

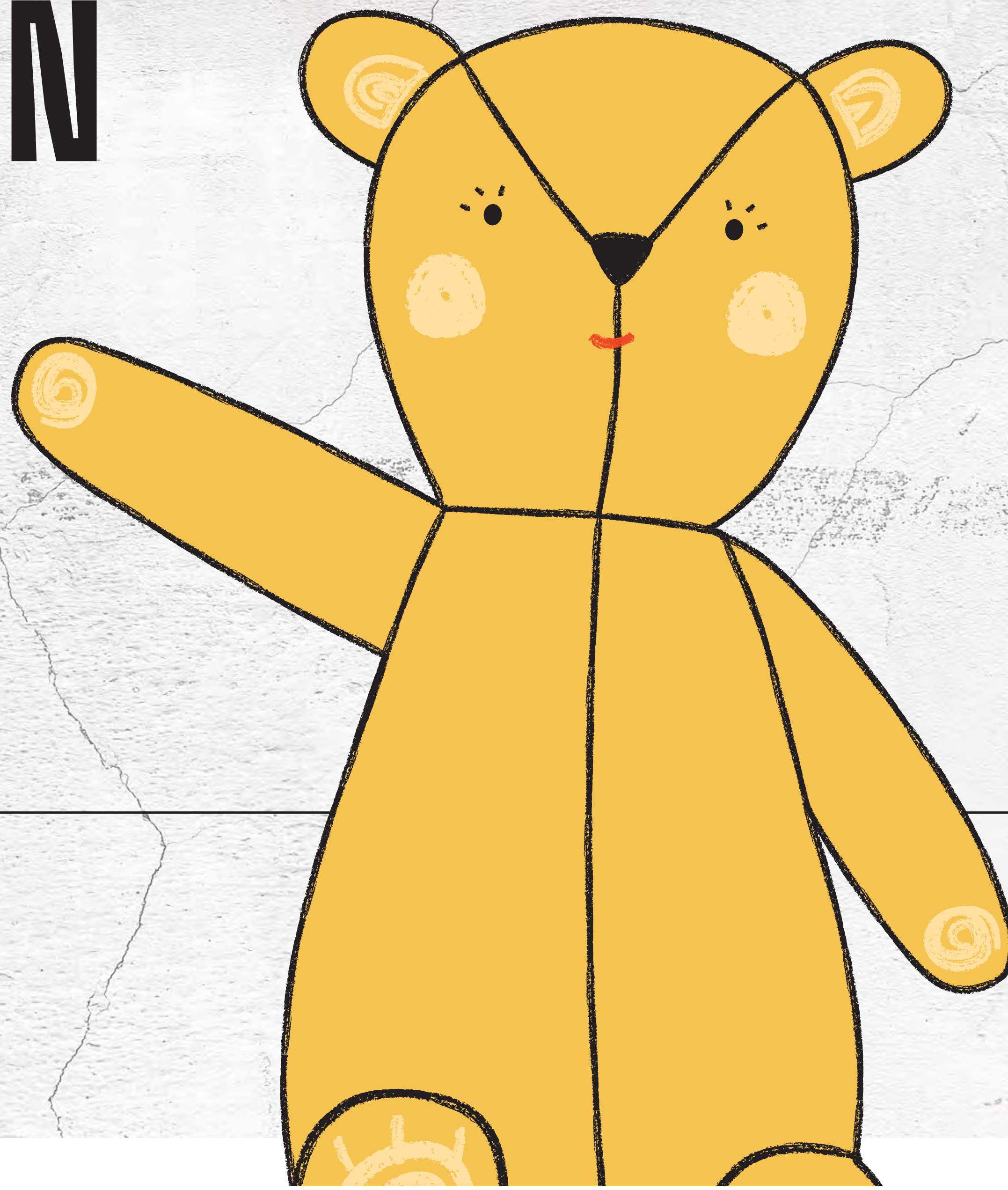
LET'S START A CONVERSATION ABOUT DEAF AWARENESS

BE A CHAMPION FOR DEAF AWARENESS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

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FACTS ABOUT DEAFNESS

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CONTENT

What is deafness and hearing loss

Ways hearing loss is experienced

Communicating with someone who is deaf or hard of hearing



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DEAFNESS

IS THE PARTIAL OR COMPLETE LOSS OF HEARING IN ONE OR BOTH EARS

The degree of hearing loss can range from mild to profound

Hearing loss can be acquired (develops after a person is born) or congenital (present at birth)



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HOW THE EAR WORKS

Sound waves travel through the outer ear and down the ear canal, causing the eardrum to vibrate

The vibrations pass along to the very tiny bones (ossicles) in the middle ear making waves in the fluid inside the cochlea where 24,000 tiny hair cells detect high frequency sounds

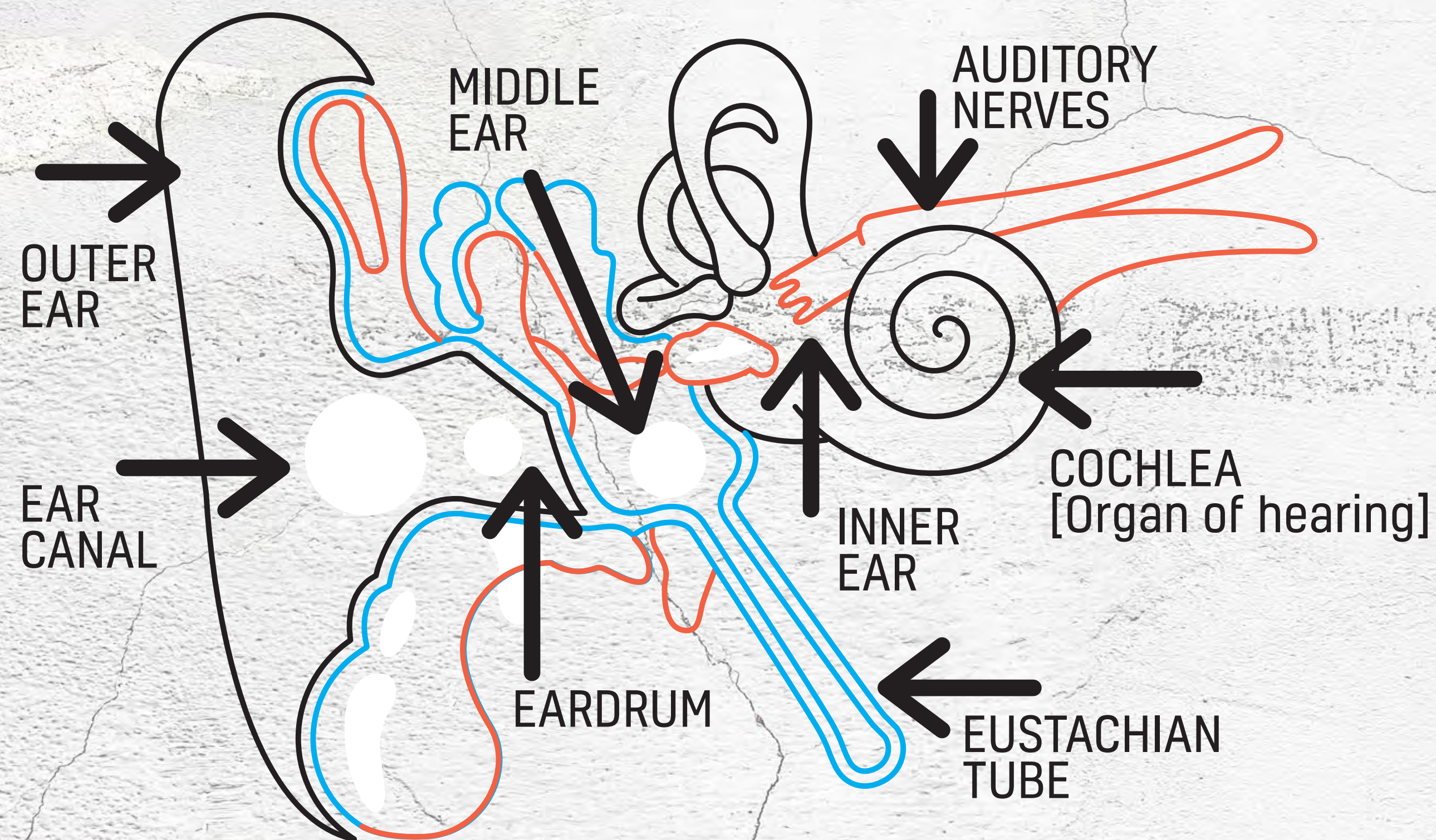
The hair cells produce electrical activity in the auditory nerve that travels to the brain where it is interpreted as sound in a process called sound transduction

Balance is controlled by the fluid filled semicircular canals in the inner ear. The fluid moves when a person moves helping the brain gauge balance)

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HOW THE EAR WORKS

The ear helps us
perceive sound and
keep our balance.



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EXPERIENCING HEARING LOSS

What a person with hearing loss
can hear will depend on:

The type
of hearing
loss they
have

The cause
of the
hearing
loss

The
degree
of loss

Their unique
presentation of
symptoms and
how they deal
with them

Any treatments
or interventions
they have had

The requirements
and stresses of
the situation

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DEAFNESS AND HEARING LOSS

affects more people than you may realise

In Australia, about 3.6 million people have some level of hearing loss. This number is expected to double to an estimated 7.8 million people by 2060 as the population ages

About 1.3 million people with hearing loss in Australia are living with a hearing condition that could have been prevented, and more than 1 in 3 Australians have noise-related ear damage that can result in hearing loss

In 2021, about 33.2 percent of the Australian population aged 65 years and older had complete or partial deafness (National Health Survey 2021)



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SIGNS OF HEARING LOSS

a child with hearing loss may:

- Appear inattentive or not respond when called
- Appear withdrawn and quiet in group situations
- Report difficulty hearing if there is background noise
- Not be able to determine the source of a sound
- Pronounce words incorrectly
- Ask for words, sentences or instructions to be repeated

- Misunderstand what is said
- Speak too loudly or too softly
- Turn up the volume
- Look at your lips to lipread
- Have trouble hearing at a distance
- Not be able to tell the difference between one sound and another
- Fall behind or appear to not understand because they didn't hear or missed information



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IMPACT AND EXPERIENCE of hearing loss will vary vastly from one individual to another

Be mindful about making assumptions.
It's OK to ask if you think someone is having difficulty hearing.



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USING IDENTIFYING TERMS

Culturally Deaf, with a capital 'D', means the individual identifies as a Deaf person who is part of the Deaf Community which has its own language (Auslan), culture (way of doing things) and heritage.

deaf is a medical term used to describe a person who cannot hear or has any type or degree of hearing loss.

Hard of hearing is commonly used by people with some hearing or whose hearing has changed over time to describe themselves. They may or may not use hearing aids or use Auslan to communicate.

Partially hearing or hearing impaired may be used to describe someone who has some hearing and may benefit from a hearing aid if that's how they identify.

Adventitious deaf or late-deafened may be used to describe people who were once hearing but who have lost all or part of their hearing over time (acquired hearing loss).

Prelingually deaf or postlingually deaf refers to people who lost their hearing either before (pre) or after (post) they developed speech and language.

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COMMUNICATION METHODS

describes how deaf or hard of hearing individuals

Using Auslan or another signed language

Using verbal speech

Listening and lipreading

Interpreting facial expression or natural gestures

Using signed English

Using cued speech

The combination of all or some of this list

Ways not listed here

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Every deaf or hard of hearing individual will have different communication needs that may change over time

It is important to be open-minded and flexible when considering good communication



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all deaf and hard or hearing individuals can lipread

MYTH

Not all deaf or hard of hearing people can lipread

Many children born deaf or hard of hearing will learn to lipread naturally, but their skills will vary widely

Learning to lipread can be extremely difficult for individuals who acquire hearing loss

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LIPREADING IS HARD

Lipreading is the ability to watch a person's lips and understand what they are saying.

Only about 30% of speech sounds can be seen on the lips. The rest are hidden.

Lipreading is a lot of guesswork, filling in gaps and using the context of the situation to understand.

Lipreaders also watch for facial expressions and natural gestures to aid understanding.

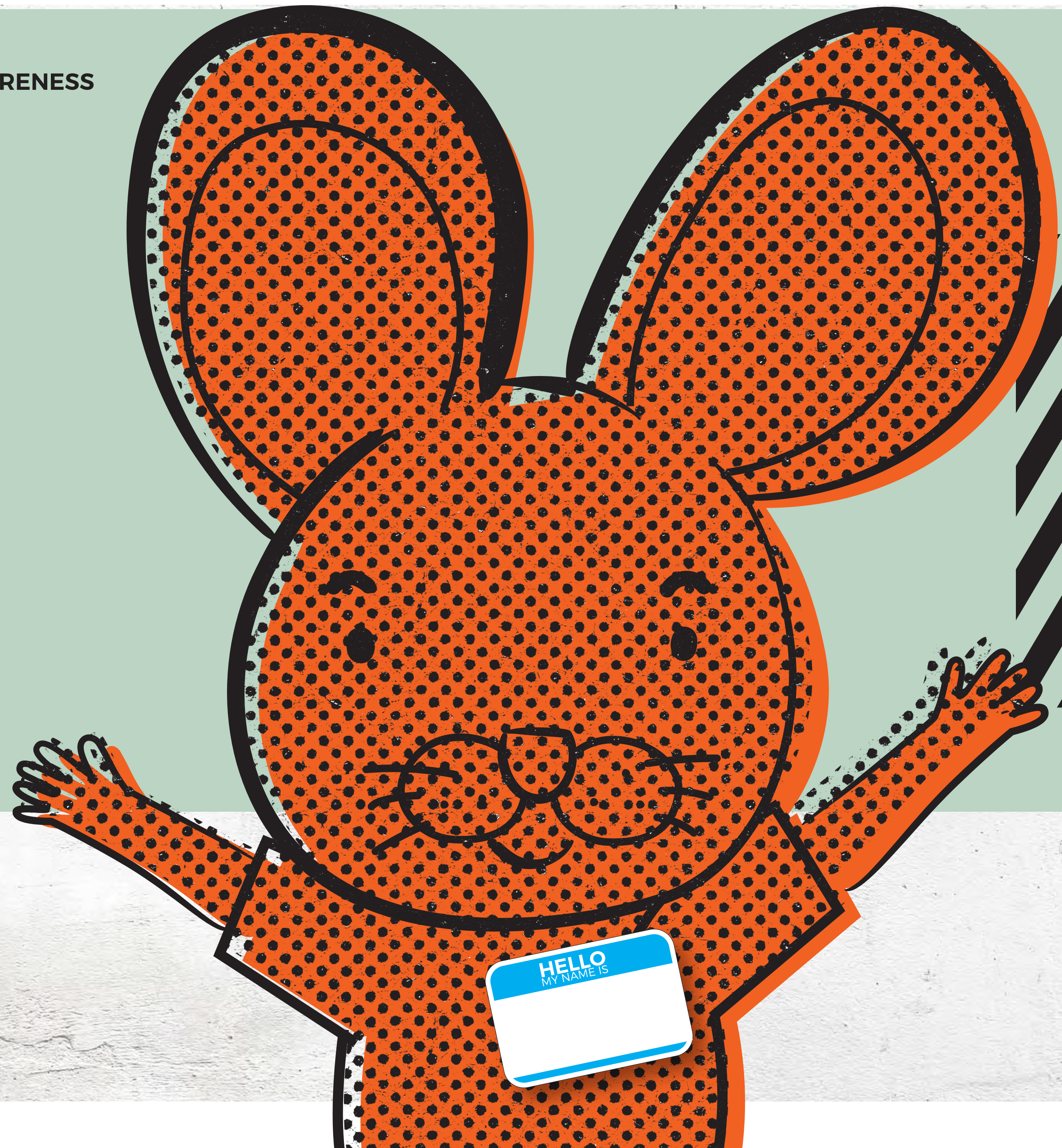
If the individual has some useable hearing, they can combine what they hear with what they see on the face.

Lipreading requires a good understanding of English to fill in gaps. The person lipreading needs to know how sentences are put together and what words are likely to be used.

Beards, moustaches, facial tics, accents, piercings, palsy or paralysis, stimming, and speech impediments can make lipreading more difficult.

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DEAF CULTURE



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UNDERSTANDING DEAF CULTURE

People in the Deaf community typically don't use the word "disabled" because that word makes implies "less than"—as though they are lacking something. By removing the label, they are also removing any stigma that might be attached.



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UNDERSTANDING DEAF CULTURE BEHAVIOURS

Eye contact

Eye contact is extremely important.

Touch

In Deaf culture, it is acceptable to touch another person to gain their attention, even if you do not know them well.

Physical proximity

Deaf people sit or stand further apart and preferably opposite each other so that they can see each other's "signing space" comfortably.

Directness

Acceptable levels of directness vary considerably between all cultures.

Attention Thumping on table/floor, lights. On/off, and waving arms.

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AUSLAN AUSTRALIAN SIGN LANGUAGE

- Auslan is the preferred method of communicating among members of the Deaf Community and for hearing children born to deaf adults [CODAs].
- There are two main dialects. The southern dialect used in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Tasmania. The northern dialect used in New South Wales and Queensland.
- Auslan is recognised as a community language under Australia's Language and Literacy Policy.
- Auslan is not signing in English word order. It is a unique visual language which has its own grammatical features.

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AUSLAN USERS

- More than 16,000 people use Auslan (Australian Census Report 2021) including people for whom Auslan is their primary or only language, and people who use Auslan at home to communicate with native Auslan users, such as children of deaf adults (CODAs)
- **The majority of Auslan users live in Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales with around 4,000 in each state**
- Less than 2,000 Auslan users live in South Australia and Western Australia and between 100 and 400 Auslan users live in each of the remaining states and territories
- 5.4% of Auslan users identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

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THE PROBLEM WITH ENGLISH

MYTH

ALL DEAF PEOPLE WILL
UNDERSTAND WRITTEN
AND SPOKEN LANGUAGE

- Someone who is deaf or hard of hearing, particularly if deaf from birth, does not have the same access to spoken English because they can't hear it. This can make learning English difficult.
- For those whose primary language is a sign language, English is an entirely different language with a different grammatical and sentence order.

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UNDERSTANDING INCIDENTAL LEARNING

Hearing individuals learn a great deal about the world, problem-solving, resolving conflict and relationships through passive exposure to discussions happening around them.

Deaf and hard of hearing individuals often miss out on much of this spontaneous, ambient learning because they don't hear it and often English is not their primary language.



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THE IMPACT OF MISSING INFORMATION

If information needed to problem-solve is missed or absent from an individual's communications and interactions, it will be more difficult for them to:

- > explore and acquire knowledge (ask questions)
- > understand context

- > express themselves through efficient language
- > understand or express narratives about themselves and others.

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ARE THEY DEAF AWARE



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INCLUSIVE INTERACTIONS



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EXCLUDED OR ISOLATED

Not being part of conversations happening around them can make a deaf child feel isolated.



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LISTENING FATIGUE

Listening fatigue is something that many deaf and hard of hearing children face, particularly at school.



What is listening fatigue?

Listening fatigue describes the physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion that stems from working hard trying to hear.

How does listening make DHH children tired?

Listening might seem effortless to people with normal hearing. But it takes energy to focus on and process sounds. Several areas of the brain are involved in doing this. When the hearing system is not fully functioning, the brain has to work harder to interpret sounds.

For DHH kids, the physical and mental effort of listening can drain their energy. Students with a hearing loss have to expend more effort than their hearing peers to process speech. They have to concentrate hard to lip read, interpret expressions and gestures, and fill in speech gaps. Over the course of a day, this can be very tiring.

Why does listening fatigue matter?

Research has shown that children with hearing loss tend to experience more fatigue than their peers with normal hearing. This matters because children experiencing fatigue can have:

- trouble with learning and performance at school
- feelings of tension, stress, and emotional upset
- lack of energy for other activities, such as sport or hobbies
- less energy for communicating and developing social relationships

What are the signs of listening fatigue?

Signs that suggest a child may be experiencing listening fatigue include:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| reduced performance or participation in a class or group. | difficulty concentrating |
| reluctance to take part in situations that involve listening | distractibility |
| | irritability |
| | tiredness |
| | headaches |
| | anxiety. |

Ways to reduce listening fatigue in DHH kids

You can use specific tactics and create environmental conditions to reduce listening fatigue. In a class or group environment, ways to do this include:

creating a good listening environment by improving acoustics in the classroom

making sure students are wearing their hearing devices

using other assistive technologies, such as an FM system

reducing background noise during learning activities

using captions on audiovisual content

teaching listening-heavy classes when students are most alert

allowing the child to remove their hearing device and leave the room for a rest break if needed.

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deaf and hard of hearing people may use and require different COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Keep in mind that deaf and hard of people are all individuals with different backgrounds, experiences and abilities. Some may use sign language (Auslan), some may lipread, and others may listen and speak, while some may use a combination of these modes and methods.



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MAKE INFORMATION ACCESSIBLE

**When sharing information with a
deaf or hard of hearing person**

Ask what the best way to communicate is
and how they prefer to receive information

Use interpreters and/or captioning as per
their individual needs

Explain context

Use pictures wherever possible

Use simple English and get to the point.

Check understanding understand and explain in a
different way if needed.

Consider the appropriateness of the delivery method.
Large or online meetings may be less accessible than
face-to-face. If you are not sure, ask!

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TECHNOLOGY

Deaf-friendly technology includes products that can help with things such as waking up in the morning, communicating with others, socialising with friends, travelling, or in the workplace:

Headphones, listeners and loops

Text relay, video relay and captioning

Safety alarms use loud sounds, strong vibrations and/or bright lights to help deaf people stay aware of what is going on around them

Radio aids work with hearing aids and cochlear implants to help deaf people communicate with friends, relatives, teachers and colleagues in noisy environments. They have a transmitter and receiver.

Streamers are useful for accessing multimedia and entertainment such as televisions and tablets

Soundfield systems distribute sounds (such as a presenter's voice) evenly and consistently throughout a room.

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THANK YOU

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