

Children of Deaf Adults (CODA) A Guide for Educational Settings and Educational Professionals

Background Information

- Some people identify as 'deaf', this group of people regard their deafness as a central part of their identity and culture rather than a disability. Deaf people regard themselves as part of the deaf community, whose first or preferred language is BSL (British Sign Language).
- You may find that you work or know a child or young person who has deaf parents. The child may or may not be deaf themselves.
- A child of deaf adults (CODA) is a person who has one or more deaf parents. They may have been raised within a deaf cultural home and may have used British Sign Language as a first language. The deaf population is a diverse group with varying degrees of deafness or hearing and a range of communication needs and preferences.
- Other people with a hearing need may communicate through spoken language and use hearing aids or cochlear implants to aid their hearing.
- It is currently considered more inclusive to refer to all people with lowercase d for deaf and others prefer hearing needs rather than hearing impairment. The CST have Language and Communication policy relating to this.

General guidance when working with CODA families

- It is important to establish preferred communication mode with any deaf parents for different scenarios, emergency contact, formal meetings, informal meetings, assemblies etc. Some would like a BSL interpreter, whilst others, would prefer to listen and lip read as well as having written information.
- Some parents may request other forms of communication support, such as a home schoolbook, emails or text messages for key messages.
- Remember do not to use the child to interpret for a parent. This can shift family dynamics resulting in the child taking on more responsibility than appropriate for their age and can leave parents feeling disempowered. It is important to be sensitive to the needs of the family.
- It is important to remember when working with CODAs that the child may have been raised with a different cultural experience and spoken English may not be their first language. These children may need some Speech and Language support to develop their understanding and use of spoken language.
- You may discuss with parents whether a referral to services which enable CODAs to meet others with the same cultural identity might be helpful.

CODA.UK General Enquiries: enquiries@codauk.org
www.brentyouthzone.org.uk/providers/brent-deaf-coda-children-of-deaf-adults-youth-club/

This is a CODA youth club, in Brent and meets on a Monday after school

Supporting communication with deaf parents/carers/families

- ✓ Ensure your face is visible and well-lit when talking.
- ✓ Do not sit with your back to the window and ensure that the deaf parent has their back to any window.
- ✓ Try to find a quiet place to talk or reduce background noise.
- ✓ Use natural gestures and facial expression to support your message.
- ✓ When in a group, take turns so only one person is talking at a time.
- ✓ Try to avoid talking over others and make it clear when the topic of conversation changes.
- ✓ Speak clearly, using full sentences.
- ✓ Avoid use of abbreviations and jargon.
- ✓ Maintain a natural pace and volume.
- ✓ Speaking slowly and overly-loudly with exaggerated lip movements can make it harder to lip read.
- ✓ Check with deaf parents that they can access what is being said and if any adjustments are required.
- ✓ Speak directly to the deaf person, not the interpreter.
- ✓ Don't feel uncomfortable if the deaf person looks towards the interpreter and not towards you.

Children's Sensory Team (CST)

The CST collaborates with CODAs who are deaf or have hearing needs. For hearing CODAs, CST offers general guidance and information, but these individuals are not included on the CST support and review caseload.

Interpreters

If parental preference is for a BSL interpreter, ensure a qualified interpreter is booked. The Equality Act (2010) is a law that was created to make sure that all people are treated fairly, this includes Deaf BSL users. The NRCPD holds details of all registered interpreters who you can book directly: [NRCPD | Home](#) **Please note:** the CST does not provide interpreters.

At the bottom of the first website page on our Local Offer there are a list of some other providers. [The Children's Sensory Team \(CST\) – London Borough of Harrow](#)

British Sign language (BSL) interpreter

Here are *some* BSL interpreter agencies that you can choose from:

- [HAD.org.uk - Deaf Services](#)
- [Book BSL Interpreters UK-Wide with Renowned Deaf-Led Agency — Remark!](#)
- [BSL Interpreter and Specialist Support Providers](#)
- [Join Deaf Umbrella Ltd for Expert Deaf Support Services | BSL Interpreting in London & South East](#)

Children's Sensory Team (CST) | Education Services | Peoples Directorate

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Local Offer: www.harrow.gov.uk/cst