

Be Prepared!



Diversity Briefing: Deaf Awareness

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Purpose

To provide Troop 71 Scouts and Scouters (and other interested persons) information about the Deaf/deaf/Hard of Hearing community. Of special interest are the programs tailored to this particular segment of the general population.



- **Basic Information**
- **Deaf Culture**
- **Terminology**
- **Communicating via sign language**
- **American Sign Language**
- **Other modes of communication with deaf persons**
- **Tips for communicating with the deaf**
- **Services for the deaf**

Basic Information

- **Two to four of every 1000 persons in the USA are “functionally deaf”**
 - That’s 625,700 to 1,251,500 persons
 - Hard to get exact numbers because of varying definitions for “deafness”
 - **Some are born without hearing**
 - **Some lose their hearing after birth**
 - Because of trauma or accident
 - Because of illness



Deaf Culture

- **The Deaf community has its own culture**
 - **They have their own beliefs, speech, way of doing things, methods for dealing with life**

Culture:

- the total pattern of human behavior and its products embodied in thought, speech, and actions;
- the body of customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits constituting the distinct complex tradition of a social group

- **Behaviors**

- **Bluntness.**

- Deaf people are very direct. They don't sugar-coat things. They use the most direct language to be absolutely clear about their thoughts. They deal with the facts.

- **Graphics as used in ASL**

- Because ASL is a visual language, Deaf persons are able to convey details, such as positional data, much easier than spoken language

- **Pointing**

- In hearing world, pointing is rude. Not in the Deaf community. Pointing is not only acceptable, but necessary.

- **Attention**

- **Deaf people must pay closer attention to those communicating with them; they cannot look away**

- **Social opportunities**

- **Deaf people typically don't socialize with hearing people mainly because of the communication barrier**

- Deaf persons have their own events, such as Deaf cruise, Deaf bowling league, Deaf Santa, etc.
- Many Deaf persons avoid hearing events, even family get-togethers

Deaf Culture

- **Dedicated support services**
 - **There are organizations that cater primarily to the Deaf community**
 - **They offer services or act as liaison to other service organizations that serve the hearing community**



- **Devices**

- **Deaf people use more devices than hearing people to interact with the world**

- Teletype machines, video phones, light flashers (in place of doorbells), vibrating alarm clocks, etc.

Deaf persons were texting before texting was cool!

Texting also helped level the playing field for deaf in their workplace



Deaf Culture

- **Those in the Deaf/deaf culture may have offspring who are not part of that culture**
 - **Deaf parent(s) may have biological children who are hearing (called Kids of Deaf Adults or KODA)**

also known as CODA

CHILDREN OF DEAF ADULTS INC.

Connecting codas all over the world.

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Terminology

- **Deaf**
- **deaf**
- **Hard of Hearing**
- **Late Deafened**

Terminology

- **Deaf / deaf / Hard of Hearing (HoH) persons are NOT mute**
 - **To be mute means to not have the ability to make sound(s)**
 - **The Deaf/deaf/HoH are indeed able to make sounds**
- **Refer to them as Deaf, deaf, or HoH**
 - **The term “hearing-impaired” is not liked by the community**
 - **Don’t call them “deaf-mute”**

What is wrong with

“HEARING-IMPAIRED?”

Hearing-Impaired

- **A term much preferred by hearing people**
 - **Largely viewed as politically correct**
 - **Hearing persons believe it is far better to soften harsh reality by using the word "impaired" along with "visual", "hearing", etc.**

(<http://www.nad.org/infocenter/infotogo/dcc/terms.html>)

Hearing-Impaired

- **The term “Hearing-impaired”**
 - **Well-meaning reference**
 - **Some deaf and hard of hearing people don’t mind the term**
 - **BUT those heavily involved in Deaf culture prefer to be called Deaf** (uppercase ‘D’)

(<http://www.nad.org/infocenter/infotogo/dcc/terms.html>)

Terminology

- **Refer to individuals or groups as**

Deaf

deaf

Hard of Hearing (HoH)

- **What's the difference?**

Deaf (uppercase "D")

- **Cultural Perspective**
- **Different**
- **Not broken**
 - **Not considered as disabled or handicapped**
- **Just can't hear**
- **Use Sign Language**
- **Capable**

Deaf (uppercase "D")

- **Cultural Perspective**

- Deaf community perceives itself as a linguistic minority, like Hispanics, not as a group of people with a disability or handicap

- **Different**

- **Deaf people believe they are able to do anything that hearing people do, except hear**

- Deaf doctors, lawyers, painters, etc.
- Consider: English-speaking people can do anything German-speaking people can do, except speak German

Deaf (uppercase "D")

- **Deaf persons are not broken**
 - **"Hearing-impaired" implies something is broken and needs to be fixed**
 - Especially if born deaf or lost hearing at very young age – never had hearing
 - Those who put emphasis on "lost hearing" are the hearing people, not the Deaf
 - **Deaf persons don't believe themselves to be broken, handicapped, or impaired**

Deaf (uppercase "D")

- **Deaf people use Deaf community as primary support system**
 - If they need help, they typically will not go to the sources/agencies that hearing people may use, instead, they will seek assistance from other Deaf people, even if that Deaf person is not the best source for actual help
 - Deaf friends are highly regarded by Deaf persons, sometimes more than hearing relatives

Deaf (uppercase "D")

- **Use Sign Language**

- Deaf people use ASL as primary mode of communication
- ASL is their natural language

- **Capable**

- Deaf people focus on what they can do, not on what they're unable to do because they cannot hear

- **The term "Capital D" Deaf may be applied only to those who meet all these characteristics**

deaf (lowercase "d")

- **May use sign language**
- **Usually employ a different mode of communication other than sign language**
 - **For example, speech or lip-reading**
- **Usually interact with hearing people**
- **Sometimes interact with deaf people**
- **This term can be used for any deaf person or person with hearing loss**

Hard of Hearing (HoH)

- **Each HoH individual has different degrees of hearing**
 - **Cannot assume all HoH persons have similar hearing abilities**
- **May use sign language**
- **May interact with both deaf and hearing people**
- **May seek assistive technologies**
 - **Hearing aids or cochlear implant depending on level of hearing**

Late Deafened

- **Become deaf at later age**
- **May not know sign language**
- **Becoming deaf at later age has different impact on emotions (Trauma) compared to being born deaf or becoming deaf at early age**
- **May seek medical help**

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Communication Methods

SIGN LANGUAGE

Sign Language

- **Sign Language is typically how one communicates with a person who cannot hear**
 - deaf person to another deaf person
 - hearing person to a deaf person
- **Other methods include pen-and-paper or electronic means (more on this subject later)**

Sign Language

- **Aspects common to both sign and spoken language**
 - **Each country has its own sign language**
 - For example, American, British, and German Sign Language
 - **Each sign language is different**
 - Sign language is iconic and based on culture

*But sign languages are mostly gestures.
So, German and American can communicate with
each other a lot better if they use their own sign
languages than verbally!*

Sign Language

– **Language has regional variations**

- Hearing person may call Coca Cola a “soda” or “pop” or “soft drink”
- For the same object/thought/concept, Deaf person in New York may use different sign than a person in Atlanta
 - There are at least seven different signs for “birthday” used in different parts of the USA

• **Let’s take a closer look at American Sign Language**

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AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (ASL)

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- **ASL is a visual, gestural language with its own rules of syntax and grammar not bound by the rules of English or any other verbal language**
 - **No such thing as uppercase or lowercase**
 - **Uses non-manual signals, such as facial expression, visual gaze, and shoulder shifting, to convey tone or inflection**
 - Raised eyebrows imply a Yes-or-No question
 - Leaning closer places more emphasis on message, just like yelling

-
- **Originated in France; adapted/enriched for use in USA**
 - **3rd most used language in USA**
 - **After spoken English and spoken Spanish**
 - **Has its own language structure and rules**
 - **Not word-for-word transliteration of English**
 - **No sign for some words such as “the” or “is”**

- **Not a written language**
 - **English is both a spoken and written language**
 - **People who use ASL to communicate (“talk”) write in English, they don’t draw the ASL signs**

- **3 to 5 years of classes, socialization, and work experience to truly master ASL**

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Other Modes of **COMMUNICATION**

Other modes of Communication

- **Signing Exact English (SEE)**
- **Cued Speech**
- **Lip-reading and Speech**
- **Paper and pencil**
- **Gesturing**
- **Rochester Method (fingerspelling)**
- **E-mail, texting, video relay services**

Signing Exact English

- **Signing Exact English (SEE) looks like ASL, but is not ASL**
- **As name implies, SEE uses English speaking/writing rules for grammar, sentence structure, etc.**
 - **Every word in the English sentence has a corresponding sign**

Cued Speech

- **Like SEE, cued speech is based on spoken English**
- **Is not a sign language, but a modified form of lipreading**
 - **Includes visual cues about phonemes (sounds) that cannot be discerned just by reading lips**
 - For example, the words "me" and "be" are accompanied by different gestures near the mouth that signal the "m" and "b" sounds

- **How effective is lip-reading?**
- **Only about 25 percent of what is spoken can be understood by lip-reading**
 - **Easy to get the wrong message**
 - **The deaf person**
 - Catches only every fourth word or
 - Receives the wrong word
- **See examples on next slide**

Lip-Reading and Speech

- **Salesperson says:**
“I see you’re looking at these handbags. We have a special deal today! The price is so low they’re almost free. You could almost take them all.”

- **Lip-reading person gets:**
“blah blah blah **handbags** blah blah blah **special deal** blah blah blah **free** blah blah blah **take them all.**”

Lip-Reading and Speech

A 92 year-old man went to the doctor to get a physical. A few days later the doctor saw the man walking down the street with a gorgeous young lady on his arm.

Doctor says, “You're really doing great, aren't you?”

The man replied, “Just doing what you said ‘You get a hot mamma and be cheerful.’”

The Doctor said, “I didn't say that. I said you got a heart murmur. Be careful.”

Paper and Pencil

- **Used when one party doesn't know sign language or understand signs of other person**
- **Can be problematic**
 - **Use of pencil and paper is slow**
 - **Many Deaf persons are not fluent in English because English is not their first language**
 - ASL is their first language

Rochester Method

- **Everything is fingerspelled**
 - **No gestures, no facial expressions, etc.**
 - **Based on English language rules (grammar, spelling, etc.)**

- **How would you like to give a speech in which you spelled every word?**

Gesturing

- **When all other forms of communication fails, people, including deaf, will resort to gesturing**
- **Many gestures are almost universally understood**
 - **In fact, ASL is 85% gestures**



Email, Texting, Video Relay

- **Deaf/deaf persons take advantage of technology**
- **Smart phones facilitate use of e-mail, texting, even video (e.g., Facetime)**



Email, Texting, Video Relay

- **Computers, video conferencing equipment, and Internet allow long-distance ASL and video relay**
 - **In video relay, an interpreter “signs” with the deaf person and “voices” with the hearing person**
 - **Persons above may be anywhere in the USA or even the world**
 - Interpreter in Ohio helping Chicago deaf person order pizza from neighborhood Domino’s Pizza
 - Interpreter in Florida helping a Los Angeles mom call her deaf son in Puerto Rico

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Communicating with the **DEAF**

Tips on communicating with deaf persons

- **Be calm and find out what method of communication is appropriate**
 - **ASL**
 - **Lip-reading**
 - **Paper and pencil**

- **Don't raise your voice**
 - **Unless person is Hard-of-Hearing**

Tips on communicating with deaf persons

- **Be aware of background light, bright colors, mustache/beard, objects around or in the mouth**
- **Be flexible and creative with communication**
 - **Don't be afraid to use your facial expression and body movement**
- **Be simple and to the point**
- **Be patient**

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Obtaining

SOCIAL SERVICES

People Problems

- **The Deaf/deaf/HoH community has the same problems as hearing people**
 - Sometimes to a greater degree than the hearing population
- **For example, addiction problems are the same as with hearing people**
 - Alcohol
 - Tobacco
 - Drug



DEAF



SERVICES

Getting Help

- **Many agencies are not equipped or staffed to deal with deaf and HoH persons**
 - **Language is biggest barrier (don't know ASL)**
 - **Unfamiliar with deaf and hard of hearing**
- **True, these agencies may use sign language interpreters**
 - **But interpreters, especially those without adequate training, may miss the finer points associated with treatment services**

Getting Help

- **What's needed are organizations that**
 - **Understand the Deaf/deaf/HoH culture**
 - **Employ the right staff**
 - **Have the technology needed (e.g., video phones, etc.)**
 - **Are trusted by Deaf/deaf/HoH people**

Getting Help

- **DODA, a program of Consumer Advocacy Model (CAM), provides or finds treatment and intervention services for those in the deaf and hard of hearing community**
- **DODA Staff are**
 - **Fluent in ASL**
 - **Trained and credentialed by national organizations**
 - **Knowledgeable of outside treatment services, such as Alcoholics Anonymous**

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For More

INFORMATION

Additional Resources

National

- **National Association of the Deaf**
- **Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf**
- **Gallaudet University**

Local

- **Dayton Association of the Deaf**
- **Deaf Community Resource Center**

SPECIAL THANKS

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