

FACTS ABOUT DEAFNESS

>10 COMMON  
MYTHS ABOUT  
DEAF AND  
HARD OF  
HEARING  
(DHH)  
CHILDREN

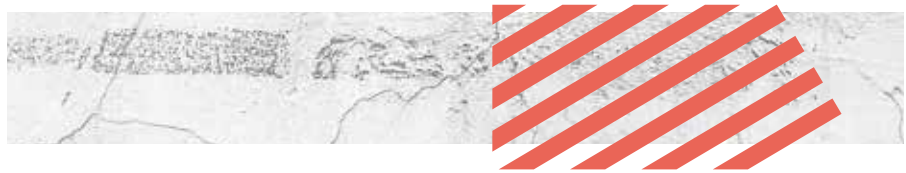
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There are many myths about deafness. Here are 10 common ones you should know about.

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## MYTHS ABOUT DEAFNESS ABOUND. WE'VE LISTED SOME COMMON ONES TO HELP YOU SORT FACT FROM FICTION.

1

### DHH CHILDREN HEAR 'NORMALLY' WITH A HEARING AID OR COCHLEAR IMPLANT

Assistive listening devices help children hear better, but they don't give kids 'normal' hearing. DHH children who use these devices may still have difficulty hearing, especially in a noisy environment. This is why it's important to learn how a DHH child communicates and create an environment that helps them understand.

2

### TALKING SLOWLY AND LOUDLY CAN HELP A DHH CHILD UNDERSTAND YOU

Shouting or changing the speed you talk at can actually distort speech and make it harder to read facial cues. Instead, aim to speak clearly and at a normal speed while looking directly at the child.

3

### ALL DHH CHILDREN CAN LIP-READ

The practice known as 'lip reading' refers to what is actually speech reading - a skill people of all hearing abilities use. Making sure the child can see your mouth clearly when you speak can help them understand you.

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### ALL DEAF PEOPLE USE SIGN LANGUAGE

DHH people communicate in various ways. They might use sign languages such as Auslan, spoken languages, gestures, writing, Signed English and speech reading, or a combination of these. It's important to ask the child or family about their preferred methods of communication.

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### SIGN LANGUAGE IS UNIVERSAL

Every country has its own native sign language. For example, Australia has Australian Sign Language [Auslan], the United States has American Sign Language [ASL] and France has French Sign Language [LSF].

### DEAF PEOPLE ARE ALSO MUTE

Many DHH people can talk. Some can speak but choose not to, while others can't. Never assume. If you are having difficulty understanding what a DHH child is saying, you can suggest using another type of communication, such as writing things down.

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### DHH PEOPLE ARE LESS INTELLIGENT THAN HEARING PEOPLE

Hearing is not related to intelligence. DHH children have the same intelligence range as the general population.

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### PEOPLE WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING HAVE ENHANCED VISION

Being deaf or hard of hearing doesn't give a child visual superpower! Children who are deaf or hard of hearing can be more likely to have vision problems and are advised to have regular vision check-ups.

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### PEOPLE ARE DEFINED BY THE FACT THEY ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

Hearing ability doesn't define a person. Just like everyone else, DHH children and young people have a wide range of likes, dislikes, interests, strengths, challenges, and personalities.

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### ALL DHH PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR

Many people who are deaf or hard of hearing are proud of their identity. They are not all waiting with bated breath for a deafness 'cure'. People who identify with Deaf culture use the capital 'D'. They see themselves as being part of a cultural group, not a community of people with disability.

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