

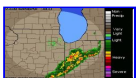
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News



Sign language is more than just a way to communicate

Thursday, July 13, 2006

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By Karen Meyer

July 13, 2006 (Last Updated: 10:55:28 AM) (WLS) -- Learning sign language is fun, educational and a great

activity for the whole family. A few years ago, the only people learning sign language were deaf and hard of hearing children and adults, but not any more. Hearing families have made this part of their everyday life. They can learn it right at home.

Stephanie Atwood and her four daughters are signing along with "Leah's Farm" -- a series of DVDs from signing time.

Seven-year-old Savannah got the family hooked on sign language.

"We had a friend that signed to my oldest daughter so she became interested so we were looking for a way for our family to learn more signs and we found Signing Times on the internet and ordered the first tape and the girls enjoyed it so much we thought we would get the next one and one thing lead to another and we now have all of them and they've been learning more and more signs," said Atwood.

The Atwood girls are between the ages of seven and one. Every one of them sign.

"My youngest one absolutely loves it. She watches them everyday at least once a day and they're 30 minutes and they have music and, you know, pictures of whatever they are talking about whether it be animals or people," said Atwood.

The biggest challenge is finding other children to sign with.

"I've met kids through signing times play groups but we're all so spread apart in the area. Most of us live an hour apart from each other," said Atwood.

"But we did go to the Signing Time camp because my girls were having so much fun with it," said Atwood.

Learning sign language at a young age has many benefits.

"I noticed my youngest one talking. I guess saying more words faster than my other children because she was hearing the words over and over again on the Signing Time tapes and signing them," said Atwood.

Savannah understands the importance of communicating.

"How can you talk to other people if they're deaf because if they can't hear you can't sign to them so they can understand," said Savannah.

Gabrielle, 5, proudly shows us some of her favorite signs

In addition to DVDs, Signing Time has books.

More information on sign language materials:

www.signingtime.com

www.babysigningtime.com

www.signtyme

www.babybumblebee.com

www.dawnsign.com

You can see the ABC7 report by clicking on the video icon above. You will need Windows Media Player 9 or higher to view this video. You can get it **FREE by clicking here**. **NOTE: Video clips will only be available for 5-days from the date they were created. ALSO: Video clips will play in a separate window on Mac OS X machines, you may also see a video help screen.**

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