

REMOVING THE BARRIER OF SILENCE FOR DEAF SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



Agreements for Today

- Raise your hand if you have a comment or question
- Talk one person at a time
- Don't interrupt someone speaking/signing
- Avoid side conversations with people near you
- Speak at reasonable pace (not S-L-O-W-L-Y)
- Be respectful of each other's opinion

Thanks To:



Training content has been adapted from:

- Vera Institute of Justice
- Justice for Deaf Victims National Coalition
- KEYS 4 DEAF ACCESS, Cuyahoga County, Ohio

Today's Learning Objectives

Today we hope to increase your knowledge about...

- Deaf Culture and the Deaf Community
- Domestic Violence in the Deaf community
- Unique Power & Control Dynamics and Abuse Tactics
- Barriers to Service for Deaf/HOH Survivors
- Specific Accommodations and Strategies to Assist Deaf Survivors
- Ways to Strengthen Partnerships and Collaborations
- Resources



Deaf Culture

Definitions

- **deaf** - lacking hearing, either entirely or at a severe to profound level. This is a medical term.
- **Deaf** - individuals who, in addition to not hearing, are members of the Deaf community, subscribing to the unique cultural norms, values, and traditions of that group. The Deaf community typically uses American Sign Language (ASL) as their 1st language.
- **hard of hearing (HOH)** - individuals with a hearing loss (ranging from mild to severe).

Note: distinction between deaf and hard of hearing (HOH) tends to depend on where the loss is on an audiogram

Definitions

- **deafened (late deafened)** – individuals that have severe to profound hearing loss, which occurred after the development of speech and language.
- **deaf-blind** – wide variation in the conditions of people who are deaf-blind:
 - Deaf and low vision
 - Deaf and limited peripheral vision
 - Deaf and blind
 - Hard of hearing and low vision
 - Hard of hearing and limited peripheral vision
 - Hard of hearing and blind

Preferred Terms

“Deaf” or “hard of hearing”

vs.

“Hearing impaired/loss/deficit”

Audism

- The belief that one is superior based on one's ability to hear
 - Like racism or sexism, audism judges, labels and limits individuals on the basis of whether they hear and speak. (Humphrey and Alcorn, 1995)
 - Shapes our world around the idea that hearing people are the norm and contributes to the discrimination and disparities Deaf people face in our country.

Examples of Audism

- Medical efforts to “fix” or “repair” Deaf people
- Devaluing signed languages in favor of spoken English in education and other settings
- Failure to provide accommodations for Deaf people, including:
 - Refusing to use an ASL interpreter
 - Asking a Deaf person to lip read or write when he/she has indicated this isn’t preferred

Examples of Audism

- Asking a Deaf person to “tone down” their facial expressions because they are making others uncomfortable
- Refusing to explain to a Deaf person why everyone around him is laughing – “never mind, I’ll tell you later, it doesn’t matter.”
- Assuming that Deaf individuals with better speech/English skills are superior
- Assuming Deaf people are less intelligent or are unfit parents
- Assuming all Deaf/HOH people are the same

Deaf Culture: History

- Deaf history includes a broad collection of experiences around community, education, language and culture
 - First Signing Community
 - Founding of the First Deaf School
 - ASL Recognized as a Language
 - "Deaf President Now" protest at Gallaudet University

Deaf Culture: Values

- **Connecting and Sharing**--Deaf people place a high degree of value on sharing information and resources.
- **Vision**--Most Deaf people gain the vast majority of their information through their eyes and they connect with people and things visually.
- **Stories about Deaf people, poetry, arts, and literature**--Serve to pass down history, wisdom, and values.

Deaf Culture: Norms and Etiquette

- Maintaining eye contact
- Being blunt and direct
- Waving, lightly tapping the shoulder, stamping on the floor and turning the lights on and off to get someone's attention
- More physically active/expressive during conversations
- Hugging when greeting or leaving
- Long goodbyes
- Being in 3 feet proximate space between people for engaging into visual conversations

Deaf Culture: Language

- Primary language in U.S. is American Sign Language (ASL)
 - Recognized language with its own rules of grammar and syntax (word order)
 - English and ASL are NOT the same thing!
 - English may be a second language for many Deaf individuals.
 - Not all Deaf individuals use ASL
 - ASL is not an international language.
 - ASL also differs slightly by region of the U.S.

ASL → English Translation

- The following slides provide examples of ASL transcribed sign for sign into English (ASL gloss) or as they might be written by a Deaf individual whose first language is ASL.
- Remember that ASL is not a written language.
 - Some of the meaning and beauty of each sign is lost when attempting to interpret ASL into written English

ASL

English

**WOMAN SILLY
MOUTH WIDE
MY FACE ME
UNDERSTAND NO**

**WOMAN WAS
SCREAMING IN
MY FACE, I
DIDN'T
UNDERSTAND
HER**

ASL Translation to English Activity

- “YOU ME CROSS MISS ME KNOW SORRY”

Answers

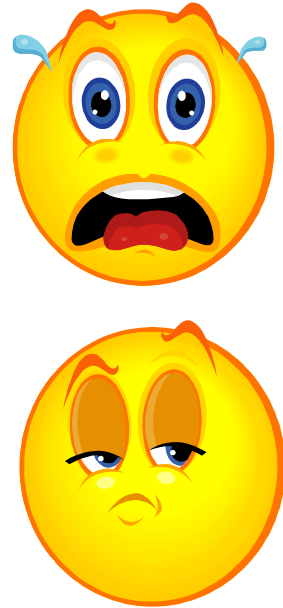
- “WE MUST HAVE JUST MISSED EACH OTHER. I AM SORRY.”

When interacting with a Deaf/deaf person...

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Be extra aware of your body language and facial expressions

Be on the lookout for the “smile and nod” that signals lack of comprehension



Lipreading

Just because a Deaf/HOH person says they can lip read, don't assume they will understand all of the conversation.

- Watch for “smile and nod” or “parrot head”

Lipreading

- Very few Deaf people are considered “expert lipreaders”
- An “expert lipreader” combines the following:

What is visible on the lips + Environmental cues + English proficiency + Knowledge of subject matter + Body language + Facial expressions

**Just to understand a portion (50-75%)
of what is said!**

Lipreading Example

misunderstood hearing read
people.
assume hear
enough fact uals
can only per “best
individual goes
well, capability
less. If person agitated,
have “fill lower.
words on

Lipreading Example

Individuals who are hard of hearing and read lips are the most misunderstood group of people. Many people assume since they speak so well, they must hear well enough to speak. The fact is, hard of hearing individuals can only lip-read approximately 60 percent on their “best day”. An individual who goes to see a doctor is usually not feeling well, so that means that their capability to read lip is less. If this person is upset, agitated, sick, preoccupied, then their lip-reading skills are much lower. They have to rely on their ability to “fill in the blanks” on the words that they have missed.

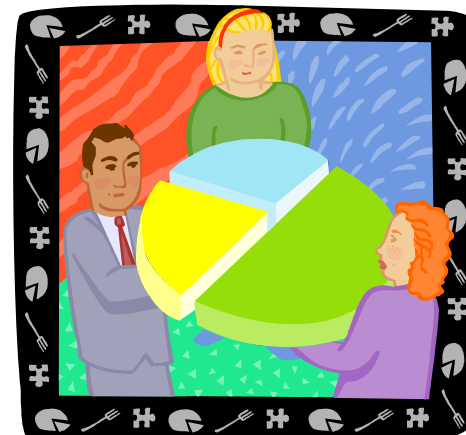


Domestic Violence in the Deaf Community

Domestic Violence in the Deaf Community

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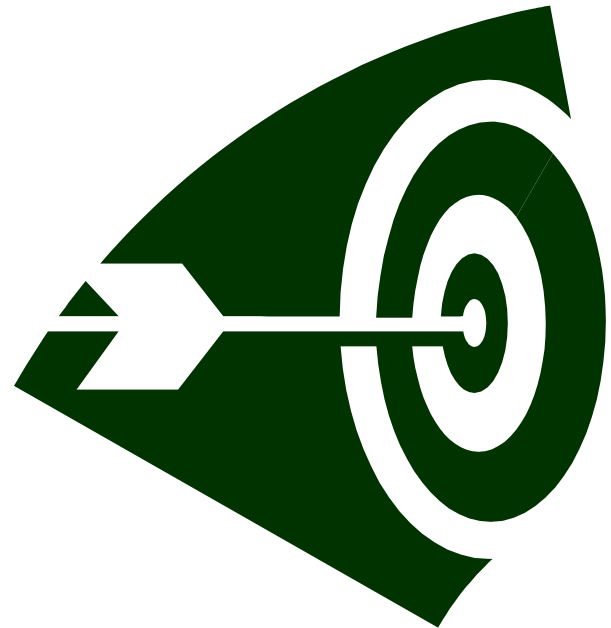
- Existing studies indicate abuse is 2 to 6 times more likely to occur among people with disabilities
- Conservative figures indicate over 60% of Deaf persons have experienced or will experience abuse by a partner in their lifetime.
- The Deaf or hard of hearing population experience the same types of abuse others do—physical, sexual, financial, emotional and spiritual—but, they experience it at a rate 1.5 times higher than the hearing population.



Why are Deaf people targets?

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- Perceived as more vulnerable
- Easier to isolate
- Deaf Stressors



Number One Deaf Stressor

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The Deaf survivor often cannot leave her community. Even if she chooses to change her geographical location, she will still be part of the community... thus, safety planning takes a different slant.

Other Deaf Stressors

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Elements of being Deaf/HOH that make a person more susceptible to victimization

- Inability to communicate - i.e. with law enforcement, medical professionals, etc.
- Tradition of secrecy within the culture/protection of perpetrators who are members of the community

Unique Abuse Tactics for Deaf Survivors

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Abuser may:

- Attack ears (to cause pain)
- Attack hands (to prevent signing)
- Destroy, withhold or damage communication equipment
- Refuse to sign
- Attack sight (to further isolate)



Deaf Survivor's Experience

[Video](#)



Power & Control Dynamics and Abuse Tactics in the Deaf Community



Intimidation

- Uses ASL to make you afraid with gestures, facial expressions, or exaggerated signs, then
- uses Deaf culture to justify the behavior
- Overuses floor stomping and pounding on the table or door
- Signs very close to your face when angry
- Gets angry because you look away while he is talking

Emotional Abuse

- Criticizes your speech, ASL or English skills
- Calls you “hearing-mind” because you aren’t fluent enough in ASL or don’t socialize or
- identify with the Deaf community
- Makes fun of your ASL style
- Puts down your education background, public school or residential school
- Tells you that you are too sensitive “like hearing people”

Isolation

- Checks your pager, instant messenger, videophone, email and/or TTY conversations
- Moves away from the Deaf community and/or your family to isolate target
- Tells you no one will believe you, because abuser is too well-known in Deaf community
- Takes advantage of lack of accessible services for Deaf survivors

Minimizing, Denying, and Blaming

- Denies abuse by saying it accepted in Deaf culture
- Angrily throws things at you as a way to get attention
- Tells people private things (example: "My wife is lousy in bed."), and says it is okay to share private information because it is part of Deaf Culture

Using children

- Your partner is hearing and doesn't allow your children to use ASL to talk with you
- Abuser doesn't allow your children to be proud of Deaf culture
- Abuser criticizes you as a Deaf mother, says bad things about you to your children
- Abuser tells you and the children that you cannot go to a shelter because everyone is hearing

Hearing privilege

- Excludes you from important conversations (talking to the bank without you knowing)
- Leaves you out in social situations (such as a party or dinner) with hearing people
- Talks negatively about the Deaf community
- If you call the police, abuser interprets to manipulate the situation to their benefit

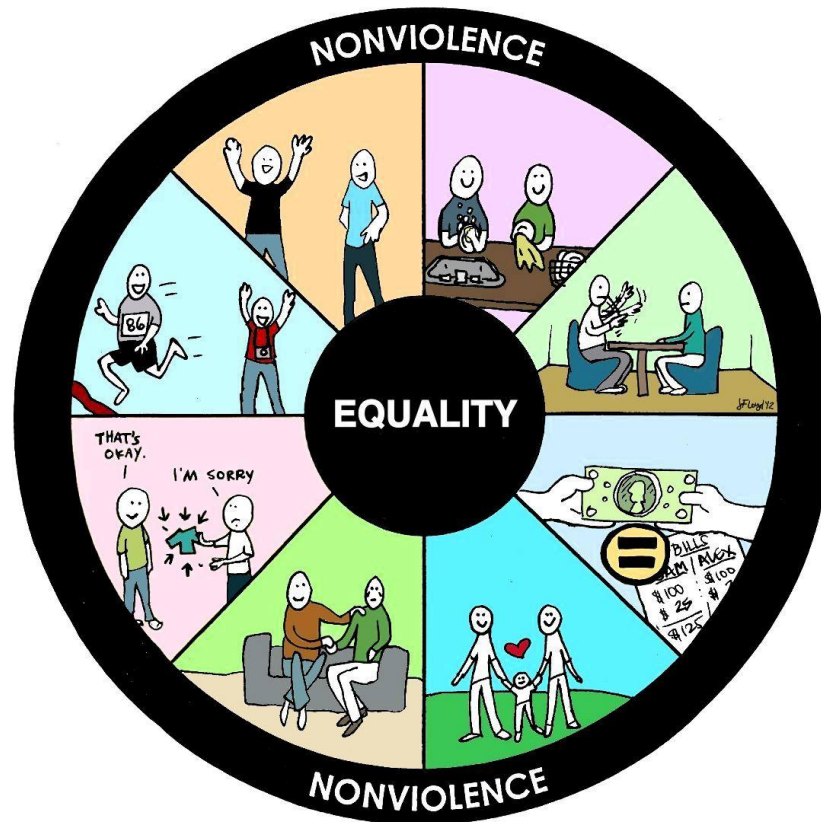
Economic Abuse

- Takes away your SSI checks or making you lose it by reporting additional income
- Ruins your chances for a job by spreading rumors about you in the small Deaf community
- Demands you ask for permission before spending money

Coercion and Threats

- Destroys your reputation by spreading false rumors
- Uses their power in the Deaf community to pressure you to stay
- Uses the Deaf school as the reason to stay together to support your Deaf children
- Uses his position as a leader in the Deaf community to discredit your story

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



Developed by:
Domestic Abuse Intervention Project
202 East Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55802
218.722.4134

Adapted and distributed by:



Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services
8623 Roosevelt Way NE
Seattle, WA 98115
Main Office: (206) 922-7088
Fax: (206) 726-0017

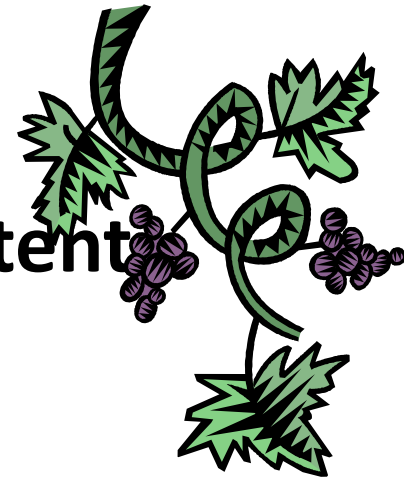


Barriers to Service for Deaf and HOH Survivors

Specific Barriers to Access Assistance and Support for Deaf Survivors

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- **Restricted access to communication and information**
- **The Deaf grapevine/community**
- **Lack of accessible/culturally competent services**
- **Lack of support system**
- **Lack of accessibility of the judicial and medical systems**



Restricted Access to Communication and Information

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- Little or no education about DV within community
- Isolation from friends and/or family because of deafness
- Minimal ability to understand or interpret information presented – example in court
- Inaccessibility of incidental learning situations
- Sometimes technology is not Deaf-friendly (closed-captioning, subtitles, English)

The Deaf Grapevine/Community

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- In tight-knit Deaf communities, rumor and gossip common
- The Deaf community has little education about DV – myths run rampant
- Confidentiality in Deaf community can be perceived as antisocial – so may need to educate Deaf client on why confidentiality is important



Lack of Accessible/Culturally Competent Services

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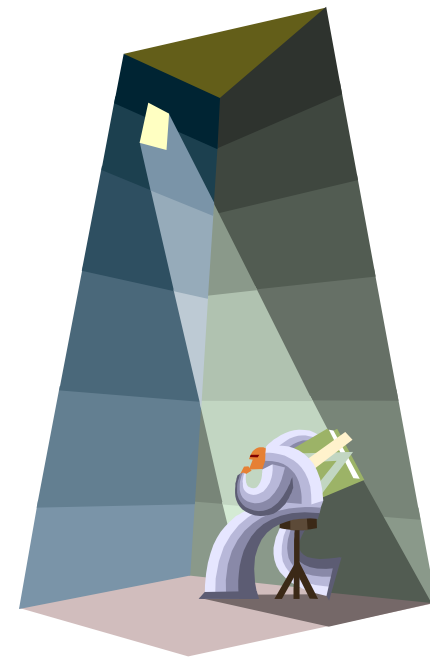
- Hotlines not accessible – often hang up
- Advocates not trained
- Lack of interpreters on hand
- Lack of knowledge as to how to find an interpreter
- Lack of understanding about Deaf culture
- Lack of appropriate treatment - No signing therapists, doctors, etc.



Isolation in the Deaf Context

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- Integration as a barrier for Deaf clients
- Integration into a hearing program = isolation
- Few Deaf clients will stay in a hearing shelter without other Deaf interaction for more than 24 hours
- Safety becomes a lesser priority than the need for communication



Lack of Support System

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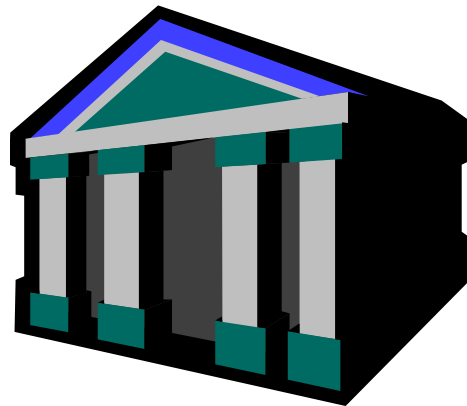
- Deaf community is spread out
- Loss of status in community... or even loss of community
- Family may be unable to communicate
 - High percentage of Deaf have hearing families



Lack of Accessibility of the Judicial and Medical Systems

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- Lack of clear and understood interpretation
- Lack of legal interpreters
- Lack of interpreters in a timely manner



“ You’ve reached the Helpline, are
you safe?...
Hello?...Hello?...
CLICK ”

“I’m not sure how we can
help you”

**There are barriers to
receiving services for
all survivors— adding
these additional
hurdles compounds
existing barriers.**

“We don’t have
an interpreter,
sorry”

“Can you just
write it down?”

“Our program just isn’t
equipped to meet your needs”



Accommodations and Strategies for Working with Deaf Survivors

Best Practice to Provide Adequate Accommodations for Deaf Survivors

- Having a well-prepared Deaf advocate
- Preparedness to make referrals to agencies with Deaf advocates
 - With the survivor's consent
- Co-advocacy, or a team approach
- Well-trained hearing advocates
 - Trained in advocacy and Deaf culture, who work with a qualified ASL interpreter and a Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI) if available and appropriate.

Tips for Using a Sign Language Interpreter

- Deaf survivors are not responsible for payment of interpreters
 - Accommodations like interpreters are the financial responsibility of the service provider when requested by a survivor or when need is known.
- **DEFINITION IN THE ADA ACT**
- A qualified interpreter is one who is able to interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary.

Tips for Using a Sign Language Interpreter

- Plan in advance
- Partner with interpreting services agencies and provide them with training on sexual and domestic violence
- Ask the survivor if there is an interpreter she prefers to work with in that situation.
 - They may prefer not to work with interpreters they know personally, or may prefer someone whose signing style (similar to a hearing person's accent) is familiar to theirs.
- Try to either supply the interpreter and the Deaf person with vocabulary ahead of time, or explain any jargon used in practical terms to the interpreter.

Intake and Procedure

Assuming that the domestic violence center has already developed a list of willing, qualified and certified interpreters, the potential client is asked if she requires such services. If the answer is “yes”, follow these procedures:

- Call an interpreter or contact your local center for independent living for a list of licensed Interpreters for the Deaf
- Give the client an estimate of the interpreter’s arrival time
- Encourage the client to read or watch television while waiting for the interpreter to arrive.
 - It is important that the client feel comfortable and safe so that she is not tempted to leave before the interpreter comes.
 - Make sure that the TV has Closed Captioning- all TV’s made after 1992 have the captioning chips built in.
- When the interpreter arrives, she should sit next to the staff person and the Deaf or HOH person should be seated directly across from the staff person to allow eye contact

Intake and Procedure

- Do not make statements such as: “Ask her what her name is”, “Tell her we have...”
- Some clients who may be HOH will not admit to their inability to hear clearly
 - They might ask the staff to repeat things and their speech might not be very clear
- Some Deaf or HOH persons may be very skilled at speech-reading
- Like many survivors, Deaf and HOH individuals may not be aware of what constitutes verbal, physical, sexual and mental abuse. Give them examples of abuse such as:
 - **VERBAL ABUSE:** “you block-head, you’re stupid, you’re mentally retarded, you shut up, etc.”
 - **PHYSICAL ABUSE:** grabbing by the arm, grabbing the chin to get attention, a hard tap on the shoulder, hitting, biting, shoving, pushing, etc.
 - **SEXUAL ABUSE:** grabbing the breast, making fun of the physical appearance, rape (force to have sex when you don’t want it), etc.
 - **EMOTIONAL ABUSE:** making threats of violence, force you to do something that you don’t like, telling you what to do all the time, embarrassing you publicly or privately, using the children against you, etc.



Assistive Technology for Deaf/HOH Persons

What is assistive technology (AT)?

“Any item, piece of equipment, product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.” Public Law 108-364

- Mechanical aids designed to provide additional accessibility to individuals who have physical or cognitive disabilities or who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing
- **Technology is not limited to the information provided here or to what is known today—there is no limit to the devices or imaginations that may serve people when they are motivated to seek access.**

Why Assistive Technology?

- For a person without a disability, technology makes LIFE easier.
- For a person with a disability, technology makes LIFE possible.



AT for Deaf or Hard of Hearing

- Computers—email and Internet
- Texting and IM (instant message) communication
- Speech to text systems
- Remote real-time captioning
- Sony's Head Mounted Display Glasses
(movie theaters and language translation)

AT for Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Alarms & Alerts



Text Telephones (TTY or TDD)



Apps for Phones & Tablets



Relay



Captioning



Video Phones (VP)

Relay

- Allows phone communication between Deaf and hearing people
- May use either text-to-speech relay (TTY or IP) or Video Relay Service (VRS)
- Many prefer VRS due to its linguistic accessibility
- Free service for agencies/hearing individuals to use
- Deaf individual pays for internet or phone connection
- Relay is NOT a replacement for an interpreter
- The quality of interpretation may vary depending on the operator
- Georgia Relay: <http://www.georgiarelay.org/services/tty.html>
 - TTY (Text Telephone)
 - VCO (Voice Carry-Over)
 - HCO (Hearing Carry-Over)
 - STS (Speech-To-Speech)
 - VRS (Video Relay Service)

Relay Etiquette and Considerations

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There are specific rules established to make communicating via Relay easier—

- Address the relay operator as if they were the person you are talking to
 - Not “Tell them...,” but “I need to let you know...”
- Be aware there may be a delay, and be patient (esp. if using TTY)
- If using relay during a group meeting or conference call, each person should identify themselves each time they speak
 - “This is Susan speaking....”

AT Specific for Hard of Hearing

Hard of hearing individuals have various levels of functional hearing. The following technology may be assistive.



A single AT device may not work with everyone who is hard of hearing.



Pop Quiz!

When referring to the audiological condition of not being able to hear, we use lowercase "deaf."

TRUE or FALSE?

True

When referring to the group of people who share the language of ASL and it's related culture we use the uppercase Deaf.

TRUE or FALSE?

True

You become a member of the Deaf Community
simply by losing your hearing.

TRUE or FALSE?

False

You become a member of the community by embracing the language and culture. However it could be argued that if you lose your hearing you instantly join the outermost edge of the various rings of the Deaf Community. But the point is that the Deaf Community is a "community" of people bound not by their "hearing" (or lack of it) but rather by their culture and language.

Last Question

The first deaf woman to win an Academy Award for best actress was in the 1986 film, "Children of a Lesser God". Acting since the age of seven years old, her lack of hearing did not stop this gracious lady from achieving fame in a profession known for sound and vision.

What is her name?

- ☐ Mia Sara
- ☐ Marlee Matlin
- ☐ Molly Ringwald
- ☐ Annabeth Gish



How Can I help?

General Strategies for
Working with Deaf Survivors

Strategies for Working with Deaf Survivors

- Follow basic etiquette for interacting with Deaf people
- Provide reasonable accommodations
- Avoid victim-blaming language
- Use welcoming and inclusive language
- Ensure that you are conveying that environment is safe
- **Ask how you can best meet her needs**

Strategies for Working with Deaf Survivors

- Create a private space to discuss her experiences/needs
- Explain confidentiality and privacy for your agency. Who will you share this information with?
 - Explain mandates to report:
 - Child Abuse
 - Elder Abuse
 - Threats to Harm Self or Others
 - Abuse of adults with “significant” disabilities (not Deaf/HOH)
- Be flexible and allow for more time
- Advocate to ensure other community resources are accessible and help her connect with domestic violence advocate

Opportunities For Change in Domestic Violence Organizations

- Budget for accessibility
- Make sure services are accessible
- Enhance policies to be welcoming and inclusive of Deaf people
- Incorporate deaf-specific images and information in program materials
- Provide Deaf culture training to staff and volunteers
- Collaborate with Deaf services organizations

Information and Tools for Staff

- GA Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
www.gcdhh.org
- Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (GCADV) www.gcadv.org 404-209-0280
- Tools for Life www.gatfl.gatech.edu 404-894-0541
- Vera Institute of Justice 212-376-3096
- National Resource Center on Domestic Violence
www.nrcdv.org

Resources and Services for Survivors

- GA Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing www.gcdhh.org
404-292-5312 (Voice/TTY) 404-381-8447 (VP)
- Grace Deaf Services www.gracedeafservices.com
- Tools for Life www.gatfl.gatech.edu; 404-894-0541 (Voice)
- Georgia's certified family violence shelters
www.gadfcs.org/familyviolence/shelters.php
- Georgia Statewide Domestic Violence Hotline
800-334-2836 (Voice/TTY)
- National Domestic Violence Hotline www.ndvh.org
800-787-3224 (TTY) 800-799-SAFE(7233) (Voice)

Research Studies

- <http://vawnet.org/sc/deaf-survivors-domestic-and-sexual-violence>
- <http://vawnet.org/sites/default/files/assets/files/2016-10/WhenDeafHearingMeet.pdf>
- <http://rid.org/about-interpreting/hiring-an-interpreter/>
- <http://vawnet.org/sites/default/files/assets/files/2016-09/DeafVictim-ILManual.pdf>
- <http://vawnet.org/material/deaf-culture-and-domestic-violence>