

# Maria Hernandez

BIPOC Presenter

Maria Isabel Hernandez was born in Juarez, Mexico. When she was very young, her family moved to Chicago, Illinois. Maria's deafness was discovered when she was 3 years old. Her mother and Maria learned ASL together. Now, Maria has 5 Deaf members in her family. All of them use ASL to communicate with each other.

Maria works for the City of Chicago Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities (MOPD). MOPD has a Substance Use Prevention Program for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing (SUPPD). This December, Maria will have worked for SUPPD for 20 years. Maria gives prevention education to Deaf and HOH students throughout the state of Illinois on topics related to Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs (ATOD).



Maria is a long-time activist, advocate, and leader in many organizations involving Latinos, Youth, Women, and GLBTQ. Maria is adept at utilizing various visual and tactile communication styles used with Deaf-Blind or international Deaf audiences as well as with Deaf people with minimal language skills. Plus, she loves traveling and meeting Deaf people from around the world.