

Understanding being Deaf and hard of hearing

For Deaf students and those who are hard of hearing, their experience of the aural world is unique. Differences in hearing will influence how a student gathers and processes information.

Definitions

Defining Deaf (capital D), deaf (small d), and hard of hearing

- Capital "D" – is used to describe Deaf culture and community. Members view being deaf as a difference in human experience rather than a disability. They describe themselves as Deaf with a capital "D".
- Small "d" – is used to describe a person's audiological ability to hear. For example, "That person is deaf in one ear."
- Hard of Hearing – refers to an individual who has a mild-to-moderate hearing loss who may communicate through sign language, spoken language, or both.

Deaf culture

Deaf culture is the shared social beliefs, behaviours, traditions, history, and values of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

"Deaf people form a distinct community with its own culture. Sign language is the glue that binds that culture together."

Source: [Deaf Aotearoa](#)

Indications of differences in hearing

Indications of hearing loss in children aged 3 years and older

- Slower speech compared with other children of a similar age
- Talking loudly
- Listening to television at a louder volume
- Shorter attention span
- Difficulty following instructions and understanding verbal questions
- Limited participation in incidental conversation.

Auditory processing disorder (APD)

APD (also known as central deafness) is a hearing disorder that affects how the brain processes speech. While the ear "hears" sound normally, people with APD find it difficult to process sounds and understand what they have heard. Diagnosis requires specialised testing. Many children remain undiagnosed.

Indicators of APD

- Difficulty understanding and remembering what people say unless it is clear and simple
- Difficulty hearing in noisy settings
- Extreme tiredness after school
- Learning problems with language, spelling, vocabulary, reading, or writing.

[The New Zealand Audiological Society](#) provides more information about symptoms and diagnosis of APD.

Influence on learning

Different types of hearing loss can affect language development, communication, and social interactions to varying degrees.

Students may have:

- experienced limited or intermittent access to the sounds of oral language
- missed out on the early language foundations they need to learn and achieve.

Students may rely on visual cues, technology such as cochlear implants and FM systems, or use a mix of NZ Sign Language, speech, and writing to communicate.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/UYdDwdIwS1k>

Through understanding Rosie's world, we examine strategies and communication supports in an inclusive classroom.

Closed Captions

Source:

[TAG \(UK\)](#)

<http://youtu.be/UYdDwdIwS1k>

Strategies and communication supports in an inclusive classroom are highlighted from Rosie's experiences of being Deaf in a mainstream school.

Useful resources

How hearing loss can influence learning

Read time: 1 min

A summary of the challenges students experience at school and an outline of teaching opportunities to support learning.

[Download PDF \(385 KB\)](#)

Hearing loss

Read time: 1 min

Information about how to detect hearing loss early and what services are available. This page contains downloadable PDFs in Samoan, Tongan, Cook Island Māori and English.

Publisher: Ministry of Health | Manatū Hauora

[Visit website](#)

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