

This TEDI resource sheet offers some strategies and resources that could be used by **teachers** of D/deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHOH) children to stimulate language use and development at home.

To learn language, children must hear or see it and have opportunities to communicate. Many DHOH children are being deprived of language stimulation sessions as a result of enforced social isolation during the pandemic. As teachers, we need to consider not only the potential for language delays, but also the secondary effects of limited communication on a child's behaviour, social interaction, skills development and self-esteem. Signing children may be at particular risk of language deprivation if family members are unable to sign. It is important to encourage family members to learn sign language.

Supporting DHOH children to learn at home

- Establish a learning routine
- Minimise background noise and visual distractions
- Make sure hearing devices are working
- Present information in a simple, structured and sequential way
- Allow extra time for processing information
- Check for understanding
- Arrange times for feedback and to monitor progress
- Send out homework packs with clear, step-by-step instructions on how to use them
- Provide families with your contact details and set times when they can contact you if they have any questions

Community support

Remind families of the community resources that are available to them. These may include their local library, religious organisations and places of worship, the local D/deaf community, and community groups and sport leaders.

Managing anxiety

Help parents/caregivers to recognise that their DHOH child may feel anxious or fearful as a result of the changes that have occurred in response to the pandemic. Encourage them to keep to a regular routine, help their child to play and relax, and check on whether their child is experiencing any stigma. It is also important that children are helped to distinguish between what they see in the media and their own experience, and to honestly address any questions they may have.

Suggested resources

HI HOPES

Home-based early intervention for families with DHOH babies. D/deaf mentors can assist with learning and developing sign language and/or spoken language, and advise on community-based sign language services.
<https://www.wits.ac.za/hi-hopes/>

ROOTS RESOURCES

Free eBooks, worksheets and videos.
<https://www.wits.ac.za/centre-for-deaf-studies/roots-resources/>

SOUTH AFRICAN SIGN LANGUAGE DICTIONARY

A teacher, friend and family resource for beginners. Quick and easy reference to learning South African signs with SASL, English, isiZulu and Afrikaans.
https://www.wits.ac.za/media/wits-university/faculties-and-schools/humanities/wits-school-of-education/centre-for-deaf-studies/documents/Einsteinhands%20dictionary%20Inside%20pages_lowres.pdf

DEAF FEDERATION OF SOUTH AFRICA (DeafSA)

D/deaf services and sign language classes available in South Africa.
<http://www.deafsa.co.za/>
<https://www.facebook.com/DeafSA-271471837806/>

SIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT (SLED)

All SLED work is focused on D/deaf education, with the primary emphasis on literacy in South African Sign Language and written English.
<https://www.sled.org.za/>
Free SASL literature on YouTube.
<https://www.sled.org.za/resources-media/>

DeafNET

Facilitates and promotes education, development, training, social services, and spiritual and mental well-being.
<https://www.deafnet.org/>

BLIND HISTORY

First-ever SASL podcast series about getting to know history's greatest men and women.
<http://cliffcentral.com/podcasts/interpreted-content/>