



## READY FOR A VIDEOPHONE?

### HSDC Provides Information & Training On Setting Up A Videophone

Videophone technology is fast replacing TTY as the method of choice for Deaf and hard of hearing callers. And for great reasons - sign language users can communicate in their natural language and conversation flows more smoothly. If interpreters are involved, information is conveyed more accurately with the inclusion of visual cues and expression.

### HSDC Provides Public Videophone Use

You can come to our Seattle, Tacoma, or Bellingham offices to use a free, public videophone during regular office hours. Here's what our Bellingham staff had to say about the success of the videophone so far...

"There are a number of people who regularly use the videophone in our Bellingham office. They use it to ask questions of a social service agency, to inquire about a job or volunteer opportunity, to do research about careers or housing, or to call a utility company to discuss their bill. We have regular users who have gone on to get one of the donated videophones provided by Video Relay Service companies, and we rarely see them now because they can call friends and family from home.

Both Deaf and hard of hearing people enjoy the reliability of communication through a Video Relay Service (VRS). It usually takes one or two phone calls for people to get hooked... then it's hard to get them off the phone \*smile\*.

Because our Bellingham office is close to the Canadian border, many community members have friends in Canada. Videophones make it easy to enjoy conversations with videophone users in other countries without additional long-distance charges.

### Types of Videophone Service

- :: **Point-to-Point (P2P)** is when one person uses a videophone to contact another person who also has a videophone.
- :: **Video Relay Service (VRS)** is an online interpreter service, used for conversations between a person who has a videophone and a hearing person using a traditional phone.
- :: **Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)** is used for conversations between a non-signing hearing person and a signing Deaf person, who are in the same room, using an online interpreter. VRI is a pay-per-minute service that is normally used for brief, unplanned meetings, or for emergency communication while service providers wait for a live interpreter to arrive. VRI is also used when interpreters are simply not available in person.

### What HSDC Offers

1. Free, public videophone for use during our regular office hours
2. Training on how to use a videophone
3. Information on ordering a free videophone
4. Help setting up a videophone in your home or business

HSDC offers three locations to serve individuals from thirteen counties across Western Washington. Please see the map at the right to find the location serving the county where you live.

You may drop by any of our three locations without an appointment to use the public videophone. For other information or training, you can make an appointment at no charge... just contact us by phone, TTY, email or videophone! Complete contact info is at the bottom of this ENews.

:: [Learn more about videophones at hscd.org](#)

:: [Email videophone@hscd.org](mailto:videophone@hscd.org) for info



### What is a Videophone?

- :: Using a regular TV set and a small camera (like a webcam) and modem, videophones enable communication between Sign Language users anywhere in the world.
- :: They can also be used for communication between Deaf and hearing people using a Video Relay Service (VRS) or Video Remote Interpreting (VRI).

The most surprised videophone users have been hard of hearing people who try Voice Carry Over (VCO) with Video Relay Services. Being able to hear the speaker's voice and lipread the interpreter at the same time can really improve understanding. They originally thought videophones were only for Deaf people, but were thrilled at how naturally they were able to communicate.

We have trained children as young as six and adults in their sixties. They all agree it sure is nice to be able to see a conversation."

Here's what some of HSDC's daily videophone users had to say:

"It is wonderful. It seems more natural now that I can see the interpreter's face - that reflects the hearing caller's vocal inflection - to better know the mood of the hearing caller. And hearing callers have informed me that it feels more natural - as if the interpreter is not there - but just the hearing caller and me communicating directly. Lastly, it is faster than the TTY relay service."

"Videophone will help improve communication access to employees at their workplace - as well as in rural area where there aren't enough qualified interpreters."



- NORTH SOUND  
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- HSDC SEATTLE
- SOUTH SOUND  
HSDC TACOMA

## MAKING STRIDES IN EQUAL ACCESS

### Whatcom Transit Authority (WTA) Meets The Need

To honor businesses and organizations making outstanding strides in equal access, HSDC created the Shine Award. Today we recognize Whatcom Transit Authority (WTA) for their installation of a public videophone.

On October 13th 2005, the staff of HSDC's North Sound office in Bellingham first met with the Whatcom Transit Authority (WTA) to discuss effective services for Deaf, Deaf-Blind and hard of hearing bus users. In that meeting we introduced them to videophones as a means of providing equal access. They invited HSDC to present at a statewide ADA transportation conference in Leavenworth, WA where we gave a videophone demonstration as part of our presentation on communication access and effective services.

WTA was in the process of designing a new downtown bus terminal, so it was a great time to discuss including videophones as part of the building design.

The bus terminal is now complete and this month there is a brand new videophone with a flat screen monitor mounted on the wall. They have a contact number posted with the videophone so bus users can call for information about which bus will take them where they wish to go.

As videophones are fast replacing TTYs as the preferred telecommunications device of sign



(left to right) HSDC Communication Advocate Joel Bergsbaken, Sorenson Communications representative Suzanne Clothier (who installed the videophone), WTA Operations Manager John Garner, and HSDC Client Advocate James Christianson, Jr. beside the new videophone.

This is the first public videophone in a bus station in all of Washington State.

language users and others with hearing loss, we look forward to seeing a growing number of public videophones available, as well as in homes and business.

WTA also installed a multi-line reader board, visible immediately upon entering the building, for written announcements that might

have only been heard over a public address system in years past. It is really an ideal set up for bus users who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

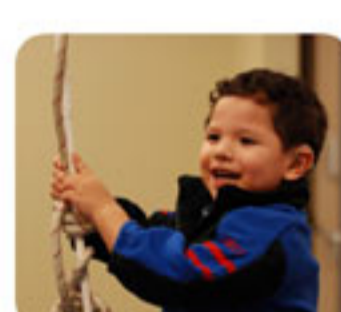
The good news is, there are far more businesses than we can recognize here... considering accommodations, practicing inclusion. The challenge for each of us: to think what we can do to make our business community even more reflective of our human community.

## Learning through Language Campaign

### It's Not Just Language Development...It's a Child's Development

HSDC is expanding to provide a continuum of educational services that will prepare children with special needs for school - and keep them succeeding in life. **Our new total - \$1,178,790!** Thank you investors! An investment in this \$2 million campaign is an investment in our children. **Join us, won't you?**

:: [Visit hscd.org](http://hscd.org) to learn more!



### THERE'S STILL TIME TO SAVE!

For a limited time, our **AUDIOLOGY & HEARING AIDS** department is offering hearing protection, hearing aid earmolds, customized listening earpieces and more at **25% off regular prices!**

In an effort to raise awareness about hearing loss and to promote the quality of life that comes with effective communication, we invite you to visit our **Seattle Office during the months of JUNE and JULY** for an opportunity to purchase these items at 25% off regular prices. Just mention "Connect News" when you come in. Save on...

- :: Earmolds for hearing aid / hearing assistive technology
- :: Musician's ear-level monitors and musician's hearing protection with interchangeable filters (available in 9, 15, and 25 dB attenuation ratings)
- :: Custom iPod®, MP3, and CD earmolds
- :: Swimplugs
- :: Earplugs for motor sports, music listening/practice, downtown traffic, hunting/shooting, sleep

Check out [www.westone.com](http://www.westone.com) under Musicians, Personal Listening, Sports Enthusiasts, Occupational Use, and Hearing Protection... Or, visit HSDC to browse through the catalog and price list.

We encourage you to forward this edition of Connect News to family, friends or coworkers who you think would be interested in learning more about HSDC. Thanks!

## HEARING, SPEECH & DEAFNESS CENTER (HSDC)

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