

# Visual Language Tips

For Parents and Educators  
working with Deaf & Hard of Hearing children

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## Be patient with yourself!

New languages take years to learn ~ be patient with yourself! Provide visual access to your home language (and culture) while you learn sign language by learning to cue your native language. You are already proficient in it.



## It is impossible to communicate in two languages at the same time.

Signing ASL and talking English at the same time provides only pieces of the signed language and spoken language. The goal is complete access, so focus on one language at a time in an interaction when modeling language.



## Languages are best modeled by native users.

Enlist the help of Deaf individuals to expose children to proficient signed language models, especially while you are building your skills! Take advantage of the virtual world! Even if there are no local Deaf native users of ASL, they can be accessed via your computer!



## Integrate language into everything you do by "narrating life"

Attach language to even the most mundane of routines. This "thinking aloud" provides amazing exposure to language. Ex: "It's raining outside, so I need to remember to take our umbrella!" Just make sure the language is complete and accessible to them!



## Quality over Quickness!

Remember, speed is not important – but complete language access is! When learning to cue your native language or learning to sign, you may feel frustrated by having to go slower in the beginning. Take solace in knowing you are providing access to whole language...not pieces!