Practical Guide to Serving

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals

At Mississippi State University

2001 - 2002
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LOCAL ONLINE RESOURCES
• Mississippi State University - Campus Guide to Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals (2001)
• Brochure entitled "Services for Students with Disabilities at Mississippi State University"

OTHER RESOURCES
• Postsecondary Education Consortium (PEC) Presentations - Project and Models (Training Materials)
METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

- How to communicate with a Deaf Individual

***Caution: Pounding your feet on the floor or your hands on a surface to get the Deaf or Hard of Hearing persons attention should only be used if that is acceptable to the individuals. In addition flashing the lights is a cultural method used most often by Deaf individuals with Deaf individuals in a group. These methods are typically used by people who know each other.
METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

• Communication with Persons who are Late-Deafened

Each person who is late deafened has individual abilities and needs, it is their decision and right to choose the method of communication. Listed below are several options available:

Notewriting

Paper/pencil notes may be passed back and forth. This is best used in simple situations such as in a store, restaurant, ticket office, etc. The major limitation for this method is the time and effort involved.

Speech Reading

While most people are able to speech read to some degree, this method allows at best 40%-50% of the conversation to be understood. Speech reading ability is highly individualized and should not be the only method relied upon.

Sign Language/Fingerspelling

Depending on the individual, some persons who are late deafened may utilize sign language and/or fingerspelling. This method is usually combined with speech reading abilities to get the most out of a conversation.

Typing

When available a TTY or a computer with word processing software can be used to type back and forth. This method is quicker and is best for more complex and lengthy conversations than notewriting.

Captioning

A TTY (often with a large display) or real-time captioning equipment should be utilized in anything from a small group situation to a conference lecture. A typist/scriptor is needed for the tty, while a stenographer is best for the real-time captioning equipment.

General Tips:

• Always speak and interact with the person directly, don't speak to their friend, etc.

• Always keep the persons visual abilities in mind when selecting the method of communication.

Information from: Center for Independent Living for Western Wisconsin, Inc.
Web site is at http://www.cilww.com/
METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

• Common Myths About Deafness

MYTH: Deaf people cannot use the telephone.
FACT: Some hard-of-hearing people have enough residual hearing to talk on the telephone. Deaf persons use a device called a TTY (teletypewriter) or TDD (Telecommunication Device for the Deaf) to communicate with others who have this equipment. If one person does not have a TTY (TDD), your state's relay system can be used.

MYTH: Deaf people are mute.
FACT: It is incorrect to assume this. Some deaf people choose not to use their voices if they think they will be difficult to understand or have unusual speaking volume or pitch. In any case, terms like "deaf and dumb" or "deaf-mute" are considered offensive and inappropriate.

MYTH: Unusual sounding speech means the person is retarded.
FACT: Speech development and sounds greatly depend on "feedback", or the ability to hear oneself talk. For the deaf person the foundation for learning to speak (hearing the sounds) works only partially, or is not there. This has nothing to do with intelligence.

MYTH: Deaf people can read lips.
FACT: Lip-reading (speech-reading) is a skill that some deaf and hard-of-hearing people have while others do not. It is important to remember that only about 35-40% of speech is visible on the lips, so at best, lip-reading is not an easy task. The words "paddle" and "battle" are different, but look the same on the lips.

MYTH: Hearing aids completely correct hearing loss.
FACT: Hearing aids are devices that amplify sound. While they can improve hearing for some individuals, they do not correct hearing. Hearing aids may enable someone to hear another person's voice, but the person still may not be able to understand distinct words. Just because someone wears a hearing aid does not mean he or she hears well enough to understand speech.

MYTH: Deaf people lead totally different lives from other people.
FACT: Deaf people are set apart by their inability to hear. Some deaf people do live within the "hearing world". They function, and interact socially, in the "hearing world". Others, however, choose to interact with the "hearing world" only when necessary. They rely on the Deaf community for socializing.

Information from: Kent School District by Priscilla Barack
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http://www.kent.k12.wa.us/staff/pbarack/myths.htm
COMMUNICATION

• Assistive Devices for Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

1. Telecommunication Device for the Deaf
A device, styled after a typewriter, that transmits electronic messages across the telephone lines to another TTY (TTD/TT). TTYs can also communicate with computers and fax machines that have specialized software. There are several styles of TTYs with a variety of features which include:

- three or four rows of keys
- printer capabilities
- enlarger capabilities
- answering features
- compact/lightweight
- tdd announcer
- memory dial

2. Amplified Phone Adapters
- Portable style that is strapped onto the handset
- telephone handset with volume control
- amplifier that is connected to the telephone
- amplified ringer

3. Amplified Listening Devices
- Personal FM Systems
- Pocket Talkers
- Infrared Systems
These devices consist of a small microphone or transmitter and a receiver. These can be used in a one-on-one, small group, and classroom/presentation basis. They are also used by persons to listen to TV or radio.

4. Closed Captioning
A caption decoder, a television, or a VCR with a caption decoding capabilities is used to enable the television viewer to "see" the dialogue written out on the screen, similar to sub-titles on foreign movies. As of July 1993 all televisions that are 13" or larger must come with the caption decoding abilities as a standard feature.

5. Real-time Captioning
This consists of using a specialized computer program for captioning, court stenography equipment and a stenographer. The result is a projection of the lecture, dialogue, etc. onto a television set or movie screen. For smaller groups or one-on-one situations another version of this consists of using a TTY (and often a large TTY display) and typist to relay the information requested.
COMMUNICATION (Continued)

• Assistive Devices for Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (Continued)

Signal Devices

1. Smoke Alarms
Several options regarding smoke alarms exist.
  · smoke alarm with flashing strobe light
  · an alarm hooked up to the wiring in the home, allowing various lights in the home to
    flash in the event of a fire (may also be connected to a vibrating device and used under
    the mattress of a bed)

2. Flashing Signal Devices
  · Alarm Clocks
    Either an alarm clock with a built-in light can be used or a conventional alarm clock can
    be hooked up with a lamp to either turn the light on or flash the light source.
  · Doorbell Signalers
    These devices either amplify the sound of the doorbell or send a signal to a lamp in one
    or more rooms, thus signaling to the occupant that the doorbell has rung.
  · Baby Cry Alarm
    This device is plugged into the wall along with a sonic alert device and lamp. When the
    device senses the baby crying, the lamp is switched on and off.

In addition to these specific signal functions, there are several signal systems that allow
the user to program in specific functions and times. These include Alertmaster, Super
Signal System, and Sonic Alert.

3. Sensory Devices
  · Shake-Awake
    This is an alarm clock/vibrator which is placed under the users pillow and shakes instead
    of making an "alarm" sound. There are also several bed vibrators that must be connected
    up to an alarm clock or powerhouse environmental control unit.
  · Vibrating Personal "Receivers"
    These vibrators can be connected to a variety of signal devices (smoke alarm, telephone,
    alarm clock, doorbell, baby cry, etc.) to indicate a noise.

Information from: Center for Independent Living for Western Wisconsin, Inc.
Web site is at http://www.cilww.com/
COMMUNICATION (Continued)

- Protocol for placing TTY or Relay calls to Mississippi State University's Police Department (Campus Police) and Starkville Police Department (EMERGENCY AND NON-EMERGENCY)

A person who has a disability that prevents them from hearing and/or speaking on the phone will place calls to Mississippi State University Campus Police in the following manner:

**Emergency**

911 when dialed on campus goes to the MSU Campus Police Department. A dispatcher is trained to receive calls from TTY callers. (Please tap the space bar several times on your TTY to alert the dispatcher that you are using the TTY device.)

**Non-Emergency**

TTY callers please use Mississippi Relay Service at 1 (800) 582-2233 to contact the following non-emergency phone numbers:

**MSU Campus police - non-emergency phone number (325-2121)**

A person who has a disability that prevents them from hearing and/or speaking on the phone will place calls to the Starkville area Police Department in the following manner:

**Emergency**

911 when dialed in the Starkville area, an emergency operator will be able to assist with TTY callers.

**Non-emergency**

TTY callers please use Mississippi Relay Service at 1 (800) 582-2233 to contact the following non-emergency phone numbers:

**Starkville's non-emergency phone numbers:**

*Police Department 323-4134
*Fire Department 323-1845
*Sheriff's Office 323-2421

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