PROVIDING ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING PATRONS IN YOUR LIBRARY

presented by Kathy MacMillan, NIC, M.L.S.
Kathy MacMillan (she/her) is a writer, American Sign Language interpreter, librarian, and signing storyteller. She presents ASL storytime programs for all ages, as well as workshops on programming, serving the Deaf community, and writing for children and adults. Kathy has worked in public and school libraries for 25 years, including serving as the Library/Media Specialist at the Maryland School for the Deaf. She lives in Baltimore, MD.

KathyMacMillan.com ~ StoriesByHand.com
QUESTION

Appropriate terms to refer to a person who cannot hear include which of the following?

a) deaf mute
b) deaf or hard of hearing
c) hearing impaired
d) deaf and dumb
ANSWER

Appropriate terms to refer to a person who cannot hear include:

a) deaf mute

b) deaf or hard of hearing

c) hearing impaired

d) deaf and dumb
QUESTION

All deaf people use sign language.

- True
- False
All deaf people use sign language.

• False
QUESTION

What is the difference between “deaf” and “Deaf”?

a) Someone who is deaf has a mild hearing loss, while someone who is Deaf has a profound hearing loss.

b) Someone who is deaf cannot hear, while someone who is Deaf is a member of a cultural group.

c) Someone who is deaf does not consider themself to be part of a cultural group, while someone who is Deaf does.

d) Someone who is deaf would never use sign language, while someone who is Deaf would always use sign language.
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American Deaf Culture:

The shared values, beliefs, and behaviors, based on shared experience, of the deaf community in the United States.
Central Values of American Deaf Culture

- Access to communication
- Deafness does not need to be “fixed”
- Community
- American Sign Language
- Deaf Culture traditions, art, and storytelling
- Clarity of communication
“[T]here are many ways to be deaf and many ways to communicate. All of them should be respected, and a person’s choice should be respected.”

– Dr. I. King Jordan, former president of Gallaudet University
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 1990
The Americans with Disabilities Act

Requires the provision of qualified interpreters for services provided by state and local governments, public accommodations, commercial facilities, and private entities related to educational and occupational certification.

These places must “furnish auxiliary aids when necessary to ensure effective communication, unless an undue burden or fundamental alteration would result.”
Basic Principles for Welcoming Deaf Patrons

• Respect
  • Look directly at the person with whom you are talking.
  • To get the person’s attention, tap their shoulder or arm, or wave your hand.

• Positive attitude
  • Don’t say “Never mind“!!!

• Visual awareness
  • Make sure the person is looking at you before you speak, sign, or gesture.
  • Don’t make people look at two things at the same time.

• Flexibility
  • Try different ways to communicate.

• Follow the patron’s lead
Types of Accommodations

- Physical space and environment
- Auditory
- The written word
- Sign language interpreters
- Tactile formats
- Other
Physical space and environment

• Clear visuals and signage
• Preferred seating for best sightlines
• Making use of context and environment for communication
  • Interacting with items in the environment
• Special Needs Communication Guide
Auditory Accommodations and Amplification

- Hearing aids
- Cochlear implants
- Microphones
- Assistive Listening Devices
Hearing Aids

https://www.hearingloss.org/hearing-help/technology/hearing-aids/
Cochlear Implant

“Normal” ear

Implanted ear

https://courses.cs.washington.edu/courses/cse590w/10sp/deaf-tech10.pdf
Microphones

- USE THEM!
- No, really. Use them, and make it clear that others are expected to as well.
- “I don’t need to use the microphone, do I?” – YES. Yes, you do.
- Portable microphone systems
- Headset microphones
Assistive Listening Devices

- Amplify sound
- Reduce background noise
- Counteract poor acoustics and echo
FM Systems

Credit: American Speech-Language–Hearing Association
Audio Induction/ Hearing Loop

The Written Word

- Writing notes back and forth
- Whiteboards
- Texting or computer documents
- Live Transcribe/Live Captions on smartphones
- UbiDuo (image on next slide)
- TTY
- Captioned telephones
- Closed captions/open captions
- Automatic captioning
- Live captioning/CART
- Transcripts
UBIDUO

https://scomm.com/ubiduo/
TTYs/Text Relay
Captioned Telephones

https://www.captel.com/
Captions

• Closed captions/open captions
• Automatic captioning

Well, our new one is SHE SPOKE: 14 MORE WOMEN WHO RAISED THEIR VOICES AND CHANGED THE WORLD,
Live captioning/CART

https://www.captionfirst.com/
Transcripts

Typically provided after the fact

May be used in conjunction with other accommodations
Sign Language Interpreters

- In-person Interpreters
- Video Remote Interpreting
- Video Relay Service (phone calls only)
The ADA requires “Qualified Interpreters”

- Interpreters in the U.S. may hold national certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, or the National Association of the Deaf.
  - CSC (Comprehensive Skills Certificate)
  - CI/CT (Certificate of Interpreting/Certificate of Transliterating)
  - NAD I, II, III, IV
  - NIC, NIC Advanced, NIC Master (National Interpreter Certification) – now streamlined to only NIC
Qualified Interpreters

Some U.S. interpreters may hold certification from state quality-assurance programs, such as EIPA (Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment).

Some states require certification or licensure for interpreters to work.

State regulations concerning interpreters: https://rid.org/programs/gap/state-by-state-regulations/
The Reality:

- There are not nearly enough certified interpreters to meet the demand
  - RID has 10,385 active certified members
    (https://rid.org/programs/membership/publications/)
- In most areas, no certification is required to work as an interpreter
- Non-certified does not necessarily mean unqualified
- Most agencies have their own screening tools
What do ASL interpreters do?

- Facilitate communication between deaf AND hearing people.
- Facilitate cross-cultural communication
- Terminology:
  - Interpreter vs. translator
  - Interpreter vs. signer
  - Interpreter vs. transliterator
- Specialized types of interpreting/transliterating
  - Deaf-Blind
  - Relay
  - Working with Semilingual or Alingual Consumers (Minimal Language Skills)
  - Oral transliteration
The RID Code of Professional Conduct

1) Interpreters adhere to standards of confidential communication.

2) Interpreters possess the professional skills and knowledge required for the specific interpreting situation.

3) Interpreters conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the specific interpreting situation.

4) Interpreters demonstrate respect for consumers.

5) Interpreters demonstrate respect for colleagues, interns, and students of the profession.

6) Interpreters maintain ethical business practices.

7) Interpreters engage in professional development.
Finding and Hiring Interpreters

- Freelancers vs. Agencies
- RID Interpreter Locater Tool: rid.org – click “Search the Registry”
- How to determine what you need
  - Consumer requirements
  - Type of assignment
  - Length of assignment
  - Number of consumers involved
Interpreters: Standard Practices

- A 2-hour minimum is charged for all assignments.
- Assignments over 2 hours, or very difficult content, will require a team of 2 interpreters.
- Assignments cancelled with less than 24-48 hours’ notice are charged at the full rate.
- The interpreter will arrive 15 minutes early.
- Standard rates vary depending on freelance status, area, type of assignment, and certification.
- For more information about standard interpreter practices, see the Standard Practice Papers at www.rid.org.
When Hiring an Interpreter, Provide:

- Date and time of assignment
- Setting (storytime, board meeting, etc.)
- The length of the assignment
- Number of deaf/hard of hearing and hearing people involved
- Deaf consumers’ name(s) (if known)
- Contact person’s name and phone number/email
- Directions and parking instructions
- As much content info as possible (outline, agenda, program, video, etc.)
When working with an interpreter:

• Allow time beforehand for the interpreter to preconference with the presenter.

• Work with the interpreter to determine best placement and sight lines.

• Work out how issues such as turn-taking and clarification will be handled.

• Remember that the interpreter will interpret everything they see and hear!

• Look at and speak directly to the deaf person/people.
When working with an interpreter:

- Remember that the interpreter will be using processing time and will be slightly behind the speaker. Allow for this when asking questions, etc.

- If visual information, such as a PowerPoint, is used, allow time for the deaf person to look at both it and the interpreter.

- Remember that the interpreter will need breaks!

- Let the interpreter be an interpreter, not a participant.

- Don’t walk in front of the interpreter.
Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)

https://sorenson.com/si/video-remote-interpreting/
• What is Video Relay Service (VRS)?
  • VRS is a federally-funded videotelecommunication service that allows videophone users and voice telephone users to communicate through a sign language interpreter.
• Service is free to users and is available 24/7
• Private companies provide the equipment and service, and are reimbursed for interpreted minutes in the U.S. by the Federal Communications Commission.
How VRS Works

1. Deaf user signs to the interpreter

2. Interpreter speaks to the hearing user

3. Hearing user speaks to interpreter

4. Interpreter signs to the deaf user

From www.sorenson.com
• VRS vs TTY (teletypewriter) Relay Services
• VRS companies provide videophone users with a 10-digit telephone number that will connect hearing callers to an interpreter automatically.
• Voice Carryover (VCO): for videophone users who wish to use their own voices during the call
• Spanish Language VRS service is also available in the U.S.
Using Video Relay Service

• Receiving a VRS call
• Making a VRS call
• Things to Know:
  • Speak directly to the deaf person
  • Allow time for the interpreting process
  • Be careful with long account numbers, especially if they also include letters
  • Be clear about local information, as your interpreter may be in another state
Tactile Formats

- Vibrating Alarms
- Tactile ASL Interpreters
- ProTactile ASL Interpreters
- Braille materials
- Refreshable Braille Displays
Vibrating Alarms

https://www.amazon.com/Vibrating-Sleeper-Digital-Bedroom-Desk-Travel-Display/dp/B07Q3BZXVM
Tactile ASL Interpreters

ProTactile ASL Interpreters

https://www.perkins.org/qa-how-pro-tactile-american-sign-language-ptasl-is-changing-the-conversation/
Braille

https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/resource/braille-books-dk/

Refreshable Braille Display
Other

- Speech and speechreading
- Oral transliterators
- Cued Speech
6 Simple and Cheap Things Every Library Can Do to Improve Access

1. Turn on the captions on any TVs playing in public areas.
2. When playing films or videos in programs, turn on the closed captions or subtitles as a matter of course. (Even if you have an interpreter!)
3. Provide closed captions for every video containing sound on your website or social media pages.
4. Make it a standard expectation for presenters to use microphones with large groups.
5. Use a headset microphone for recordings and online programs.
6. Write a simple statement about your accessibility provisions and post it in a place where patrons can easily find it. Make sure it is clear, succinct, and provides simple instructions for how to make a request. Post it everywhere that is relevant, including on individual program registration pages.
Resources to Know

- Maryland Deaf Culture Digital Library: https://www.marylandddcdl.org
- Recommended Resources from Kathy MacMillan: https://storiesbyhand.com/resources/
- Free online courses about accommodations and access from National Deaf Center: https://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/learn
Questions?
Hands Up!: Live ASL Practice for Library Staff (6-week online series)

- Beginner: Tuesdays, January 30 to March 5, 2024, 12-1 PM Eastern/11 AM-12 PM Central
- Intermediate: Tuesdays, March 19 to April 23, 2024, 12-1 PM Eastern/11 AM-12 PM Central
- Review Series: Tuesdays, May 7 to June 11, 2024, 12-1 PM Eastern/11 AM-12 PM Central

Signing in Storytime

- Weather Signs: Wednesday, April 11, 2024, 11 AM-12 PM Eastern/10-11 AM Central
- Sign, Baby, Sign!: ASL in Baby and Toddler Storytimes: Tuesday, June 4, 2024, 2-4 PM Eastern/1-3 PM Central
- Summer Reading Special: Tuesday, May 21, 2024, 2-3 PM Eastern/1-2 PM Central
- Summer Signs: Wednesday, May 29, 2024, 1-2 PM Eastern/12-1 PM Central

General Programming:

- Storytime Stuff for Beginners: Wednesday, April 17, 2024, 1-3 PM Eastern/12-2 PM Central
- Storytime Stuff – Advanced: Wednesday, May 8, 2024, 1-3 PM Eastern/12-2 PM Central

Publishing:

- The Getting-Published Guide for Library Staff: Thursday, May 2, 2024, 2-4 PM Eastern/1-3 PM Central
Upcoming ALA eCourses

- **6 week eCourse**
  - *American Sign Language for Children in Storytime or in the Classroom*
  - Next session begins
  - April 2, 2024

- **6 week eCourse**
  - *American Sign Language for Library Staff: Level 1*
  - Next session begins
  - August 5, 2024

- **6 week eCourse**
  - *American Sign Language for Library Staff: Level 2*
  - Next session begins
  - October 7, 2024
Book now for Summer 2024:
American Sign Language Adventure
Indoor, outdoor, and online programs available for all ages.

Learn basic American Sign Language as we go on a signing adventure through stories, songs, and rhymes for the whole family! Presented by Kathy MacMillan, author of the Little Hands Signing series and Little Hands and Big Hands: Children and Adults Signing Together.

More info at StoriesByHand.com/SummerReading
Thank you!

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