

COMMUNICATION OPTIONS FOR A CHILD WHO IS DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING

There are a variety of communication options available for a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, since every child is unique and different in their response to these techniques. Below is a brief description of these various communication modalities, as well as some resource listings.

Oral Method

The Oral Method of communication utilizes speechreading (lipreading) and the maximal use of a child's residual hearing for the development and production of speech. The premise behind this method is that a child who is deaf or hard of hearing will then be able to communicate more effectively with hearing individuals.

Cued Speech Method

Cued Speech facilitates lipreading by having the speaker simultaneously use hand gestures while speaking to help the listener visually distinguish between similar looking sounds on the speaker's lips.

Manual Communication Methods

Manual methods of communication utilize a child's ability to communicate through visual stimuli such as fingerspelling and sign languages.

- ***American Sign Language (ASL)*** is composed of positions and gestures made with the hands, body and facial expressions to convey abstract concepts as with any spoken language. Being its own language, ASL has a distinct grammatical structure which is quite dissimilar to English.
- ***Manual English*** uses many of the traditional ASL signs, while maintaining the English word order and grammar so as to develop a child's ability to read and write English. Examples of this system are: Seeing Essential English (SEE I), Signing Exact English (SEE II) and Signed English.
- ***Fingerspelling*** augments most sign language systems by using handshapes to code the letters of the alphabet as well as numbers. Words (i.e., proper names, places, etc.) are then spelled out by using these individual letter codes.

Total Communication (TC) Method

The philosophical basis for Total Communication (TC) is for a child who is deaf or hard of hearing to use any and all communication methods necessary to facilitate language acquisition. This system, which typically uses signs in English word order, may include: speech, fingerspelling, manual signs, gestures, speechreading, cued speech and augmentation of residual hearing. Basically,

this mode of communication may utilize any combination of the communication options listed above.

RESOURCE LISTINGS

ORAL METHOD

- **Listen Up**
Website: www.listen-up.org
- **Auditory/Oral Schools for the Deaf in the U.S.**
Website: www.oraldeafed.org

CUED SPEECH METHOD

- **National Cued Speech Association**
Website: www.cuedspeech.org
- **Cued Speech Discovery**
Website: www.cuedspeech.com
- **Harris Communications-Cued Speech**
Website:
www.harriscomm.com/catalog/default.php?cPath=35_1022&osCsid=650d5111c4a29fd0616ae7ceda9bc73d
- **Alternatives In Education For The Hearing Impaired**
Website: www.aehi.org
- **TECUnit, Inc.**
Website: www.tecunit.org

MANUAL ENGLISH METHOD

- **Center for Early Intervention on Deafness (C.E.I.D.)**
Website: www.ceid.org
- **Harris Communications-Signed English Dictionaries**
Website: www.harriscomm.com/catalog/default.php?cPath=35_173
- **Learn American Sign Language (ASL) and Signed English (SE)**
Website: www.lesstutor.com/ASLgenhome.html
- **Modern Signs Press, Inc.**
Website: www.modernsignspress.com

- **San Francisco Public Library**
Books and tapes available. Also extensive resource list of S.E.E. books and tapes.
Website: <http://sfpl.org/index.php?pg=0200002001>
- **S.E.E. Center of the Advancement of Deaf Children**
Central resource center for S.E.E. sign information
Website: www.seecenter.org

FINGERSPELLING

All sign language books, whether ASL or manual English, will have a section showing the symbols for the letters. Fingerspelling is the same regardless of which manual communication method used.

- **Fingerspelling (website practice)**
Website: asl.ms

TOTAL COMMUNICATION METHOD

- **Center for Early Intervention on Deafness (C.E.I.D.)**
Website: www.ceid.org
- **Beginnings, For Parents of Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc.**
Website: www.ncbegin.org
- **Educating Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing: Total Communication**
Website: www.ericdigests.org/1998-2/total.htm

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE (ASL)

American Sign Language (ASL) is a manual language capable of conveying abstract concepts as with any spoken language. The grammatical structure of ASL is distinct and very different from that of English. Since some hearing parents of deaf or hard or hearing children decide to introduce sign language to their children, these parents may choose to learn sign language along with their children. As with any language, repetition and practice is essential for mastery of that language. Listed below are a number of free websites which include ASL dictionaries and fingerspelling practice.

Online Dictionaries

- **Dictionary**
Website: www.lifeprint.com
- **Dictionary with movement on video**
Website: www.signingsavvy.com/index.php
- **Dictionary with movement on video**
Website: commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/aslweb/browser.htm
- **Dictionary**
Website:
www.masterstech-home.com/The_Library/ASL_Dictionary_Project/ASL_Tables/A.html
- **Dictionary**
Website: library.thinkquest.org/10202
- **ASL Dictionary**
Website: www.asl-dictionary.com
- **ASL Dictionary of Religious Signs**
Website: www.deafmissions.com/?PageID=18
- **ASL Dictionary, Religious Signs, Conversational Signs, ASL for Babies with movement on video**
Website: www.aslpro.com/cgi-bin/aslpro/aslpro

Fingerspelling

- **Fingerspelling (website practice)**
Website: asl.ms

Sign Language Resources

- **American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA)**
Website: www.aslta.org
- **ASL University**
Website: www.lifeprint.com/asl101
- **ASLPAH.com**
An e-zine (website magazine) for students and teachers of American Sign Language.
Website: www.aslpah.com

- **Buy ASL.com**
Website: www.buyasl.com
- **Dawn Sign Press**
Website: www.dawnsign.com
- **Harris Communications-Sign Language Books, Tapes, and Dictionaries**
Website: www.harriscomm.com/catalog/default.php?cPath=35_105
- **Learn American Sign Language (ASL) and Signed English (SE)**
Website: www.lesstutor.com/ASLgenhome.html
- **San Francisco Public Library**
Books and tapes available. Also, extensive resource list of ASL books and tapes.
Website: <http://sfpl.org/index.php?pg=0200002001>
- **Sign Language – CAL Resources Guides Online**
Website: www.cal.org/resources/archive/rgos/asl.html
- **Sign Media, Inc.**
Website: www.signmedia.com