



# FAMILY NETWORK FOR DEAF CHILDREN & DEAF YOUTH TODAY

OUR SUMMER PROGRAM,



FALL

Fall (Sept 2020)

*FNDC values sharing information to deaf children, families, professionals and the communities that support them. These events, advertisements and/or articles do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of FNDC or offer an endorsement*

## A very different DYT Summer ...



*Deaf Youth Today (DYT) has now wrapped up for the summer. A GIANT thanks to Andrea, Terry, Scott and the entire team of our young DYT Deaf staff: Hilary, Izzy, Madison, Zack, Sul,*

*Ben, Kareem, Nina, Zain and Bella for tackling the challenge of an unprecedented COVID Summer. DYT entered uncharted territory and navigated new online events/sessions and small "in person" camps. Thank you, campers and parents for your patience. DYT has learned a lot and hopefully (fingers crossed), Summer 2021, camp experiences will be (somewhat) back to "normal" and we can look forward to Family Deaf Camp and DYT "in person" camps. Due to COVID, this was the first summer we were unable to offer programs for hearing siblings and hearing children of Deaf parents. For me personally, this was a tough decision because of my own experience – for my hearing children, this was always a HUGE part of their summer experience and their learning: being with other hearing siblings and other deaf/hard of hearing kids.*

## Siblings

**Editorial: Hearing Siblings of Deaf & Hard of Hearing (DHH) Kids ...**  
by Cecelia Klassen

I am often asked about family dynamics when raising my children (deaf and hearing) – particularly questions about hearing siblings. This is a topic my husband and I have lived, from the very day we found out our daughter was deaf, every single day up until today; thinking about how to find a balance for both hearing and deaf people in a family. There isn't a perfect recipe, and if there is, I guess I don't have THAT cookbook.

I would like to share some of the ups and downs that my husband Doug and I have made in our parenting journey with our three (now) young adult children, who are each 2 years apart: Annie (hearing), Mari (deaf), Jake (hearing).

Every family is unique with regard to culture, values and dynamics; our experience may be very different from yours. You may want to take what I share with a grain of salt or pull out what may work for your family. More importantly, I hope you can learn from some of our mistakes.

As "hearing parents", Doug and I never envisioned having a deaf child in our family. From the moment Mari was diagnosed at 3 months, we immediately rolled up our sleeves to begin the journey without giving much thought to the impact on our hearing children throughout their lives.

After we jumped in, we quickly understood that language and communication is the essence of being human. In order for our baby to develop – LANGUAGE was imminent. The hours logged from the beginning was somewhat overwhelming: researching Early Intervention programs, language development, audiology appointments, speech therapy sessions, DHH workshops, DHH events, ASL classes in the evening. This all took away from "normal" family time. *Although I must admit, I still have no idea what normal family time really is.*

### How did our hearing kids feel?

Mari and I would go to countless audiology appointments, DHH play groups and speech therapy together often ending with an ice cream or lunch out. Looking back, I can only imagine their little minds thinking that I was out having fun with Mari while they were hanging out with grandparents (but, THANK GOD FOR GRANDPARENTS). In trying to fill in all the gaps and give Mari an equal shot at life, without intending to, we made our hearing kids feel less valued.

Strangers would even re-enforce this. A waitress would zero in on the "little deaf girl" and magically appear with the brand-new box of crayons or the mall mascot would give Mari the pink sparkly balloon while our two other kids had the broken crayons and the plain red balloons. Our hearing kids soon got the message: they were less valued.

We would attend DHH events where (understandably), well-meaning adults and staff would focus on DHH kids- trying to build much-needed language and social opportunities. The subtle feeling our hearing kids had: they were less valued.

Our daughter's thoughts as she reflected back on her experience (as a young child) on having a deaf sister:

*"Because we used sign language, everyone around us was instantly alerted to the fact that our family was different. There was this subconscious anxious feeling that was always present in me. I felt the need to look out for Mari, the burden of not wanting to cause my parents added stress and the longing to look the same as everyone else. There were these golden moments growing up where you could almost 'come up for air' and just be a kid. Hornby Island was always one of these times for me."*

– Annie (Klassen) Lehbauer

When we attended Family Deaf Camp (Hornby), DYT and Deaf events that included our hearing kids, they felt comfortable, made friends and had fun. This was where our hearing kids didn't have to explain about their deaf sister or have people being "fascinated" by the

Twitter: @FNDcandDYT  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/fndc.ca](https://www.facebook.com/fndc.ca)

signing deaf girl or why their sister makes different sounds and taps people to get their attention. Signing was just another language; being different was natural and the whole family was valued. Our hearing kids found their own unique place of belonging. They were able to laugh and share about the unique qualities in all our families.

My two hearing kids now look back with fond memories of DYT, Deaf events and Family Deaf Camp where they were with other siblings of DHH kids. These friendships were not always obvious at the moment (ie. age gaps, not a lot in common besides having a DHH sibling, etc.) but nonetheless, they were and are important! We think about the importance of DHH kids being with other DHH kids – YES, but it is also important that hearing siblings spend time with each other – so they can see other families that are the same as them.

### Were we the weird family in the neighbourhood?

Thinking back, our family and home were different than neighbours, friends and extended family. For example, over the many years, we were the family that had:

- ▶ a big white board in the kitchen for communication if anyone was stuck;
- ▶ colour-coded communication Calendars posted and emailed weekly to our family;
- ▶ flashcards around the house labelling all our furniture. Yes, the toilet was also labelled;
- ▶ the mom (me) **trying** to interpret Friday Family Movie Nights. FYI: I hated Friday nights;
- ▶ Fridge photos of friends/family with names written in black felt pen. FYI: that way Mari knew the names of EVERYONE – including her brother and sisters' friends.
- ▶ flashing lights for phone and doorbells and a video camera on our computer LONG BEFORE anyone was using that technology;
- ▶ closed captioning always on the tv – even during hockey games!
- ▶ a large glowing light for the back of our jeep so communication could be SEEN;
- ▶ family meetings with the agenda on huge poster paper in the living room;
- ▶ dinner games: sign, gesture or act out what you did today! FYI: we did this so we didn't have to deal with two languages at the table or having one person interpreting;
- ▶ a frazzled mom or dad interpreting in the neighbourhood, community, family events, Sunday School, sports fields and gyms;
- ▶ Family text group (to this day): for all events, information and humour. Some days there can be up to 20 messages. This is Important for equal access to all info in a family – even the mundane stuff like 'the yellow house down the road is for sale';
- ▶ a mom yelling out the window to hearing kids "tap Mari", "get Mari's attention" or "can you interpret this for Mari";
- ▶ siblings that sometimes had to interpret for Mari. FYI: I regret asking them to do this;

- ▶ a hearing brother signing "I hear the ice cream truck" (when there was no truck) – which meant Mari searching for cash while her brother finally got his turn on the swing.

While all of the above felt completely natural for our family, our hearing kids knew that none of their friends did any of these things. Our family was different.

In recent years, as adults, our hearing kids have come to understand that Mari needed language and extra supports that they didn't need; although that has come with guilt and loss for them. Finding a balance between the guilt of knowing that Mari needed "more time" yet the loss of some of their own "mom and dad" time is always there. We can't change that. We are blessed that all three of our kids have been open to sharing their feelings about our parenting and the uniqueness of our family. We are thankful for the love and forgiveness given to us by all of them. No family is perfect. I encourage every parent to try your best, ask for support and keep learning.

### I hope you can learn from our mistakes:

- ▶ Hire interpreters when you can – so you can be a **parent** to all your children;
- ▶ Try not to ask your hearing kids to be their brother or sister's interpreter or protector;
- ▶ Expose your hearing kids to other hearing siblings; encourage relationships;
- ▶ Ensure all your kids feel a sense of belonging, have friendships and a community;
- ▶ Practise turning your voice off so your hearing kids can learn ASL (and not only listen to your voice); remind them about the importance of signing with good eye contact and using facial expression!
- ▶ Don't only talk to your hearing kids with your DHH child present, remember to sign. For example: It's important for your DHH child to see that you also discipline their siblings!
- ▶ Set up special 'date days' with each of your kids;
- ▶ Don't always drop everything for your DHH child's communication needs. This will instil turn-taking and patience. Create a family "signal" that alerts your DHH child that you are in the middle of a conversation and they need to wait their turn. FYI: Our son Jake, says this is his #1 request for this Editorial;
- ▶ Include more people in your life (grandparents, aunts, close friends) to play roles in supporting your hearing kids while you are doing the "DHH thing";
- ▶ Constantly assess and try to maintain balance in your family.

And FINALLY: Counselling is a good thing! We have done this many times and benefitted greatly. Don't be afraid to reach out. You are not alone.

Contact me any time if you need support or have questions

Cecelia  
[cecelia@fndc.ca](mailto:cecelia@fndc.ca)

# Deaf Youth Today (DYT)

**FREE** Virtual Drop-In Sessions  
for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Kids & Youth



## **VIRTUAL DROP-IN for DHH TEENS: Ages: 12-16**

Back by popular demand is our weekly Teen online Chat and Game night! Join us weekly for social time, fun interactive games like Kahoot, Bingo, Gestures, Scavenger Hunts and more.

Start planning your Halloween costume for the last Friday!

Dates: 4 Friday Drop-in Sessions: Oct 8, Oct 15, Oct 22 & Oct 29

You don't need to attend all nights.

Maximum 12 participants. Required: access to Zoom/Internet

**FREE, but you must register!**

This event will be led by our DYT staff/mentors in an ASL environment. Register by emailing [dyt@fndc.ca](mailto:dyt@fndc.ca) with teen's name, age, school and if they require an interpreter.

## **Kids Game Night for DHH KIDS: Ages 5-8**

Wed Oct 14th 6:00 – 6:45

Back by popular Demand is our Kids Online Program! Join us for a fun evening of interactive social and game time. Each child will get a small package in the mail prior to the event (you must register 2 weeks prior for postage confirmation)

Maximum 6 Participants. Required: access to Zoom/Internet

**FREE, but you must register!**

This event will be led by our DYT staff/mentors in an ASL environment. Register by emailing [dyt@fndc.ca](mailto:dyt@fndc.ca) with child's name, age, school and if they require an interpreter.





### Kid's Games Night FOR DHH KIDS: Ages 9-11

Wed Oct 14th 7:00 – 7:45



Back by popular demand is our Kid's Games Night! Join us for a fun evening of interactive social and game time. Each child will receive a small package in the mail prior to the event (you must register 2 weeks prior for postage confirmation)

Maximum 6 Participants

Required: access to Zoom/Internet

#### FREE, but you must register!

This event will be led by our DYT staff/mentors in an ASL environment. Register by emailing [dyt@fndc.ca](mailto:dyt@fndc.ca) with child's name, age, school and if they require an interpreter.

### Halloween Game Night for DHH KIDS: Ages 5-11

Wed Oct 28, 2020: 6:15-7:00 PM

Wear your Halloween costume and join us for Halloween themed fun. Each participant will receive a Halloween Surprise Kit in the mail or via pick up. For outside of the Lower Mainland, please register before Oct 14<sup>th</sup> to guarantee your Surprise Kit is delivered in time.

Maximum 8 Participants

Required: access to Zoom/Internet

#### FREE, but you must register!

This event will be led by our DYT staff/mentors in an ASL environment. Register by emailing [dyt@fndc.ca](mailto:dyt@fndc.ca) with your child's name, age, current school and if they require an interpreter.



To register, or if you have questions, comments or suggestions, please email:

[dyt@fndc.ca](mailto:dyt@fndc.ca)

# **FNDC & our DYT PROGRAM SENDS A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE VANCOUVER FOUNDATION**

**We wouldn't be providing online services  
to DHH kids this Fall without their  
support!**

vancouver  
foundation

**AND THANK to: Canadian Tire, Sons of Vancouver Distillery, Next Gen Concessions & Coastal Reign Printed Cloth** for donations of hand sanitizer, masks and supplies – all for our DYT 2020 Summer Program



# ***LEGO adds minifigure with a hearing aid***

FROM: [https://www.hearinglikeme.com/lego-minifigure-with-a-hearing-aid/?fbclid=IwAR2--tN7GGFanM9ii1xfj6kMMBfB1mQyR0co22frDYnYrh8-NsKpacjv\\_ck](https://www.hearinglikeme.com/lego-minifigure-with-a-hearing-aid/?fbclid=IwAR2--tN7GGFanM9ii1xfj6kMMBfB1mQyR0co22frDYnYrh8-NsKpacjv_ck)

September 17, 2020

LEGO building bricks have been around for 62 years. In addition to the classic versions, popular culture sets like Star Wars, Stranger Things, Harry Potter, and Frozen are available. Several years ago, LEGO unveiled the first minifigure with a disability: a person in a wheelchair.

Now, people who wear hearing aids also have a LEGO minifigure they can relate to.

## **LEGO minifigure with a hearing aid**



LEGO's minifigure with a hearing aid can be found in the LEGO City Main Square (60271) set, but it may be included in other LEGO sets in the future.

When asked what prompted the minifigure with hearing loss, LEGO said they understand the importance of representation in toys. They want every one of their fans to imagine themselves as part of the action.

"We are committed to developing our

LEGO City sets in a way that ensures they are representative of the world in which children are living," LEGO says. "Therefore, we will continue to include minifigures that portray people with diverse ages, professions, genders, and characteristics."

## **The Evolution of Accessible Toys**

LEGO's first minifigure with a disability — a boy in a wheelchair — was released in 2016. But in 2005, Build-a-Bear introduced a hearing aid accessory for its stuffed animals. Then it wasn't until 2019 that Mattel added three Barbie dolls with disabilities to their line of Fashionista Barbies, according to The Mighty, including two dolls who use manual wheelchairs and one with a prosthetic leg.

When it comes to hearing loss, Lottie Dolls became the first global toy brand in 2017 to release a fashion doll with a cochlear implant. Mia, a wildlife photographer, can be purchased through Amazon UK.

Earlier this year, American Girl also released a “Girl of the Year” doll, Joss Kendrick, who wears a hearing aid.

### **Campaigning for Inclusivity**

Developing toys that encourage inclusivity and accessibility has been a big topic in recent years, largely due to a viral campaign by ToyLike Me. The not-for-profit organization creates art and design projects to start playful conversations about disability, while encouraging and consulting the toy industry to better represent children with disabilities. ToyLikeMe, which was established by Rebecca Atkinson, who is partially deaf and partially sighted, also aims to educate and engage the public.



“We started our campaign for more positive representation of all disability in toys and children’s media,” a representative with ToyLikeMe says. “We made over toys to show them how it could be done. These included deaf, visually impaired, wheelchair user, etc.”

In 2015, ToyLikeMe made an image of three Duplo figures with disabilities. The image was printed onto postcards. Children were asked to write to LEGO, asking them to be made. ToyLikeMe says they also sent them to LEGO’s head of design.

“We are really pleased that we are beginning to see more representation,” ToyLikeMe says. “We want to see characters with disabilities pop up across all children’s media, just like they pop up in real life.”

ToyLikeMe hopes that LEGO doesn’t stop here.

“[We] think the culture of disability representation is higher on their agenda now, as it should be – but not high enough!”

### **Respite Worker needed**

I am a Social Worker looking for a respite caregiver to care for two First Nations girls, ages two and three that live in Surrey. Both girls live with their grandmother but the grandmother has to work and would appreciate support in the care of both girls. Scheduling will be agreed between the respite caregiver and grandmother.

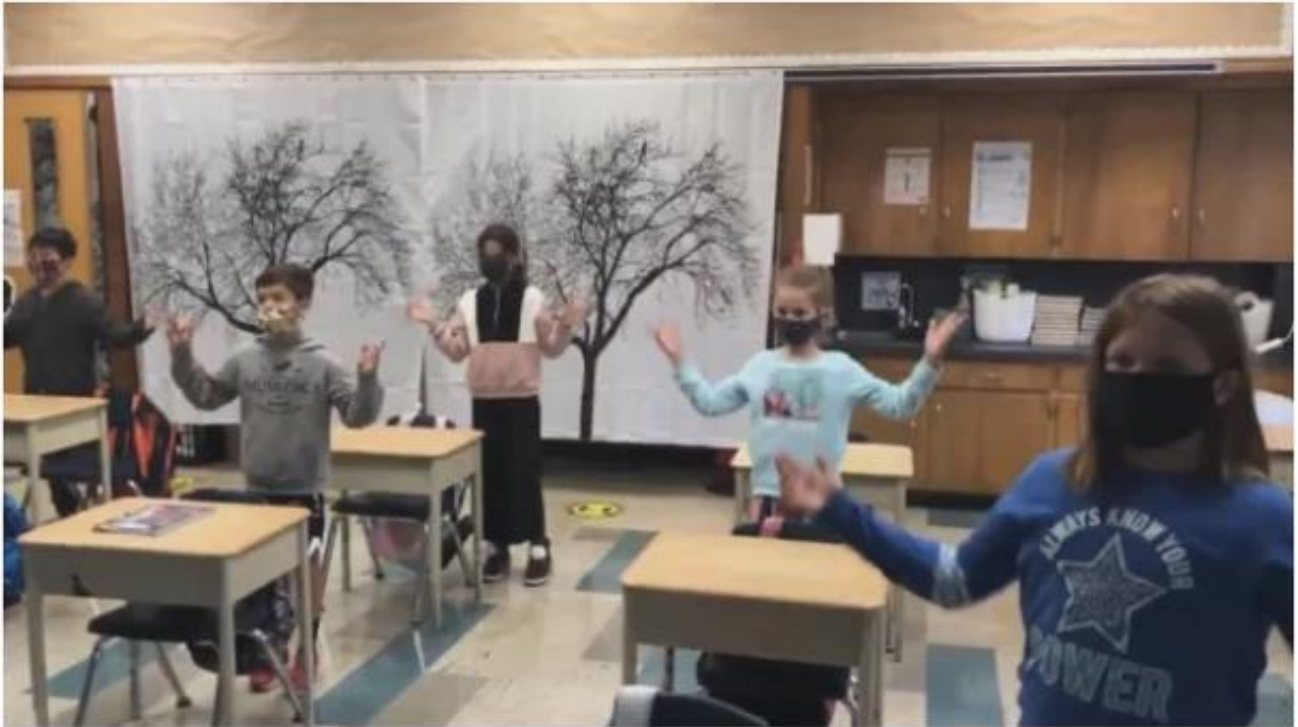
The three year old is deaf and has additional support needs so we are looking for a respite caregiver that is fluent in American Sign Language and able to create social opportunities or activities for the girls to participate in to benefit their language skills as well as global development. As a respite caregiver, you will be given \$43.16 per day.

You might be required to go through a screening process to become an approved respite caregiver. Please contact me at [Kaeli.Sort@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Kaeli.Sort@gov.bc.ca) or call me at 778 572 2857. More details will be given to serious inquiries in respect to the children’s privacy.

Kaeli Sort- Family Services Social Worker  
FIM-Multi-Disciplinary Team  
Ministry of Children and Family Development  
Indigenous Child and Family Services (Circle 5)

# From singing to signing: Students use ASL for their daily rendition of 'O Canada'

FROM: <https://www.cbc.ca/amp/1.5721445>



Following a prohibition on singing to fight the spread of COVID-19, students in Amy Allison's Grade 3/4 class were taught how to sign "O Canada." (@MrsAllison123/Twitter)

Some schools have forbidden singing as a preventative measure against COVID-19

Many students across the country are used to starting their day with a daily tradition — standing up and singing "O Canada" while the anthem plays over the school's loudspeaker.

But with the COVID-19 pandemic forcing some schools across the country to prohibit singing altogether, one teacher in Windsor, Ont. had to get creative.

"I decided right after the principal played 'O Canada' that I would play them a YouTube version and had them watch it. And then we practiced signing it a few times," said Amy Allison, a Grade 3/4 teacher at D. M. Eagle Public School.

Allison said by the third practice run, her students were starting to pick it up. She posted a video of the moment to her Twitter account Thursday afternoon. By Friday evening, the video had been viewed more than 50,000 times.



Having just started her 22nd year as a teacher this week, Allison — who emigrated to Canada when she was just seven years old — said she's very strict about making sure students stand up to honour the flag.

"We had to have a discussion about the particles and how the particles can travel when you sing. So our principal plays 'O Canada' every morning and he asked us all to stand, but not to sing," she said.

"That's very hard for kids who have been accustomed to doing the same thing every day since they started school — and even for their teacher. So teachers have had to come up with lots of creative ways to teach."

### **A sense of normalcy in an abnormal time**

Allison added it's very important to continue the tradition of "singing" the anthem every morning because "it gives them comfort" in a time where students' routines have been turned upside down.

"At the end of the day, they're still with teachers who are going to look out for them and make sure they're safe and teach them in different ways. But they're still learning. They're still with their friends," said Allison.

Allison's Twitter account mainly serves as a window for parents to check in on their children, she said, adding the goal is to show that students are being cared for and still learning despite COVID-19 keeping students physically apart from teachers and one another.

"In our classroom, that community starts with standing proudly and starting with their anthem each day. I wanted parents to have a look into our classroom, but I didn't expect all the other educators and people to notice that," Allison told CBC News with a wide smile.



Grade 3/4 teacher Amy Allison says she will try and teach other songs to her students in ASL after they become more fluent with signing "O Canada." (Sanjay Maru/CBC)

"We'll start with 'O Canada.' In a couple of weeks, hopefully, they will be able to do it with a little bit more fluency. And then we'll start with some other songs."

**Take a look as Mrs. Allison's Grade 3/4 split class uses ASL to "sing" O Canada:**

<https://www.cbc.ca/amp/1.5721445>

# Cyprus High's First Football Coach Who Is Deaf: 'We Can Do Everything Except Hear'

FROM: <https://ksltv.com/444496/coach-who-is-deaf/>

*MAGNA, Utah* – High school football season is in full swing. It's already a historic season, and a new Cyprus High School football coach is setting records. Dante Ramirez is the team's first coach who is deaf. "Deafness to me is power," he said. "Deafness is proof that we have the power to overcome."



Ramirez joined Cyprus after being a freshman coach last year at Cedar Valley High School. He faced adversity trying to find his next position prior to landing the position with Cyprus. Ramirez applied to 12 football coaching positions and 14 lacrosse coaching positions. He got four interviews for football and was denied each spot. He said he almost had a volunteer lacrosse coach position within the Jordan School District, but conversations went cold when he requested an interpreter.

The Americans with Disabilities Act states any state or local government agency, business or nonprofit that serves the community must provide effective ways of communication for people with disabilities.

Ramirez's wife, Sheri, said it was a difficult process to watch her husband go through. "I will never understand what it is like to have someone constantly reject me," she said. "As a deaf person, he is resilient." It worked out in the end.

Ramirez's newfound football family at Cyprus couldn't be happier to have him and his interpreters around. Ramirez works alongside his interpreter, and that is how he communicates with the players. "Oh yeah, he knows what he is talking about," senior football player Kari Butler said. "He is not afraid to step in and tell us what we did wrong."

Head Coach Richard Garcia said he's enjoyed seeing the way players, coaches, and himself are learning from Ramirez outside of the game. He said Ramirez has a better eye for situations and is even-keeled, allowing himself to remove intense emotions that often times arise during the sport. "It's good because it's allowing us to learn how to communicate differently," Garcia said. "Actually, it makes us all better coaches."

Ramirez played football in high school and then went on to play lacrosse at Utah Valley University. His love for football never faded and has only increased with coaching. The longtime Brigham Young University football fan said he hopes to one day be coaching at the collegiate level. "We can do anything except hear," Ramirez said, "and that's not a problem. Most of us understand that."

# Confusion at the crossroads of autism and hearing loss

FROM: <https://www.spectrumnews.org/features/deep-dive/confusion-at-the-crossroads-of-autism-and-hearing-loss/>

***Hearing difficulties and autism often overlap, exacerbating autism traits and complicating diagnoses.***

At the age of 3, Tyler spoke only about five words at a time, often with a stutter. Doctors initially thought he was deaf, and experts diagnosed him with auditory desynchrony, a condition that alters how the brain processes sound. But subsequent evaluations revealed that Tyler's hearing was just fine.



Yet as Tyler grew, his speech problems — along with other atypical traits — led to a host of diagnoses, including speech apraxia, dyslexia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. His father, Tim, always felt there might be a more cohesive explanation for his son's melange of issues. (To protect the boy's privacy, *Spectrum* is withholding the family's last name.) Tyler lagged on certain motor skills, such as the ability to walk in a straight line, and had unusual sensory traits, such as a constant need to touch and smell things. "We went down so many rabbit holes trying to figure out if all this stuff was somehow connected," Tim says.

Late last year, when Tyler was 11, his parents signed him up for a study on speech impairments. The researchers, at the University of California, San Francisco, verified that Tyler's ears work but found that his brain has trouble discriminating words from background noise. He also struggles to identify rapidly presented sounds, which may be the cause of his slow, halting speech. Taken together with the boy's sensory traits and delayed motor skills, the researchers wondered if he was on the spectrum. An autism evaluation confirmed their hunch.

It was a revelation to the family. Tyler is sociable and has never had issues with making eye contact, a classic characteristic of autism. "He'd been diagnosed with a hodgepodge of different things," Tim says. "But [until then], nobody suggested he could have autism."

A late autism diagnosis such as Tyler's is just part of the confusion that can arise when hearing problems and autism overlap. Most people know that children with autism can be unusually sensitive to certain noises, such as the roar of a vacuum cleaner or the commotion of a busy shopping mall. Less well recognized is that many people on the spectrum experience hearing difficulties, including conditions that disrupt the brain's processing of sounds. Just how frequently these difficulties coexist with autism is still unknown. But studies hint that hearing problems are at least three times as common in autistic people as in typical people. Among deaf or hard-of-hearing children, autism occurs in an estimated 4 to 9 percent, compared with only 1 percent of children in the general population, some reports suggest.

Similar biology may underlie some hearing problems and autism, says psychologist Jean Mankowski of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For instance, premature birth and infections with rubella or cytomegalovirus in the womb are associated with a higher likelihood of both hearing problems and autism. Prematurity, infections or other conditions can alter how neurons form connections in the fetal brain, which in turn may interfere with hearing or contribute to behavioral traits.

Whatever the reasons for the overlap between hearing problems and autism, doctors often conflate the two, causing them to miss one diagnosis or make an incorrect one. They may attribute a young child's difficulty understanding and producing speech to hearing impairments rather than autism's hallmark

social and communication difficulties. “I’d frequently hear from colleagues, ‘There’s this deaf child who seems to have characteristics of autism, but nobody’s evaluating that,’” says [Jackson Roush](#), an audiologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. “Or the other way around: ‘This child seems autistic, but we think it may be more related to hearing loss.’”

If someone has both conditions, it may take years before both are correctly identified. And a failure to make the right diagnostic calls can mean lost opportunities to address a child’s actual needs at the right time. Children who are deaf or hard of hearing already have an increased likelihood of being deprived of language during critical periods of brain development. Throw autism into the mix and those odds likely run even higher, says [Aaron Shield](#), a language acquisition expert at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

To prevent children with both conditions from slipping through cracks, investigators are mapping out the overlap to gain insights into how even subtle auditory problems without hearing loss may hinder communication skills. And they are beginning to optimize diagnostic instruments and interventions for deaf and hard of hearing children with autism. “Earlier diagnosis of autism could help parents and teachers be aware of additional support a deaf child with autism might need in order to acquire language,” Shield says.



**Auditory effects:** Typically, sound waves cause the eardrum, located in the middle ear, to vibrate — a thrum that is picked up by nearby membranes and bones. The vibrations travel to the inner ear, triggering ripples in the fluid-filled, spiral-shaped organ called the cochlea. There, cells covered in tiny hairs sense those perturbations and convert them into nerve impulses. The electrical signals zip to the auditory processing region of the brain, to be parsed into birdsong, laughter and other sounds.

Hearing snafus can ensue if parts of this relay system break down. The peripheral hearing system — the eardrum, bones or cochlear fluid — might not respond properly to a sound. Or the brain’s auditory region might fail to make sense of incoming information. More subtle issues, such as difficulty distinguishing sounds, can result when the neural circuits that process sound err.

One of the earliest reports of [hearing impairments in people with autism](#) is a 1977 survey from the Medical Research Council in London, England. Experts tested middle-ear function and the ability to hear pure tones in 16 children with autism aged 8 to 15. A few children had partial hearing loss, and most showed abnormal responses within the ear.

Over the following decades, technological advances paved the way for new discoveries linking autism and hearing conditions. Today researchers can decode the ability to hear sounds at specific frequencies and gauge how well middle-ear membranes respond to air pressure changes. They can use electroencephalography (EEG) to monitor how sounds are processed in the brain and to detect auditory deficits in someone whose ears otherwise function well.

Thanks to these tools, researchers can probe in depth how hearing problems can influence autism traits — in particular, delayed speech and language development and problems recognizing others’ emotions. Many children with autism have halting, monotonous or inarticulate speech. One-third are minimally verbal, and untold numbers have co-occurring auditory processing difficulties.

**“Families are a bit blown away when we say, ‘We’re seeing these traits; do you mind if we rule out autism here?’” Jean Mankowski**



A groundbreaking 2016 study found that about half of autistic children have at least one kind of peripheral hearing problem, compared with only 15 percent of their typical peers. And these problems manifest in subtle, nonobvious ways, such as unusual sensitivity to sounds in one ear or involuntary muscle contractions in the middle ear that distort sounds. For some, there are signs that the cochlea amplifies and transmits sound differently.

The study turned up something else intriguing: Autistic children who experience hearing difficulties at frequencies around 2,000 hertz — the middle range for human speech — themselves have distorted speech. “I wasn’t expecting to find a strong relationship with communication abilities,” says lead investigator Carly Demopoulos, a neuropsychologist at the University of California, San Francisco. For these children, incoming speech sounds may be altered in some way, thwarting their ability to understand and replicate those sounds, she explains. Any distortions in — or inability to hear — the sound of one’s own voice might also make it tougher to learn to speak clearly.

Auditory processing difficulties in autism might manifest as hypersensitivity to noises or an inability to tell sounds apart, according to other lines of research. For instance, in large gatherings, people without processing issues can usually follow a single conversation while ignoring laughter or, say, the clink of silverware in the background. “Their brains are able to focus attention on this relevant stream of sound they’re trying to interpret,” says neuropsychologist Helen Tager-Flusberg of Boston University. But “some autistic kids have great difficulty with this.”

That difficulty may contribute to speech problems. In 2015, Tager-Flusberg and her colleagues used electrodes to track the brain activity of autistic and typical adolescents as they heard unexpectedly loud or soft sounds amid a background din that mimicked a party. The brain activity of the teenagers varied greatly, the researchers found, but only in minimally verbal youth did neural responses correlate with reactions to sounds in everyday life, as measured by a questionnaire the teenagers’ parents completed.

A follow-up study to be published this month in *Autism Research* provides additional support for a connection between sound processing and verbal ability: It finds that minimally verbal autistic adolescents and young adults have trouble distinguishing their own name from someone else’s and have a markedly different neural response to the sound of their name than verbal young people with autism and typical people do. “It’s not that their brain doesn’t pick up the sound itself, but it fails to attribute importance to the sound,” Tager-Flusberg says. Such findings may help explain why some individuals on the spectrum often feel overwhelmed in noisy settings.

Hearing difficulties can also obscure emotions conveyed by another person’s tone of voice. In 2015, Demopoulos’ team asked autistic and typical children to identify the emotional tone of someone saying, “I’m going out of the room now, but I’ll be back later” in a happy, angry, fearful or sad voice. The researchers also took magnetoencephalography recordings as the children listened to a series of tones. The autistic children who took a long time to process the tones or had trouble processing a rapid sequence of tones also tended to struggle with interpreting the speaker’s tone. “It didn’t matter what any of the words were in that sentence,” Demopoulos says.



**Tangled traits:** On the flip side, autism can complicate the communication challenges of deaf and hard-of-hearing children. Charlie Hughes, 25, of Nottingham, England, was diagnosed as autistic at age 2 and had progressive hearing loss, possibly as a result of Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, such that he became profoundly

deaf. His parents chose not to fit him with hearing aids because “they didn’t want me to get picked on for ‘looking deaf,’” he recalls, chatting via text on Skype.

Hughes could not speak until he was 8 years old, but he started learning British Sign Language and lip-reading in preschool. He flourished under formal sign-language training along with exposure to social cues, albeit incidental ones: Engaging with the deaf community over the years improved his reading of body language, he says, and helped him overcome some of the social obstacles of being autistic. Three years ago, he graduated from university with a degree in forensic science.

Sometimes, a child who is deaf or hard of hearing can keep pace with her hearing peers if her hearing issues are diagnosed and addressed via cochlear implants or signed languages early on. But adding autism can create new hurdles. “It makes it even harder to expose them to enough language to develop and grow,” Shield says. Children with autism are often uncomfortable with eye contact and may have trouble with joint attention, in which two people focus on the same object together. They also may find it challenging to process facial cues. “Being able to do these things is really important for learning sign language,” Shield says. “So, the earlier autism is diagnosed in deaf and hard-of-hearing children, the greater the chance for effective interventions.”

Even so, children with autism whose parents have taught them a signed language from birth often reverse signs that have a specific palm orientation (inward or outward) or refer to themselves by signing their name instead of using pronouns, akin to similar idiosyncrasies seen in hearing autistic children, Shield has found. And deaf autistic children who use a signed language also tend to repetitively echo what an adult signs to them, just as hearing autistic children may arbitrarily repeat words they hear — a tendency called echolalia.

Deaf children with autism who do not learn to sign from an early age like Hughes did need tailored interventions to catch up, says child and adolescent psychiatrist Barry Wright of the University of York in England. For instance, a deaf typical child may need supports such as visual calendars or cues for routine activities to compensate for lost language exposure. An autistic deaf child may need similar language support, coupled with social and behavioral interventions to address problems with eye contact or with interpreting facial expressions.

For many children with autism and hearing issues, the autism goes undiagnosed for years, experts say. Parents and clinicians tend to focus on the most obvious issue, such as the stuttering speech patterns Tyler has. “Sometimes families have put so much work into making sure the speech and language needs are met, that they can possibly miss some red flags,” Mankowski says. “Families are a bit blown away when we say, ‘We’re seeing these traits; do you mind if we rule out autism here?’”

That elimination process is complicated by a lack of reliable clinical tests. Instruments such as the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule are not designed for the deaf or hard of hearing. These assessments often include questions about whether a child responds to the sound of her own name or speaks in a monotone or an otherwise unusual pattern. As a result, among deaf or hard-of-hearing children, the tests may flag autism in children who are not autistic. Alternatively, if a clinician chalks up some of the answers to hearing problems, an autistic child may not make the diagnostic cutoff.

**“The earlier autism is diagnosed in deaf and hard-of-hearing children, the greater the chance for effective interventions.”**  
**Aaron Shield**

Deaf children can be mistaken as autistic for other reasons, too. Unable to hear, they may fixate on other sensory cues. Wright recalls speaking with teachers and parents who were concerned about autism in one deaf child simply because this child spent long stretches alone in a corner of the school playground, tossing leaves into the air and watching them flutter down.

Given these challenges, it can take years to understand the full scope of a child's autism and hearing issues. For example, only last year did Hughes learn that there are multiple layers to his auditory challenges. Because he wanted to work on his speech and not have to rely so heavily on interpreters, he sought out an audiologist to get hearing aids.

"The [hearing aids] have been fairly useful for things like alarms and not getting run over by cars," he says, "but not as much for speech, because it's hard to filter it all." The devices amplified other people's voices — but he did not necessarily understand them, he says. Further testing revealed for the first time that Hughes also has an auditory processing disorder, such that his brain does not process sounds correctly. He plans to get additional tests to determine whether specialized hearing aids might help.

Clinicians are developing tools to decrease diagnostic delays and improve outcomes for autistic children with hearing issues. Wright and his colleagues have adapted the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule for the deaf and hard of hearing by creating signed-language equivalents for questions that make reference to spoken words or phrases. They have tested and validated the adapted version in deaf and hard-of-hearing children across 10 centers in the United Kingdom. Other investigators are evaluating tools such as Language Environment Analysis (LENA), which records and analyzes children's word production in natural settings, to distinguish speech patterns in autism from those in altered hearing.

Another approach is to focus on early detection of inner-ear problems that contribute to speech processing difficulties in children, including those with autism. Researchers have used an earplug-like device, outfitted with tiny microphones and speakers, to pick up inner-ear responses to a series of clicks and beeps; the test could potentially be administered at birth, much like the newborn hearing screen in the United States, researchers say.

And Roush, Mankowski and their colleagues have established a clinic at the Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities in Carrboro, North Carolina, to help identify autism and related conditions in deaf and hard-of-hearing children. Diagnoses at the clinic are a team effort and include opinions from an audiologist, psychologist, speech-language pathologist and occupational therapist. "There are many things we consider about behavioral differences that would be above and beyond what's seen in children with hearing loss alone," Mankowski says.

Such clinical expertise could spare families like Tyler's years of bouncing around from one specialist to another in search of answers. Learning that Tyler has autism has helped Tim and his wife come to terms with the boy's needs. Their son's first school focused on mainstreaming typical deaf children, a poor fit for a child who is neither hard of hearing nor typical. This year, Tyler plans to attend a private middle school for typical children with dyslexia, which Tyler also has. Looking back, Tim says, the family made decisions about Tyler on the assumption that he was a typical child with delayed speech and learning disabilities. If the family had known Tyler was autistic from the beginning, Tim says, "it might have made an enormous difference."

## Breaking barriers: ASL interpreter Nigel Howard to teach UBC classes

FROM: <https://globalnews.ca/news/7324637/nigel-howard-american-sign-language-ubc/>

One of the most recognizable faces in B.C.'s COVID-19 communications efforts is making history at the University of British Columbia.

Nigel Howard has been front and centre during the pandemic as an American Sign Language interpreter during the province's coronavirus briefings.

Howard, who is deaf, is also an adjunct professor in linguistics at UBC, and this fall will teach the university's first-ever ASL credit course, the introductory ASL 100.



"This is a seed, we're planting it and hopefully it will grow," Howard told Global News, Tuesday.

"People are recognizing deaf people are not disabled, they've got a language and culture, that they're just like us — they just use a different language."

A poster shows B.C. ASL sign language interpreter Nigel Howard reminding the public to keep two metres apart during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Howard has earned accolades for his expressive sign language interpretations, which make use of facial expressions and body language as much as his hands.

Those expressive elements are crucial to speaking in ASL, he explained, helping to communicate emphasis and intonation in a language that relies on the eyes rather than the ears.

"(Students will) have to learn to use their bodies, their facial expressions in a new way," he said.

"If they were taking a course in spoken English or spoken French they might be able to have their eyes onto their page, writing. But now they're going to have to be watching me. they can't be writing notes at the same time."

While Howard has been stopped and thanked on the street by people who recognize him from the briefings, he remains humble about his role.

The real credit goes to public health experts like provincial health officer Dr. Bonnie Henry, he said, though he's pleased that sign language and deaf people are gaining new prominence.

Howard expects the course to fill up quickly, and believes there will be significant demand if the university expands the program.

***WATCH: ASL interpreter Nigel Howard to teach UBC classes***

<https://globalnews.ca/video/rd/4709244c-f242-11ea-ba3d-0242ac110002/?jwsourc=c1>



FROM: <https://www.workbc.ca/Employment-Services/Assistive-Technology-Services.aspx>

## WorkBC Assistive Technology Services

Assistive Technology Services provides equipment and devices to help individuals thrive in the workplace.

### Supports available through Assistive Technology Services include:

- Assistive devices, equipment and technology
- Ergonomic supports (e.g. ergonomic furniture, lighting systems)
- Restorative supports (e.g. canes, crutches)
- Attendant services related to work (e.g. assistance with mobility)
- American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting and captioning services
- Communication and hearing devices related to work
- Workplace access and modification
- Vehicle modifications

### Items not funded through Assistive Technology Services:

- Medical treatments and therapies
- Items for daily living
- Employment services and case-management supports (e.g. job coaching, employment and skills training, wage subsidies, etc.)
- Supports and services that are not employment or volunteer related.

### Am I eligible for Assistive Technology Services?

Assistive Technology Services are available to individuals who have a work-related barrier due to a disability or a functional limitation. This may include barriers related to traveling to and from the workplace.

### To be eligible for Assistive Technology Services, you must:

- Be a resident of and legally eligible to work in BC and 16 years of age or older
- Need assistive equipment, devices or disability supports to start work or to avoid losing:
  - your current work or
  - self-employment or,
  - volunteer work that is part of a longer term goal of employment

For more information or to access Assistive Technology Services online, [click here.](https://apply.workbc.ca/Orientation/AtOrientation)  
(<https://apply.workbc.ca/Orientation/AtOrientation>)

OR Go to [Assistive Technology Services](https://workbc-ats.ca/) (<https://workbc-ats.ca/>)

# Tips for Being Deaf-Aware: Part 1

FROM: <https://www.ai-media.tv/tips-for-being-deaf-aware-part-1/>

Communication is an essential part of life, but Deaf and hard-of-hearing people are often cut off from many forms of communicating that hearing people rely on. This can be frustrating and isolating.



The odds are that, even if you are hearing, you know and regularly interact with someone who has a significant hearing loss. The World Health Organization estimates that about 466 million people around the world have significant hearing loss, and that by 2050, that figure will nearly double. That will mean that one in 10 people will have significant hearing loss in the next 30 years.

There are easy ways that each of us can be a little more Deaf aware. This ranges from knowing more about Deaf culture to supporting the equal access that many deaf and hard-of-hearing people fight for.

A first step is simply being attentive to the ways you can effectively communicate with someone who is deaf or hard-of-hearing. Here are a few easy ways to do this.

## 1. Understanding Deafness

Deafness is a spectrum. If someone says they are deaf, they are not necessarily 'profoundly deaf' (meaning they can't hear anything at all). They *might* not be able to hear anything at all, or they might be able to hear conversation fairly well, or any variation in between. Degrees of hearing loss vary dramatically from person to person. Some people may also wear hearing aids or cochlear implants.

**Communication styles:** Each deaf or hard-of-hearing person will also have different ways of communicating. They might include a sign language (of which there are many!), lip-reading, the use of an interpreter, a combination of all of these, or none of these. Some deaf or hard-of-hearing people might hear to a degree that they can listen to a conversation and respond directly.

Environmental factors might also come into play. It may be harder for a deaf or hard-of-hearing person to make out sounds and words in a noisy environment, so even if they can hear you in a quiet environment, they might need to use alternative communication methods in a noisier area.

**Deaf as an identity:** It's also important to understand deafness as an identity. 'Deaf' with a capital 'D' refers to a cultural identity, which many people take pride in, while 'deaf' with a lower-case 'd' simply refers to a degree of hearing loss in practical terms. Many Deaf people do not consider deafness to be a disability, but some do.

## 2. The Signs that Someone Can't Hear You

Often, you might not realize that someone is deaf or hard-of-hearing. Here are some signs that may help you notice. Someone may:

- Ask you to repeat phrases or words
- Seem confused while in conversation
- Appear to be ignoring you
- Pay close attention to your facial expressions
- Communicate with hand gestures that you don't understand
- Be wearing a hearing aid or cochlear implant

## 3. Getting Someone's Attention

If someone is deaf or hard-of-hearing, yelling "Hey you!" across a noisy room isn't going to work. Neither is whistling. Of course, it's also not likely to be a welcome greeting by anyone. If you suspect someone is deaf or hard-of-hearing, you can move into their field of vision to get their attention. Alternatively, a friendly wave can let them know you are interested in a chat. Whichever way you choose, make sure you have a warm smile and are actively seeking eye contact.

## 4. Body Position is Important

Body positioning is also critical. Face the person, and, if at all possible, be at the same eye level. For example, stand if they are standing; sit if they are sitting. And don't forget to make and maintain eye contact.

## 5. Speak in a Clear, UNExaggerated Way

Many deaf or hard-of-hearing people expend a lot of energy to communicate and follow conversations with hearing people. Lip-reading is one way a deaf or hard-of-hearing person may strive to keep up, but lip-reading is difficult. Even the best lip-readers on average understand only 30 per cent of what is being said. Add a mustache or accents, and lip reading becomes even harder.

Trying to exaggerate your words and drastically slow down the way you pronounce words does not help a deaf or hard-of-hearing person to understand you. It distorts the words and makes it much more difficult for someone to follow you.

### Do:

- Speak clearly, slowly and steadily. Don't mumble, shout or exaggerate.
- Be positioned with good lighting to allow the person to follow your lip movements.

- Make sure your mouth is uncovered.

## 6. Use Simple Body Language and Visual Cues

When speaking, a few simple gestures can help you get your point across. Of course, don't go overboard trying to mime every single word. This can come across as disrespectful, not to mention distracting.

## 7. Writing to Communicate

Also, don't be afraid to use pencil and paper, or a text app on your phone, to supplement your communication if necessary. A deaf person may prefer writing, and it's important to be flexible to each person's needs.

## Everyone is different

When in doubt of how best to communicate with someone who is deaf or hard-of-hearing, just ask the person for suggestions to improve communication! They want to communicate with you as much as you do and are working much harder.

# Tips for Being Deaf-Aware: Part 2

In our previous post on Tips for Being Deaf-Aware (Part 1), we covered seven tips for effectively communicating with someone who is deaf or hard-of-hearing. Here are four more tips that we hope to help you be a stronger, more aware communicator.

## 1. Don't Speak to the Interpreter

If a sign language interpreter is present, do not look and speak to them if you are communicating with the deaf or hard-of-hearing person.



Imagine if someone looked and spoke to someone else if they were addressing you! You would feel alienated and excluded. Remember, the interpreter is not the person you are communicating with.

The interpreter is an aid and serves as a representation of the deaf or hard-of-hearing person's speech, not the person themselves.

## 2. Learn a Few Simple Signs

While you don't need to be fluent in sign language, learning a few key phrases is helpful. This is especially helpful in customer service environments like being a server or working in retail or hospitality.



There are many resources to learn and practice the sign language that applies in your country. YouTube is a great resource for learning just a few helpful words and phrases. You can find short videos for American Sign Language (ASL), Australian Sign Language (Auslan), and British Sign Language (BSL) to name just a few.

The Ai-Media Facebook page also regularly shares content for those learning ASL and other sign languages!

### **3. Words to Use (and Not Use)**

All communities have words that are considered rude or even derogatory.

People who consider themselves culturally 'Deaf' (spelled with an uppercase 'D') often use sign language and identify as members of the signing Deaf community. And as we mentioned in our last article, the word 'deaf' (spelled with a lowercase 'd') describes the physical condition of not hearing. It also refers to people who are physically deaf but do not identify as members of the signing Deaf community.

You can check with the person on how they identify and how they like to refer to their hearing loss. Culturally Deaf people often prefer not to be described as 'hearing impaired'. It is perceived as clinical and negative. Hard-of-hearing people often do not like being identified as 'deaf'. When it's a group of people with a range of hearing loss, use more than one term. For example, "Deaf and hard-of-hearing people use captions."

Something else to avoid is the phrase 'Never mind', or getting fed up. It's dismissive. The deaf or hard of hearing person is trying to stay with you in the conversation and saying 'never mind' doesn't give them a chance to communicate with you – not to mention that it's disrespectful. Many deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals often don't rely on their voice as their primary form of communication, so hearing people might have some trouble understanding. Put judgement aside and pay close attention. Don't comment on their 'accent'.

### **4. Patience is a Virtue**

Communicating with a hearing person can be daunting for a deaf or hard-of-hearing person and has the potential to cause some anxiety. Repetition and backtracking might be needed. Indicate that you're patient and willing to learn. You may need to rephrase or find a different word. As long as you smile, don't yell, and maintain eye contact, you are establishing that you're there for an open and trusting line of communication.

The first, and most important, step in being deaf-aware is being open. With that attitude, you and the person you are communicating with will find the flow that works for you.

## Why sign language is vital for all deaf babies, regardless of cochlear implant plans

<https://theconversation.com/why-sign-language-is-vital-for-all-deaf-babies-regardless-of-cochlear-implant-plans-142956>



Learning how to say 'more.' JCU/Jamie Gird via Getty Images

When their newborn failed a hearing test, Quinn and Kai were distraught. Their pediatrician reassured them their baby was a candidate for a cochlear implant – an electronic device consisting of an external part worn behind the ear and an internal part surgically placed under the skin – that could partially restore hearing through electrical stimulation of the auditory nerve.

“We were told Casey would go to a mainstream school and learn to hear and talk just like any other kid,” Quinn told us. “The doctors said to

speaking to him as if he were hearing and not to learn sign language, because it would inhibit his spoken language development.” A few years later, Casey could speak some words but fell short of language milestones. Quinn and Kai’s story is one that is all too familiar to parents of deaf children.

As researchers of language and literacy in deaf education, we regularly see implanted deaf children like Casey arrive at school with limited language and reasoning skills. September is International Deaf Awareness Month. We want to debunk common misconceptions that can – and often do – harm deaf children.

### Cochlear implant ‘success’

Cochlear implants are not a proven substitute for natural hearing. After surgery, children must undergo ongoing, intensive therapy to train the brain to make meaning of the sound it hears. Implant users’ understanding of speech is highly variable and declines substantially when talking or other environmental noise is present. Research shows cochlear implant success is uneven. Although children implanted at younger ages have higher speech and language scores than those implanted at older ages, the majority still perform “below” to “well below” average. In a 2020 study of 136 children with



Cochlear implants are most successful for children who learn sign language at an early age. (Shutterstock)

cochlear implants in grades 3-6, teachers reported half had difficulty expressing “many to most” concepts in spoken English, and 13% did not speak English at all.

### **Sign language and speech development**

It is a misconception that learning sign language hinders spoken language development for implanted children. Research shows the opposite to be true. Deaf children of deaf parents, whose first language is sign language, end up having better spoken language skills once they are implanted than deaf children of hearing parents who did not learn sign language.

Research also shows a relationship between sign language and spoken English in school-aged children with cochlear implants: The children who scored highly in sign language were the same ones who scored highly in English. And the children with weak sign language skills also struggled with spoken English.

In fact, sign language is so good for the developing brain some hearing parents teach it to their hearing children to boost brain development and jump-start communication before speech.

### **The window of opportunity for language development**

The idea that sign language can be introduced later, if a cochlear implant is not successful, ignores the basic facts of language development.



In the first years of life, children absorb language like sponges, as long as social interactions are accessible. The longer a child waits for meaningful language input, the greater the risk of never fully acquiring language. The first five years are a critical period for acquisition.

Research shows that deaf children exposed to sign language later – after unsuccessfully developing spoken language – demonstrate

rapid word learning but stop short of attaining complex grammatical structures.

The long-term implications of language deprivation are quite serious. A wide range of adverse childhood experiences are known to be associated with adult disease and health problems. Communication exclusion and neglect experienced by deaf children create toxic stress that can trigger physiological and psychological responses.

Limited access to communication in childhood is linked to heart problems, lung disease, diabetes, hypertension, depression and anxiety disorders as well as chronic mental illness.

In severe cases, individuals may be institutionalized with language deprivation syndrome. They struggle with social and emotional skills, memory, problem solving and judgment, all of which can impact their ability to live independently.

### **Audism in the medical community**

Just as racism is at the root of structural inequalities towards Black, Indigenous and other people of color, audism is institutionalized discrimination against deaf people. The medical community is steeped in hearing-at-all-costs attitudes and beliefs that can lead to language deprivation in deaf children.

Doctors are trained to treat and remedy specific physical ailments. Unfortunately, their training is unlikely to include topics of early language acquisition and sign language. When a deaf baby is born, parents receive the bulk of their information and advice from the medical community – audiologists, ENTs and pediatricians. These doctors too often discourage sign language, suggesting it impedes speech development. As a result, deaf children risk growing up without a solid foundation in any language, which is dehumanizing and reduces their quality of life.

### **The way forward**

We believe the medical community must be educated about deaf children's need for sign language education.

Families can learn sign language along with their babies. It takes two years to acquire conversational skills and five to seven years to develop language fluency, which perfectly matches a child's language development timeline.

Free services are available to families, including home visits, sign language classes and deaf mentorship. Schools for the deaf are a great resource, as are civil rights organizations like the National Association of the Deaf. For deaf children and their families, taking part in the deaf community can deepen their understanding and appreciation of the deaf experience and increase their linguistic role models, which in turn provides a long-term educational advantage.

The catastrophe of language deprivation is entirely preventable with early sign language exposure. Lack of awareness is all that stands in the way.



## UPDATE FROM LILA & PIP



Lila & Pip has always talked about whether we should expand our age mandate beyond 0-4 and work with school age children. A wonderful opportunity came and I am THRILLED Lila & Pip has accepted a contract job where I (Erin) will be working with Surrey school district as a language acquisition support coordinator. Alayna is super excited about this opportunity for Lila & Pip and will be supporting behind the scenes.

I will be working along with teacher of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Lynda Dewit who is a CODA (child of deaf adult). We will be doing a pilot cohort D/HH kindergarten class at Mary Jane Shannon Elementary.

Behind me the director and principal of surrey school district is fully invested in improving language and education opportunities for surrey D/HH students.

I met most of the staff at MJS elementary and guess what?! They have been taking online ASL class through the summer break and is fully committed to making the school accessible for any Deaf and HH students.

This school has the best team waiting to welcome any students. They have made me feel very welcome here.

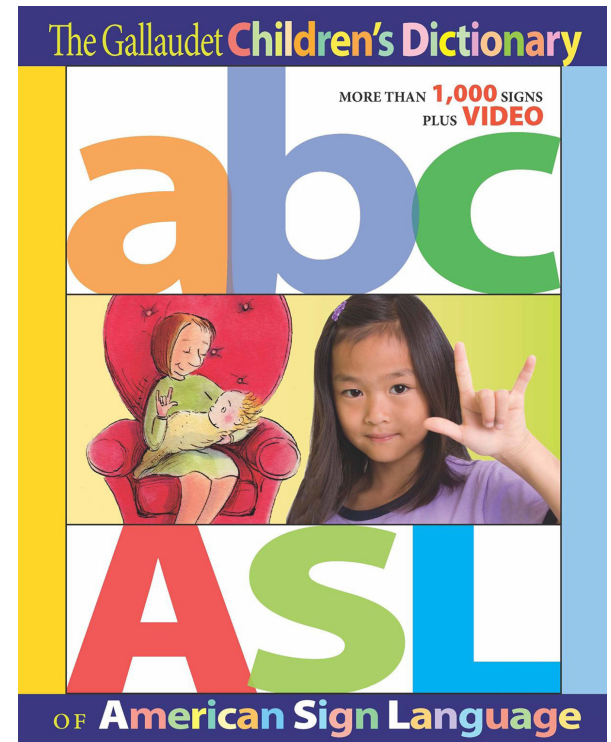
If you know any D/HH school age children - send them our way and we will work hard to ensure they have full access to education, peers, role models and community!



## GALLAUDET CHILDREN'S DICTIONARY

### Features

- More than 1,000 ASL sign drawings
- All signs paired with charming color illustrations
- Introduction explains how to sign ASL and fingerspell
- Complete index of English terms for each sign, including synonyms
- Sample sentences using specific words to match every sign's meaning
- Purchase of the hardcover dictionary provides access to the online video dictionary, which features children who are native ASL signers demonstrating all the signs from the book
- Available from Gallaudet University Press.
- [www.gcdasl.com](http://www.gcdasl.com)



***FNDC Editor's note: These courses are full, but you may want to contact Burnaby School district to inquire about future courses.***

## Introductory American Sign Language 11

**\*\*\*We are now accepting registrations for Intro ASL 11. The classes are currently full so new registrations will be put on a waitlist and then processed as space becomes available in the course.**

This one-to-one online course prepares students who are Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing with no or minimal ASL background to communicate in American Sign Language (ASL). The course includes ASL instruction, ASL evaluation, and Deaf cultural awareness components.

The Intro ASL course will be accessed online with embedded video. Each student will receive a textbook and DVD to use as a reference. The student will need access to a webcam for this online ASL course.

- **Communication:** email and video chats with ASL teacher
- **Assessment Method:** Some written assignments and majority of assessments will take place through video submissions of the student signing and through pre-booked video chats with the ASL teacher. Throughout the course, the student will need to arrange times for video chat assessments with the ASL teacher.
- **Instructional Hours:** Approximately 100 hours.
- **Level:** This introductory course prepares the student for entry into ASL 11.
- **Deposit:** Please note that there is a \$200 deposit for ASL texts/workbooks.
- Course Plan: [Intro ASL 11](#)

## American Sign Language 11

**\*\*\*We are now accepting registrations for ASL 11. The classes are currently full so new registrations will be put on a waitlist and then processed as space becomes available in the course.**

This one-to-one online course prepares students who are Deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing with ASL background to communicate in American Sign Language (ASL). The course includes ASL instruction, ASL evaluation, and Deaf cultural awareness components.

The ASL course will be accessed online with embedded video. Each student will receive a textbook to use as a reference. The student will need access to a webcam for this online ASL course.

Pre-requisite: Intro ASL 11 and an evaluation by the ASL teacher

- **Communication:** email and video chats with ASL teacher
- **Assessment Method:** Some written assignments and majority of assessments will take place through video submissions of the student signing and through pre-booked video chats with the ASL teacher. Throughout the course, the student will need to arrange times for video chat assessments with the ASL teacher.
- **Instructional Hours:** Approximately 100 hours.
- **Level:** ASL 11 meets the Grade 11 language requirement for University entrance. This course will allow the students to move more easily into established programs which will lead them to interpreter programs and positions.
- **Deposit:** Please note that there is a \$200 deposit for ASL texts/workbooks.
- Course Plan: [ASL 11](#)

*American Sign Language is specifically "a visual-gestural language that is indigenous to the Canadian/American Deaf Community". (Baker-Shenk & Cokey (1), p. 457). ASL is separate and distinct language in much the same sense as French or Chinese, and does not represent a visual form of the English language. ASL should not be confused with any of the varieties of manual English, which are commonly called Signed English, Signing Exact English (SEE), Cued Speech, Pidgen Sign Language or home made signs.*

# Fall 2020

*PFS offers a full range of programs and services: Family and Parent Support, Children and Youth Services and Language Development. We provide services in individualized or group settings. Our programs vary every program cycle; however, if any of the programs below do not work for you and your family, please contact us at [fs@gov.bc.ca](mailto:fs@gov.bc.ca) for specific service requests or general inquiries.*

***(For families with Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deafblind children aged 5 – 23)***

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***(Please let us know if you require a language interpreter)***

## **Provincial Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services INFORMATION SESSIONS**

**When:** Monday, October 5 at 6:30 pm [via ZOOM](#).

Join in to learn more about our services and how we can support families with deaf and hard of hearing children aged 5-23.

## **PARENT TO PARENT GROUP**

**When:** Tuesdays, September 22 to November 24 from 10:00 am – 11:00 am [via ZOOM](#).

Come and meet other parents and learn more about your child's access needs and available resources.

## **"LIFE-SKILLS AND SOCIAL"**

Group for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Youth ages 17-23

**When:** Mondays, October 5 to November 30, 2020 from 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm [via GoToMeeting](#).

A pre-survey will be sent to interested participants to decide the topics, but the basic idea is to teach you independence skills.

## **"CYBER-BULLYING AND HOW TO BE A GOOD FRIEND"**

for Deaf & Hard of Hearing Children ages 12-16.

**When:** Mondays, October 5 to November 9, 2020 from 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm [via GoToMeeting](#).

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# AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

## ON-LINE GROUPS

Registration  
Deadline:  
September  
14

The sessions will run from October 5 to November 27, 2020.  
(No sessions on Thanksgiving and Remembrance Day)

Register at [FS@gov.bc.ca](mailto:FS@gov.bc.ca)

### Technology required:

\*Personal computer, Laptop or iPad with camera capability (we must be able to see you).

\*[GoToMeeting](#) Platform will be used.

\*For children's on-line services, the parent should try to supervise the child to ensure on-line etiquette is used.

	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays
Introductory to ASL	10:00 am	5:00 pm	10:00 am	5:00 pm
Beginner 1	5:00 pm	1:00 pm	5:00 pm	1:00 pm
Beginner 2	1:00 pm	6:30 pm	1:00 pm	6:30 pm
Beginner 3	11:30 am	8:00 pm	11:30 am	8:00 pm
Intermediate 1	7:30 pm			
Intermediate 2			8:00 pm	
Advanced Conversational Practice		7:30 pm	10:00 am	

\*Families with deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind children aged 0-5 can register for some of the sessions if space is available.





## MINDFULNESS AND SELF-COMPASSION

HAVE YOU FELT ANY PAINS IN YOUR BODY?  
DID YOU KNOW THAT EMOTIONS CAN TELL YOU IF YOU'RE HURTING?

WANT TO LEARN MORE? JOIN US!  
LEARN HOW TO BE AWARE OF YOUR THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS,  
BEHAVIOURS AND TO PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION.  
TECHNIQUES WILL BE SHARED.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6  
3:30 PM TO 5 PM  
ONLINE – ZOOM  
PRESENTED BY KATHRYN JONES, MENTAL HEALTH CLINICIAN

WORKSHOP WILL BE IN ASL.  
VOICE INTERPRETING AND CART CAPTIONING CAN BE PROVIDED IF REQUESTED.  
REQUEST NEEDS TO BE MADE BEFORE OR BY WEDNESDAY, SEPT 30

To register, contact Kathryn:  
Text: 778 987 4172  
Email: [kathryn.jones@vch.ca](mailto:kathryn.jones@vch.ca)



## LET THEM LEAD: UNDERSTANDING & SUPPORTING LEARNERS WITH DEAF-BLINDNESS

Language First webinar  
Presented by Krista Lewis, M.Ed.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2020  
3-5PM EST



FIND OUT MORE OR REGISTER AT [LANGUAGE1ST.ORG/EVENTS](http://LANGUAGE1ST.ORG/EVENTS)  
EMAIL [KIMBERLY@LANGUAGE1ST.ORG](mailto:KIMBERLY@LANGUAGE1ST.ORG) WITH QUESTIONS

## AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE ON-LINE CLASSES

by Deaf Children's Society of BC



NEW CLASSES STARTING  
THE WEEK OF OCT. 6, 2020

DESIGNED FOR FRIENDS, FAMILY, COMMUNITY WORKERS, CHILD  
CARE PROVIDERS, TEAM COACHES OR ANYONE ELSE  
INTERESTED IN LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE

Free for DCS Families

Fee for Non-Clients: \$100 FOR 10 weeks

Maximum Participants per Class -10

All classes run using GoToMeeting Online

Participants should have access to a desktop computer, laptop or ipad.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR A FULL LIST  
OF CLASSES & REGISTER ONLINE!

[WWW.DEAFCHILDREN.BC.CA](http://WWW.DEAFCHILDREN.BC.CA)

[http://www.deafchildren.bc.ca/store/  
c4/DCS\\_Fall\\_2020\\_Classes.html](http://www.deafchildren.bc.ca/store/c4/DCS_Fall_2020_Classes.html)

Made with PosterMyWall.com

## DCS Preschool Is HIRING

### Full-Time Early Childhood Educator Lead Teacher



DCS hosts the only preschool in BC  
providing ASL as the language of  
instruction.

The ECE Lead Teacher will provide quality,  
inclusive preschool programming to deaf,  
hard of hearing and cochlear implanted  
children, and CODA children, by developing  
and implementing exceptional curriculum for  
the Deaf Children's Society Preschool.

Application Deadline October 10, 2020

### Qualifications

- \*Fluency in ASL
- \*ECE Certification in BC
- \*Excellent English Language Skills
- \*Experience working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing children

For more information:  
[www.deafchildren.bc.ca/careers](http://www.deafchildren.bc.ca/careers)

Submit resume and cover letter to  
[office@deafchildren.bc.ca](mailto:office@deafchildren.bc.ca)

Made with PosterMyWall.com



**Wear your costume and join us for an online**

**HALLOWE'EN PARTY**

**October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**10:00-11:15am**

**To RSVP:**  
<http://bit.ly/BCFHalloween>

**Families from any of the three early intervention agencies (BCF, CHSC, DCS) are welcome to attend.**

**Event will be conducted in spoken English and ASL**

**Songs and Stories**

**Science Experiment!**

BC Family Hearing Resource Society

35 years of making futures bright

BC Family Hearing Resource Society

BC Family Hearing Resource Society is pleased to present an online:

**EDUCATION FAIR**

It's never too early to start thinking about educational options for your child who is deaf or hard of hearing.

**Oct 17, 2020 • 1pm to 3pm**

Presentations and Q&A format hosted on Zoom

Come learn directly from professionals representing different educational supports and programs, from preschool to Kindergarten and beyond!

**Questions?**  
 Contact: [info@bcfamilyhearing.com](mailto:info@bcfamilyhearing.com)  
 or call 604-584-2827

**RSVP link:**  
 To register for this event:  
<http://bit.ly/BCFHEDUFAIR>

This event is open to all parents of deaf/hard-of-hearing children who receive services from BC Family Hearing Resource Centre (BCFHRC), Children's Hearing and Speech Centre of BC (CHSCBC), and Deaf Children's Society (DCS)

**- Breaking News -**

The Surrey School District is launching a brand new

**Enhanced Language Acquisition (ELA) program for d/hh kindergarteners!**

The program will offer an ASL, spoken English, and print rich learning environment, supported by a Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Educational Assistants, Interpreters, an SLP, and a D/HH Early Learning Specialist.

**Beginning this September!**

For more information, please contact Diana DiCesare  
 District Principal - Student Support  
[dicesare\\_d@surreyschools.ca](mailto:dicesare_d@surreyschools.ca)

**Fluent in ASL?**

I work for Sea to Sky Community Services and am looking to hire a someone who is fluent in American Sign Language to work for our Special Needs Resource Program. Our program operates in Squamish, Whistler and Pemberton but this position specifically is in Squamish. I see that you run some amazing camps for children. For information, contact: [caitlin.anderson@sscs.ca](mailto:caitlin.anderson@sscs.ca)

Thanks in advance,  
 Caitlin Anderson

**Do you need a tutor?**

Terry Gardiner has over 30 years of experience teaching at BCSD, and holds a current B.C. Teaching Certificate, and can teach B.C. Curriculum. Can tutor/teach grades 5 through 12 but prefer grades 5 through 10. Preferred instructional areas are: English (Reading, Writing), Science (Biology, Physical Geography, Earth, Chemistry), Social Studies (History), Math.

Terry Gardiner: [tgardiner77@gmail.com](mailto:tgardiner77@gmail.com)

**Support Deaf-Owned Businesses**

From: *Language First Fall bulletin, Issue 2*

By Marais, a Deafbusiness that is best known for its artistic ILY symbol. The owner and founder, Mara, explains that the ILY hand means more than just "I love you." It symbolizes Deaf culture, awareness, language, and history. Make sure to follow By Mara on Instagram as @bymarai and check out their website: [www.bymarai.com](http://www.bymarai.com)



# THE LOWER CASE "d" OR UPPER CASE "D"

By Joanne Cripps and Anita Small

It has always been Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf (CCSD)'s position to encourage and promote Deaf culture, and the rights and responsibilities of every Deaf citizen. In keeping with this position, a discussion of the use of lower and upper case "d/D" when referring to Deaf members of Canadian society is warranted.



Some people use small "d" (deaf) to refer to those who attend hearing schools and do not interact with Deaf people. Some view it as a medical label referring to audiological status of the individual. Others associate the small "d" with an individual who has no Deaf cultural identity. Others associate the small "d" with those who refuse to sign and hold an oral philosophy of Deaf education.

Some people use the upper case "D" (Deaf) to refer to those with a strong sense of identity, rooted in Deaf culture and American Sign Language or Langue des Signes Quebecoise, in Canada. Others associate big "D" with those who attend all-Deaf schools. Still there are others who use it as a label to establish the cultural status of an individual rather than their audiological status.

CCSD has decided not to make any of the above assumptions. Each child is innocent and for us to make distinctions between Deaf people based on audiograms or based on how a child is placed educationally which influences their cultural identity, runs counter to the notion of the rights of all Deaf citizens in Canada.

CCSD has adopted the convention of upper case "D" based on the rationale cited by Helen Pizzacalla and Joanne Cripps (1997) as follows:

It is common for authors to use Deaf with a capital "D" when discussing individuals who are members of the Deaf community and consider themselves to be culturally Deaf, and to use deaf with a lower case of "d" to describe an audiological state of being - (James Woodward 1972, Padden and Humphries 1980, Mahshie 1995, Carbin, 1996, Roots 1999). We have decided not to make this distinction. We use capital "D" when referring to all Deaf individuals. This is not to place a particular identity on particular individuals. Rather it is to indicate that ASL and Deaf culture are the birthright of every Deaf individual by virtue of their having been born Deaf or become Deaf in childhood, whether or not they have been exposed to it. This is in keeping with how authors refer to individuals from other cultural groups such as Black or Jewish individuals regardless of the strength of their identity. We do not make assumptions about each individual's identity for them by determining whether they should have a capital or not.

H. Pizzacalla & J. Cripps,  
Conflict Resolution Program for the Culturally Deaf, 1995  
Modified on February 7, 1997.

Sign language and Deaf culture are the birthright of each Deaf child and adult. Therefore when we use the Big "D", it includes all who are Deaf.

Note: The mandate of the Canadian Cultural Society of the Deaf (CCSD) is to promote Deaf culture, to preserve American Sign Language (ASL) and Langue des Signes Quebecoise (LSQ) and to advance their artistic forms in Canadian Society. In keeping with this, the CCSD board is comprised of Deaf individuals who are rooted in Deaf culture and American Sign Language or Langue des Signes Quebecoise. Their role is to protect and promote the rights and responsibilities of every Canadian Deaf citizen.

# Netflix Orders Two Documentaries About Deaf Community In America

*Will air on Netflix October 9, 2020*

*Producer Nyle DiMarco, a Gallaudet University alumnus, wanted to show the diversity of experience at the school.*

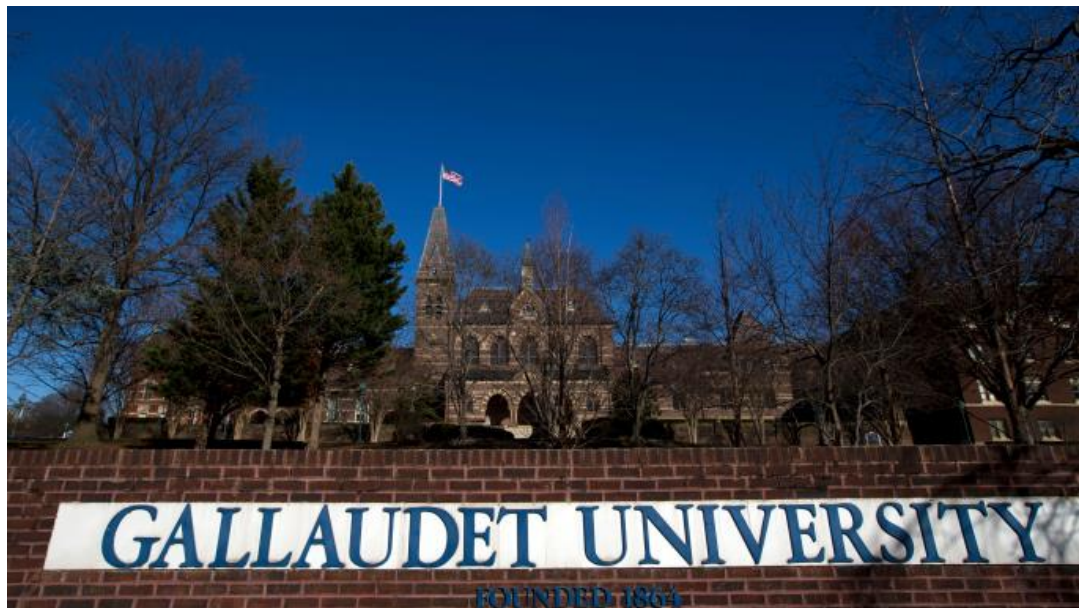
From: <https://deadline.com/2020/07/netflix-two-documentaries-about-deaf-community-america-1202994593/>

Netflix has ordered *Deaf U* and *Audible*, two documentaries centered around the deaf community in the U.S.

*Deaf U* is a coming-of-age documentary series following a tight-knit group of Deaf students at Gallaudet University, a renowned private college for the deaf and hard of hearing, in Washington, D.C. As the group of friends navigate the high, lows, and hookups of college life together, their stories offer an unprecedented, unfiltered, and often unexpected look inside the Deaf community. The doc, which will premiere on October 9, consists of eight episodes of around 20-minutes. It will be exec produced by Eric Evangelista, Shannon Evangelista and Nyle DiMarco

*Audible* is an immersive film, documenting the journey of Maryland School for the Deaf high school athlete Amaree McKenstry-Hall. Amaree and his closest friends face the pressures of senior year while grappling with the realities of venturing off into a hearing world.

They take out their frustrations on the football field as they battle to protect an unprecedented winning streak, while coming to terms with the tragic loss of a close friend. This is a story about kids who stand up to adversity and demand to be heard. They face conflict, but approach the future with hope – shouting to the world that they exist and they matter. The 36-minute film is directed by Matt Ogens, produced by Geoff McLean and exec produced by Ogens, Peter Berg, Matthew Goldberg, Brandon Carroll and Nyle DiMarco.







LANGUAGE FIRST WEBINAR

# Parents Who Learn Sign Language: What Can Professionals Learn From Them?

Presented by Dr. Nate Dutra

Sunday, October 25th, 2020

10am-12pm PST/1-3pm EST

Find out more or register at

[language1st.org/events](https://language1st.org/events)

Questions? Email [kimberly@language1st.org](mailto:kimberly@language1st.org)

# Announcing new CAV Connect Program

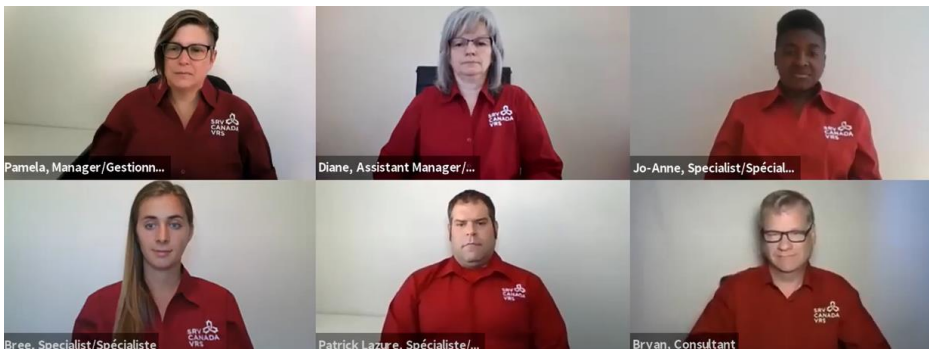
Canada Administrator of VRS (CAV) is pleased to launch the new CAV Connect program!

Community connection has always been an important part of CAV's mission, and it is particularly challenging during the COVID-19 outbreak when our communities can no longer gather for in-person social events, sporting activities, meetings, or conferences.

However, one positive outcome is we are all becoming more comfortable connecting with each other via video. The program is called **"CAV Connect"**.

If you look closely, you see the logo is inspired by CAV's commitment to both ASL and LSQ communities. In fact, it is a bilingual logo that shows how VRS is signed in ASL and LSQ!

We are pleasure to announce that we have a new Outreach team!



Pamela Witcher, Manager (Gatineau, QC); Diane Underschultz, Community Relations, Assistant Manager (Edmonton AB); Jo-Anne Bryan (Ottawa, ON), Bree Sproule (Kelowna, BC) and Patrick Lazure (Montreal, QC), Community Outreach Specialists; and Bryan Johnson (St. John's, NL), Outreach Technical Support Consultant.

CAV's Outreach Team will be hosting various webinars, webcasts, and special topic sessions such as:

- How-To step by step
- How to use Canada VRS
- How does 9-1-1 works
- New App for PC and Mac
- And many more!

Please follow the calendar on our website to learn more about the CAV Connect Program, event topics, dates, and how to register.

There are many ways to connect with Canada VRS Join us!





# Zoom catches up with new accessibility features for sign language interpretation

September 21, 2020

From: <https://mashable.com/article/zoom-video-accessibility-features/>



Keep the spotlight on an interpreter or certain speaker.

For Zoom users who are part of the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community, some long-awaited features are here.

On Wednesday, Zoom added three major accessibility options, each mainly focused on making it easier for sign language interpreters to stay visible on the screen.

Jen Hill, a Zoom marketing manager, demonstrated on a Zoom call how users can now pin and spotlight multiple video screens at a time, to keep someone who is signing alongside the speaker or on the main screen and always in view. In Zoom's grid view, users can rearrange video windows to keep the interpreter where they want to see them. These changes are intended so that everyone is "able to live and work in a digital platform," especially during these pandemic days.

Following standards set through the A11Y digital accessibility group, which promotes inclusion for people with disabilities on tech tools and services, Zoom added spotlighting and pinning for multiple screens during video calls. Previously, you could only pin one video screen while on a Zoom call. For meetings (those are usually in speaker mode, which keeps whomever is speaking highlighted), users can keep more than one speaker's video centered, so there can be several videos pinned to the main screen. Only you as the user would see the multiple videos, so you can choose to keep an interpreter video pinned next to the main speaker, while other call participants might choose to just have the speaker centered on their screens.

Zoom hosts can give multi-pinning access to up to nine different people on a call. Hill explained that it's a resource-heavy ability intended for people who need it to see what someone is saying while on a Zoom call.

Multi-spotlight is pretty much the same thing as pinning, except the host can decide to keep up to nine videos in place for everyone to see, no matter who is speaking during the video meeting. This can help keep the sign language interpreter's video up alongside the speakers. The photo at the top of the page shows what a screen with four different videos spotlighted looks like.

Then, there's a feature in gallery view that all users — it's not limited to only nine per a call — will be able to use starting Wednesday: You can rearrange the placement of videos. You could move the interpreter's video box closer to the content on the screen, or order different screens as you like. This is supposed to help users keep a certain speaker or interpreter in a certain position on the screen, like closer to a presentation with graphs and charts.

Hill summed up the additions to Zoom as ways you "can maximize control for your own particular needs."

Looking at other video conferencing services, there are a mix of accessibility tools available. Cisco's WebEx is by far the most comprehensive, with all of Zoom's new features already baked into its product. Skype and Google Meet mostly provide transcription and real-time closed captioning as ways to allow users who are deaf use the services. Google Meet users have asked for something like Zoom's new pinning option as recently as this month.



Rearrange window placement for what works best.



Transcribing comes with many options.

Apple's FaceTime just got an accessibility upgrade with the release of iOS 14 last week. In group calls, FaceTime now auto-detects if someone is using American Sign Language, or ASL, and keeps that video front and center.

Zoom already offered keyboard shortcuts, screen readers, and closed captioning. As Zoom's first chief diversity officer Damien Hooper-Campbell said in a Zoom — naturally — call, "It's a continuous tinkering." He and the team are "constantly learning" about how to best launch Zoom accessibility features and updates.

# New education 'hubs' for Deaf children needed to replace social spaces lost when specialist schools close

September 24, 2020

From: <https://phys.org/news/2020-09-hubs-deaf-children-social-spaces.html>

New dedicated hubs for Deaf children are needed around the country to provide new social spaces, education and support, an expert has said.

Special schools for Deaf children have had an important role in the Deaf community, acting as places people can meet and learn BSL together. But the move to inclusive education and new technology such as cochlear implants means most children with hearing loss are now educated in mainstream schools.

Deaf education should be remodeled to replace the role previously provided by specialist schools which have closed, Dr. Hannah Anglin-Jaffe argues in a study in the British Education Research Journal.

Dr. Anglin-Jaffe proposes Deaf education and support could be run in the same way as existing community provision in schools and other social spaces such as libraries or community centers. These hubs could act as a new iteration of the special school for the Deaf and host Deaf clubs, specialist provision, pastoral support and social activity.



The hubs could provide expertise on visual learning methods, sign language tuition for children and their families and could also facilitate a meeting place for Deaf people of all ages. The hubs would work in partnership with mainstream schools and peripatetic Teachers of the Deaf to enable access to a broad mainstream curriculum.

Dr. Anglin-Jaffe said: "There is a need for Deaf children to access Deaf culture and sign language, whilst maintaining the positive achievements of inclusive practice such as raised expectations, family and community belonging and high academic achievement.

"Statistics suggest there are now less specialist provision for Deaf children in mainstream schools. We need to find new social spaces which meets the needs of Deaf children and adults."

Many special schools have closed and those that survive are faced with the threat of closure. They also support children with complex and additional needs. Whenever a school is threatened with closure grass roots activism from the Deaf community is mobilized, showing they inspire strong feelings of loyalty from parents, pupils, staff and the Deaf community.

The key features of the new Deaf education hubs proposed by Dr. Anglin-Jaffe would be the ability for Deaf children to meet with their peers and use sign language. This would safeguard the existence of culturally significant places and social spaces for the Deaf community.

Hubs could be set up in areas where there are Deaf children who could benefit from access to BSL. They could be coordinated by local authorities and social enterprises.

Dr. Anglin-Jaffe said: "New hubs within communities could provide linguistic support, social space and access to a peer group. Young Deaf children would spend part of their time learning and socializing there, and the majority in mainstream schools local to their families.

"From this hub 'ripples' could expand allowing Deaf children to engage as bilingual and bicultural learners moving between different languages and developing positive identities. This will challenge the perception of a hostile, inaccessible 'hearing world'. Empowering young Deaf children to see the whole world as theirs to inhabit would be a profound but welcome change at the heart of Deaf education."

Explore further

Education system failing deaf children, research shows

More information: Hannah Anglin-Jaffe, Isolation and aspiration: Deaf adults reflect on the educational legacy of special schooling, British Educational Research Journal (2020). DOI: 10.1002/berj.3658

Save the Date:

2020 Annual CAEDHH-BC Conference  
October 23, 2020

**COLLABORATIVE PRACTICES**

Location: Conference held online.  
Meeting links will be emailed closer to the conference date.

Time: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm  
CAEDHH-BC AGM begins at 8am

Register on our website:  
[www.caedhhbc.com/conference](http://www.caedhhbc.com/conference)

Keynote Presentation

**Collaborative Practices:  
The Key to Successful  
Inclusion**

**Michelle Schmidt,**  
Ph.D., Director of  
Instruction & Student  
Support in Surrey  
School District

**Afternoon Sessions**

**English as an Additional Language (EAL)  
strategies and resources in bimodal bilin-  
gual education**

**Dr. Joanne Weber,** TDHH at Winston Knoll Collegiate, author of *The Pear Orchard* and *The Deaf House*, and artistic director of Deaf Crows Collective

**The impact of fatigue on students who are  
deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) in educa-  
tional settings**

**Dr. Natalia Rohatyn-Martin,** Assistant Professor in Human Service and Early Learning, MacEwan University

**Building your toolbox: Social inclusion  
strategies and practices for d/HH stu-  
dents K-12**

**Dr. Denyse Hay-ward,** Associate Professor in Special Education, University of Alberta

**Dr. Nancy Norman,** Professor in the Faculty of Education at Vancouver Island University, Previous TDHH in Richmond School District

visit: [www.caedhhbc.com/conference](http://www.caedhhbc.com/conference) for more details

## Citizens With Disabilities

A man with a beard and mustache, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie, stands in front of a building. Above him is a green awning with the text "GARY MALKOWSKI, MPP" in white. To his left, a sign on the building reads "GARY MALKOWSKI YORK ELGIN COMMUNITY CENTRE". The building has a white door and a ramp to the right.





# FAMILY NETWORK FOR DEAF CHILDREN & deaf youth today

OUR SUMMER PROGRAM,

September 2020

Dear FNDC Newsletter readers, members, DYT camper families and newsletter subscribers:

## Re: MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL DATES

All FNDC membership expired on June 30, 2020. We decided to change our membership dates to coincide with our Summer DYT Program. It's that time of year for FNDC memberships (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021).

***Our Board of Directors feel that families benefit greatly from our low cost Deaf Youth Today summer programs and all the information and articles we keep you up to date on. For this reason, becoming a member of FNDC shows your belief in our organization, is valued and vital.***

As a non-profit society, we are required to have formal memberships. Membership lets us know that you believe in what we are doing for deaf and hard of hearing children, youth and their families in British Columbia!

FNDC has been the catalyst to many of the changes and services that families currently receive and benefit from. We continue to "inform and educate" by writing letters, consulting and information sharing to ensure that deaf/hard of hearing children and their families have access to sign language classes, counselling, family support, better TV/movie theatre captioning & government videos, Video Relay Services, improved literacy, the right to qualified interpreters, post secondary opportunities. The list is endless (and the work ongoing) when it comes to access and inclusion for our deaf and hard of hearing children!

***Your membership says you believe in what we are doing and is an indicator that you support us!*** FNDC's Summer Program: Deaf Youth Today (DYT) provides social/recreational programs for deaf children, leadership opportunities for deaf youth and is the leading employer of deaf students during the summer months.

We keep our costs to a minimum by working from home offices, sharing a FNDC cellphone and applying for grants to employ deaf students as DYT summer staff. We do this because we believe that parents make huge financial sacrifices (ie gas costs, significant travel time, time off work) driving your children daily to attend our DYT Summer Program. Your membership fees and donations help us with the costs incurred in website maintenance, workshop planning, newsletter production and our DYT Summer Program.

We are extremely grateful for donations. If you wish to receive our newsletter and ongoing email updates please make sure that you add [fndc@fndc.ca](mailto:fndc@fndc.ca) to your "safe sender's list" and email address book.

To pay online: [www.fndc.ca/membership](http://www.fndc.ca/membership)

To download the form and mail: go to [www.fndc.ca](http://www.fndc.ca), click "MEMBER" and download the form.

Thank you for your continued support!

*Cecelia*

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## FNDC FAMILY NETWORK FOR DEAF CHILDREN

PO Box 50075, South Slope RPO  
Burnaby, BC V5J 5G3

T: 604.684.1860 [voice/text message line]

Email: [fndc@fndc.ca](mailto:fndc@fndc.ca) Website: [www.fndc.ca](http://www.fndc.ca)

# FNDC MEMBERSHIP FORM

## July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

☐ \$10.00 includes newsletters & updates by Email **ONLY**

☐ \$35.00 includes newsletters by **MAIL** & updates by Email

### WHICH TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP?

You may use this form or pay for your membership online at: [www.fndc.ca/membership](http://www.fndc.ca/membership)

☐ Voting Member: Parent/guardian of deaf/hh child

☐ Non-Voting Member: Individual or organization

Note: voting members are parents/legal guardians of a deaf/hh child. One vote per family.

Birth year of your deaf/hh child: \_\_\_\_\_. *If you are unable to pay at this time, please just let us know!*

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY/PROVINCE

POSTAL CODE

EMAIL

TEL/CELL#

Check if text only ☐

**Note: Please add [fndc@fndc.ca](mailto:fndc@fndc.ca) to your "safe sender's list" You will receive our email information via MAILCHIMP. Please add Mailchimp to your safe sender's list too!**

### DONATIONS

You may donate using this form and mail to FNDC or you may also donate directly at [www.fndc.ca/donation](http://www.fndc.ca/donation)

I would like to make a charitable donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (income tax receipts will be issued for donations over \$10.00). Thank you for your continued support. (Charitable Registration No. 88622 5655 RR 0001)

### PAYMENT METHOD

You may pay your membership using this form and mail to FNDC or you may also renew your membership online at [www.fndc.ca](http://www.fndc.ca)

☐ Mastercard



☐ Visa



☐ PayPal



☐ Cheque \*

CHARGE CARD #

EXPIRY [MM]

[YYYY]

SIGNATURE

TOTAL AUTHORIZED PAYMENT

\* Please make your cheque payable to **FNDC Family Network for Deaf Children**

**FNDC Family Network for Deaf Children**

PO Box 50075, South Slope RPO Burnaby, BC V5J 5G3

Phone: 604 684-1860 voice/text message

Email: [fndc@fndc.ca](mailto:fndc@fndc.ca) Website: [www.fndc.ca](http://www.fndc.ca)





## What is FNDC all about?

Family Network for Deaf Children (FNDC) is a parent run, non-profit, charitable organization supporting families with deaf and hard of hearing children that use sign language or are interested in learning sign language.

Even though technology and methodology have changed over the years, we seek the wisdom of parents, professionals and Deaf/HH adults so that common themes of “access, equity and a sense of belonging” continue to be highlighted in areas such as: social/recreation, leadership, education, employment, general services and community involvement.



## What is Deaf Youth Today?

Deaf Youth Today (DYT), is FNDC's summer social/recreational program and is committed to providing recreational experience and leadership opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing youth in British Columbia that use sign language for all or part of their communication or who are interested in learning sign language.

## FNDC Board of Directors

Hester Hussey .....	Mentor, Advisor
Colleen Peterson .....	Board President   <a href="mailto:colleen@fndc.ca">colleen@fndc.ca</a>
Nicki Horton .....	Director
Karen Jackson .....	Director
Charlie Coyle .....	Director
Joy Santos .....	Director
Gwen Wong .....	Director
Laura Batista .....	Director
Leigh Chan .....	Director
Dan Braun .....	Director
Bobbi Taylor .....	Director
Pauline Anderson .....	Director

**The Board of Directors are parents of deaf children.**

## FNDC Staff

Cecelia Klassen .....	Executive Director   <a href="mailto:cecelia@fndc.ca">cecelia@fndc.ca</a>
Bella Poato .....	Executive Assistant   <a href="mailto:accounting@fndc.ca">accounting@fndc.ca</a>
Scott Jeffery .....	Info Tech Manager FNDC/DYT   <a href="mailto:scott@fndc.ca">scott@fndc.ca</a>
Jason Berube .....	Newsletter Tech & IT Support   <a href="mailto:webmaster@fndc.ca">webmaster@fndc.ca</a>
FNDC .....	General Inquiry   <a href="mailto:fndc@fndc.ca">fndc@fndc.ca</a>

## DYT Staff

DYT (General Inquiries) .....	<a href="mailto:dyt@fndc.ca">dyt@fndc.ca</a>
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## Membership (Paid)

Membership is open to those who support the goals of our Organization.

- \* Our membership is open to individuals, schools, and organizations. Parents/guardians of deaf and hard of hearing children are eligible to vote.

## Join Our E-Mail List (for free)

**Join our email list (for free) and receive:**

- \* Our newsletter (which is published four times a year)
- \* Email Updates regarding upcoming workshops and courses, children & youth programs as well as community updates

## Contact Us

**Contact us below and be added to our email list or to request a membership form:**

**Family Network for Deaf Children**

P.O. Box 50075 South Slope RPO

Burnaby, BC V5J 5G3

604-684-1860 (voice/text message)

[www.fndc.ca](http://www.fndc.ca) (website) [fndc@fndc.ca](mailto:fndc@fndc.ca) (e-mail)