teacher connects with each student, precisely understands each child's skills, and can focus the instruction to the appropriate level to provide the greatest challenge and success. We match our students with peers who have comparable spoken language skills, giving them a peer group to build their confidence and facilitate further learning.



The intensive small-group lessons and conversation sessions are balanced with many opportunities to move around and participate in experiential learning created to maximize retention and generalizability of skills that are learned. Our highly trained, caring faculty includes speech-language pathologists, teachers of the deaf/hard-of-hearing, and specialists in early childhood education. This breadth of expertise ensures that our students benefit from a well-rounded, age-appropriate learning environment that meets all of their needs while remaining intent on the goal of developing the skills of listening and speaking.

TALKING, LISTENING, SUPPORTING

The primary goal at Northern Voices is to develop listening and speaking skills that will open doors for spoken communication. The curriculum also ensures that children will be on a comparable level to their hearing peers academically when they enter a mainstream school.

Educational Program

Northern Voices' successful program is based on an innovative, research-based curriculum developed by Jean Sachar Moog, an internationally recognized leader in deaf education who demonstrated that a highly focused approach to the teaching-learning interaction dramatically improved the achievement of deaf and hard-of-hearing children. The award-winning curriculum, developed by Moog while principal at Central Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis (CID), has twice been recognized for excellence by the U.S. Department of Education. No other program for children who are deaf and hard-of-hearing has ever received this award.



Program Descriptions

Parent/Infant: Getting started early is the key to success. The goal of our Parent/Infant Program is to empower parents to communicate with their young children with hearing loss.

Toddler: Our Toddler Program is for children who are ready to begin social interactions in small-group settings, usually around age two.

Preschool: When children are ready to begin a full day, at about age three, they enter our full-day Preschool Program.

For a full listing of our programs, visit www.northernvoices.org.





Academic areas such as early reading, science and math are taught with the continuing primary objective of teaching the language that is needed for understanding and discussing the subject matter.

Modeling and imitation is a primary teaching technique that has been shown to be effective in accelerating the development of spoken language in children with hearing loss. In this approach, the child talks; the teacher listens both to what the child says and how the child says it; the teacher provides a spoken model that expresses the child's idea using improved language or speech; the child imitates the model; and the teacher uses additional techniques that help the child make the targeted improvement.

Natural conversational opportunities are provided all day long through activities that encourage a child to communicate, such as show and tell, talking about things they have done outside of school, games, food preparation, art projects, acting out stories and much more. These activities naturally motivate and stimulate the child to talk, which is the starting point that allows the teachers to engage in modeling and imitation.

Parent education and support are essential aspects of the program. Through parent education programs, we provide parents with information about hearing loss and its impact on language development, as well as strategies and techniques for helping their deaf or hard-of-hearing child develop listening and speaking skills.

Northern Voices strives to ensure that every family we work with understands and considers the full range of communication options for their child. Our Parent Support Group provides a supportive learning environment for families and invites speakers to present information on such areas as medical technology, tests and assessments, disability law and strategies to promote language development.

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Remarkable Results

Standardized assessments show that our students are clearly holding their own with respect to their hearing peers, and we will be glad to share these test results with any family that visits Northern Voices. Perhaps the most striking measure of our success, however, can be heard reverberating throughout our classrooms every day as children and teachers listen

to one another, speak to one another, laugh and sing and play with one another. Each student's progress is genuinely remarkable and is made possible through the synergy of close collaboration between families and professionals, early intervention, application of evidence-based practices and personalized instruction. Northern Voices truly enables students to reach their greatest potential and to fulfill their dreams.

Hear the Possibilities

Northern Voices is the only nonprofit school in Minnesota offering children who are deaf and hard-of-hearing a true auditory-oral program. Centrally located in Roseville, MN, we are accredited by the North Central Association of Schools and serve students from throughout



the Twin Cities metropolitan area, greater Minnesota, and neighboring cities across the Upper Midwest, such as Fargo, ND, and Hudson, WI. The school is supported through program fees from independent school districts and parents, as well as foundation grants and individual contributions.

We invite you to see – and hear – for yourself the remarkable transformations in progress every day at Northern Voices, and experience our warm and supportive environment. You are welcome to tour and observe our classes, and we look forward to exploring with you how Northern Voices can help your child meet his or her fullest potential.

Enrollment & Program Fees

Northern Voices maintains an open enrollment policy throughout the year. The sooner a deaf or hard-of-hearing child is enrolled in early intervention programs, the better the outcome can be, so we welcome you to get in touch with us at any time to learn more about our program and determine whether Northern Voices is the right choice for your family.

In many cases, the child's home public school district will pay the cost of attending Northern Voices. Our staff will help guide you through the process of initiating that dialog with the school district. In cases where assistance from the school district is not available or parents choose not to pursue it, the program fee is determined based on a very reasonable calculation of ability to pay, and an affordable monthly payment schedule will be arranged. Program fees cover only about 25% of the total cost of Northern Voices' programs; foundation grants, private donations and special fundraising events make up the difference. We are committed to ensuring that each and every student, regardless of income level or family background, is provided with the best opportunity to achieve lifelong success.



AT NORTHERN VOICES, WE BELIEVE:

- Every family with a child with hearing loss deserves to be educated on a full range of communication options.
- Families pursuing listening and spoken language for their child have the right to specialized intervention focused on helping their child to reach his or her maximum potential. We are committed to serving every family that designates Northern Voices as their educational program, regardless of income level.
- Families and children that share a language are healthier, happier and stronger. We are committed to supporting families and their role in communication development.
- Each staff member plays an important role in a child's development and a family's history. We employ staff members that are committed to excellence through continuing education, compassionate care and respect of each family's values.
- Through collaboration and partnership, families and professionals are able to achieve better outcomes for children.
- Incorporating evidence-based practices help us to create state-of-the-art programs.
- Learning to listen and to talk happens through early experience and the opportunity for increased interactions, and is most often achieved through laughter and play. We work to create an environment to welcome all to our school with warmth, compassion and professionalism.



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