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### American Societies Impact on American Deaf Culture

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# American Societies Impact on American Deaf Culture

*Deaf culture:*

*"A unique medium for personal expression, a spatial and visual language that does not require the use of sound and emphasizes hands, faces, bodies and eyes." (HandsandVoices.org)*

## Where are the implications?

The Deaf Community faces issues with employment, education, social isolation, and other important societal aspects.

*"About 33% of working-age, hearing adults have a bachelor's degree or higher, but only 18% of those who are deaf or HOH do." (VerywellHealth.com)*

## How can I become more involved in Deaf Culture?

Encourage yourself, as well as others, to become educated on American Sign Language. If you want to learn about a culture, you must first be able to communicate with those within it.



## What is American Sign Language?

American Sign Language is the connecting bridge between the Deaf and the hearing world. It is how we, as a Hearing society, are able to communicate with those of the Deaf culture. Further, it serves as the Deaf Communities main form of communication and is strictly visual, as opposed to the hearing world's verbal form of communication.

## How can I begin to learn ASL?

Looking into courses offered by your University, reading books, using websites, watching educational videos, etc. are all great places to start. Additionally, there are many communities online where one can engage with and learn from others who are Deaf or also learning the Language.



## What about "Cochlear Implants"?

"The deaf community sees Cochlear Implants and hearing aids as a tool rather than a solution. It could add a benefit, but there's about a 20 percent chance of a deaf person being able to use their hearing to a level that would assist them. It's like one out of five kids experience success with this, so four kids are left with this delay in language, this delay in learning, and this delay in life, because of this technology."

- Marvin Miller, president of the Indiana Association of the Deaf

## How can we, a Hearing society, Help?

First, implementing programs which offer basic ASL courses could encourage individuals to gain an education and understanding of the language of Deaf Culture, regardless of whether they are hearing or deaf. Further steps to help lessen American societies impact on deaf culture could be simply advocating for more funding for communication services (i.e. interpreters, video relay services, etc.), improving access to/understanding of social environment factors for deaf families through closed captions, and encouraging deaf/hard of hearing individuals to take occupations within public health and other health-related fields so they can serve on behalf of members of their own deaf culture.

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- Learn ASL!**
- <https://www.signingsavvy.com/>
  - <https://www.handspeak.com/>
  - <https://www.signlanguage101.com/>
  - <https://www.lesstontutor.com/ASLgenhome/>