

## DEAF CULTURE TIPS

Deaf culture is a social belief system, in which being deaf is viewed as a type of human experience as opposed to a disease or a disability. Deaf culture encompasses the behaviors, literary tradition, values, and history, in communities that use sign language for communication. Many people in the deaf culture community have pride in their identity as a deaf individual, and in deaf culture the language used to describe being deaf is carefully chosen to ensure a positive identity. In deaf culture, being deaf is not viewed as something that needs to be fixed.

- The sign language used in the United States and Canada is not universal. Countries around the world have their own sign languages.
- Examples of what deaf culture encompasses includes social customs, collectivism, deaf art, deaf theater, deaf humor, deaf folklore, deaf organizations, and deaf history.
- Deaf people enjoy being with other deaf people as a part of a community, which is collectivism in deaf culture.
- In deaf culture it is a longer process for a deaf person to say goodbye at a gathering. They make their way around to say goodbye to everyone, which takes longer but it part of the interconnected values of deaf culture.
- In deaf culture it isn't considered rude to ask each other questions that some may consider private. For instance it is normal to ask someone why they gained weight - because if they don't ask it could be assumed they don't care about the person's well-being.
- Deaf people are statistically better drivers than drivers who can hear. However in some countries it is not legal for deaf people to drive a car.

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- Deaf people are more visually aware when they are driving than those who rely on sounds for cues. They are more focused and less likely to be distracted.
- In deaf culture people look at each other's face, not their hands, when communicating. Facial expression is considered a major part of the communication process.
- When attempting to gain the attention of someone who is deaf, it is rude to wave your hand in front of their face. Tapping them on the shoulder is a much more acceptable method to grab their attention.
- Those in the deaf culture community consider themselves members of a linguistic community, and the family members of a deaf person are also considered members, even if they are not deaf themselves.
- Although there are hundreds of sign languages around the world, sign language itself is the fourth most popular language in the world.
- American Sign Language is more similar to French Sign Language than sign languages from other countries.
- Technology is important to deaf culture. Technology can improve communication between deaf people and non-deaf people significantly.
- Properly designed architecture can make communication for deaf people much easier, by minimizing obstructions and including design elements that free up the hands for sign language.
- Within deaf culture there are many notable writers and poets, as well as actors and actresses, artists, and others who represent deaf culture.