



# Deaf Awareness

## Deaf awareness

### The theme for deaf awareness 2022 was inclusion

The campaign for 2022 focusses on how hearing loss impacts on everyday life and how to increase the awareness, visibility, and inclusion of those who are deaf. Creating an inclusive approach towards supporting those who are deaf aims to support mental health and wellbeing of those who may feel underrepresented either in education, workplace, health settings or within the community.



#### **So, take time to reflect on how it might feel to be deaf.**

- How might you communicate with your family and friends
- How challenging would your learning become
- How might this impact your social interactions with others now and in the future
- What strengths would you have over someone who can hear?

When communicating with those who have a hearing impairment consider the following top tips:

#### **Top tips**

- Make sure you have their attention
- Make sure the room is well lit
- Learn some basic signs
- Face the person and give eye contact
- Check they understand you
- Don't shout
- Use plain English
- Speak one at a time

## Common myths around deafness

- Myth 1. Deaf people can't enjoy music.**  
 Not all deaf people can hear music they have their own unique ways of enjoying music – reading writing, visuals, cultural – sound just one part
- Myth 2. Deaf people can't be frontline medical professionals.**  
 Wide range of deaf professionals – can actually be beneficial in adopting alternative methods of communication – EAL, refugees and others settling in Britain. Use of body language helps engagement
- Myth 3. Deaf people can't dance.**  
 Not just about using ear to hear – it's about feelings – vibration through feet heart and mind – helps with rhythm, patterns frequencies

## Policies

Policies are being reformed to legally recognising British sign language as a language used by many in the UK.

A Bill to recognise British Sign Language as a language of England, Wales, and Scotland; to require the Secretary of State to report on the promotion and facilitation of the use of British Sign Language by ministerial government departments; and to require guidance to be issued in relation to British Sign Language.

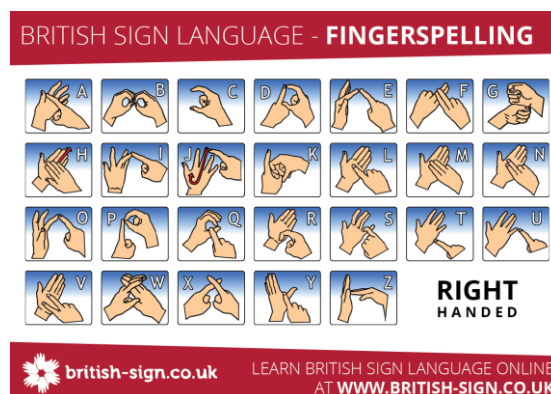


Check out the following:

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2915#:~:text=A%20Bill%20to%20recognise%20British,relation%20to%20British%20Sign%20Language.>

## Challenge yourself

Have a go at some of the British Sign Language for finger spelling. This image shows using the right hand, but you can download one for left-handed.





## Did you know?

- There are approximately 87.0000 BSL users in the UK
- Sign language uses more than just hand gestures
  - As well as 'signs', British Sign Language includes facial expressions, gestures, and body language to communicate. Sign language uses its own system of grammar, which involves different sentence structures to spoken English.
- The longest Deaf reoccurring role was on Sesame Street
  - For many people growing up in the 70s-90s the first Deaf person they may have seen on TV is Linda Bove. Linda Bove first appeared on Sesame Street as a librarian, Linda, with her dog Barkley. She introduced many hearing and deaf children to American Sign Language and the Deaf community. She remained in this role from 1971-2002, thus making her the current title holder for the longest Deaf reoccurring role in television history.
- The Smurfs communicated using sign language
  - These little blue characters were on the first animated show to use Sign Language. "Smurfing In Sign Language" is the episode that introduced the wood-elf Laconia. There is some debate over whether she was deaf, but on the show, it is said that she is "mute and uses sign language to communicate." The show inspired those watching to learn some sign language. This was revolutionary as the technicality of producing signs in animation was not something that had ever been done before.



## Good practice – watch clip

- Watch the clip below – that show just how inclusion is achievable.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u8PlyEXwVI0>