

Tips for friends and family of deaf and HoH



Be upfront

It can be a little confusing when approaching a conversation with a deaf person for the first time, but the easiest way to know how to communicate is to simply ask.



Gather in well-lit areas

Good lighting helps both of you see each other's faces. With a brighter, well-lit environment, your loved one is better able to read lips and take nonverbal cues.



Be patient

You may not understand things on the first try or even the second or third. Remain patient, and be sure to ask if you are understood because a nod doesn't always mean comprehension.



Be an ally

- Learn about the Deaf community.
- If you see someone struggling, don't be afraid to ask if you can offer help.
- Have paper and pencil ready, in case it's needed for better communication.



Utilize apps

One of the best things you can do when your loved one is hard of hearing or deaf is to use assistive technology, such as audio transcriber apps.



Learn sign language

Traditional language may not work effectively as hearing loss becomes more advanced. Learning sign language—even basic phrases and words can help those HoH or deaf feel more included in the conversation.



Clear face mask

Due to COVID-19, face masks have rendered lip-reading essentially impossible. Using a clear face mask will allow those who are deaf and HoH to communicate with you more easily.