

Resources for deaf children and their families

1. Sign Language. Free BSL 20 hour course for all under 18's (hearing and deaf) and reduced fees for key workers

<https://british-sign.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/360044794654-Coronavirus-Crisis-Discounted-Free-Enrolments>

2. Sensory activities

<https://www.hearinglikeme.com/sensory-activities-for-deaf-kids/>

3. Balance, strength and body awareness exercises for HI children who often need help in these areas
 - Jumping along a Hopscotch or similar Playground Markings requires a child to change movement patterns quickly.
 - Sitting, kneeling or standing on a platform swing or suspended ladder requires varying degrees of balance. When swinging equipment moves in unexpected ways it forces the body's trunk to do more work and improves core strength.
 - Moving over unstable surfaces such as moving bridges, or just simply beanbags on the floor, mean the trunk has to do more work to keep upright.
 - Walking over balance beams, rubber tyres, and stepping stones or logs with big jumps will really challenge a child's balance as well as allowing them to have a lot of fun travelling across the playground in new ways! If this is too adventurous, start off by marking a line across the ground with chalk to make a pretend balance beam that is flush with the ground. This will help to reduce the fear or risk of falling until the child is ready to progress onto a balance beam.
 - Group games such as football, netball, cricket and rounders work well for everyone and particularly for deaf children as they have clearly defined rules. Staying in position to catch, hit, kick or throw a ball all requires balance. Grab a bat and a ball and have some fun!
 - Riding a bike, trike or scooter and navigating across a playground require a child to make frequent changes to their posture to maintain balance.
 - Stand on top of a bosu ball, balance board or a stool on one leg. This is challenge in itself but can you jump and down? Before attempting this, try standing with one foot on the ground while the other foot is resting on the stool, ball or balance board in front. You can then progress to standing on one leg or up on a higher level. If this becomes too easy, try catching and throwing a ball to friends at the same time!
 - Have some fun on a trampoline! Jumping up and down without falling will work on balance and body strength and it's a great aerobic activity too! Try standing on just one leg. To make it even harder, ask someone else to jump on the trampoline while trying to keep balanced! Trampolines are brilliant because if you do take a tumble, it's a gentle landing.

4. Activities for home

Activity 1 - Spot the difference

Take some card or paper and draw an outline of an object or animal. You can use a picture from a magazine as an outline or template. Then draw the object four or five times on the same piece of paper. When you draw the pictures, try and draw them the same but change the details on one of them. For example, if you draw a dog, have one with a long tail and the rest with short tails.

Ask your child to find the differences. You can use the game to introduce or reinforce words or signs by asking questions such as:

- are the ears the same?
- are they the same colour?
- are they the same size?

Activity 2 - Making jigsaws

It's easy to make your own simple jigsaws. Collect birthday cards, comics or magazines and choose pictures that are clear, simple and mean something to the child, such as pictures of everyday objects or situations. Stick the picture onto some card and cut it into pieces. You can also encourage children to make their own jigsaws. Jigsaws can help children with their visual skills and their fine motor skills (skills in making slight movement) as they match and fit the pieces together.

Activity 3 - Dressing up

A box with clothes in is all that's needed for this game. Ask relatives or friends for unwanted items. Car boot or garage sales are also great places for buying unusual clothes and hats. Dressing up and play-acting can help children learn about different roles and the world around them.

Activity 4 - Missing things

Gather together several different household objects and place them on a tray. Ask your child to look at the objects. Then cover the tray with a cloth and remove one of the objects. Ask your child which one is missing. You can make this harder by adding more objects to the tray. It's also a good game for taking in turns as your child can take away items and you can guess what's missing.

"The missing things game was one of my favourite games that I used to play with my son. We had great fun taking it in turns to take away objects from a tray."

Activity 5 - Story strips

Think of a story. It doesn't have to be complicated. It could even be an event or activity in your child's life, such as going swimming or visiting relatives. Divide the story into four or five parts. Then draw the different parts of the story onto a piece of card and divide the different sections with lines.

Use the story strip to tell the story, pointing at the different sections. You can also ask your child to retell the story or you can ask them questions about what's happening in the different pictures. To make the activity more difficult you could cut the card into the different parts of the story, mix them up and ask your child to put them into the correct order.

"We found this story strip really helped our children (I have two deaf children) develop their language as well as an awareness of order."

Activity 6 - Labels

This is a great way to help children associate words with objects. Place cards on different household objects. You can also introduce descriptive words such as 'small chair', 'large chair', 'blue lamp' and so on.

"We had labels on nearly everything so that our son could associate the words with the objects and items. Sometimes we would give him the labels and ask him to put them on the right object such as a table or chair."

Activity 7 - Shopping list

When you go shopping, make a small list of items for your child to get at the shops. Stick a picture next to the word to help them make the connection between the object and its name. You can make the activity more complicated in different ways such as writing the items and asking your child to draw pictures to go with it, or by giving them the picture and asking them to write the word.

Activity 8 - Playing shops

When you have decided on the type of shop you want to create, collect together as many different relevant items as possible. Your child can help you label each item with its name and a price. Use a tub or a box as a cash register. Try and use real coins, as it is good for children to get used to handling real money. You can also use other items such as buttons. Have a bag and purse that you or your child can use when you are playing.

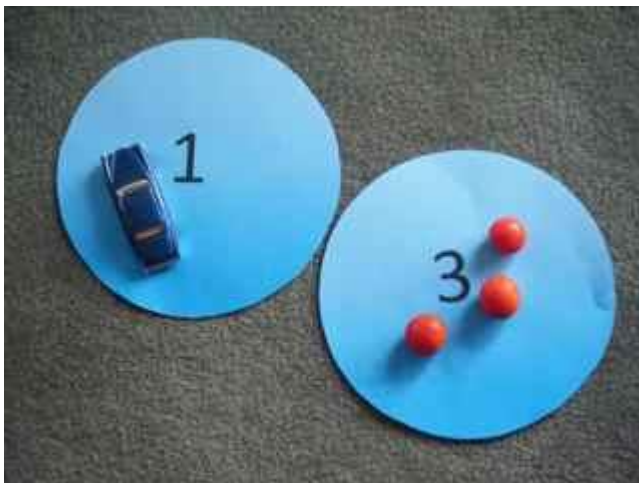
"Playing shops is great fun and is a great way to help your child understand the world around them. We used to play at being all kinds of shops such as the supermarket, a toy shop, a clothes shop and the bank."

Activity 9 - Visual diary

For your weekly chart you can have different pictures or photographs of the activities you are going to do. For young children, you can stick the picture on the chart yourself. For older children, you can encourage them to stick the picture on the chart and describe the activity, or get the things they need ready (such as a towel and swimming costume).

"We had a chart on the wall with the days of the week on it. Under each day of the week we would stick a picture of the activity we were going to do."

Activity 10 - Matching numbers



Cut out some circles and write a number from 1 to 10 in each one. Collect together lots of different objects and ask your child to put the right number of items in each circle.

"My son found it difficult to learn his numbers so we invented a game to help him. It involved placing the right number of toys on a number card. Then we developed the game to introduce adding and subtracting. Not only did it help him to learn but we had a good time together. I really didn't want to make it seem like learning but more like playing a game."

Activity 11 - Measuring

This is a simple activity. All you really need is a ruler or a tape measure. You could also ask your child to draw a picture to show what the smallest and largest things you measured were.

"We used to measure everything - teddies, toys, furniture, garden plants. It was a way of introducing size, shape and concepts such as bigger, smaller."

Activity 12 - Cooking

Cooking is a great way for children to learn and have fun. It involves a lot of learning activities such as planning, estimating, measuring and timing as well as handling the ingredients and cooking utensils.

"There are so many things you can do during your everyday life that can help and support your child. We used to love baking cakes together, especially measuring out the ingredients, oh and of course eating the final product."

Activity 13 - Gardening

Like cooking, gardening is good for developing many different skills and for learning about nature. As well as planting vegetables, seeds and plants, there are many other activities you can do. For example, if you go for a walk, you and your child can collect different types of leaves. When you get home, stick the leaves into a scrapbook or onto paper. Have some books about trees ready so your child can look up which trees the different leaves came from and write the name next to the leaf.

"When the children were young we didn't really have much outside space, only a patio. However, each of the children had their own plant pots with different plants and vegetables. They used to get excited each time there was a new tomato on the plant or a new flower came out."

5. Baby Beats music programme for young listeners

Available via a free app:

<https://advancedbionics.com/uk/en/campaign/babybeats.html>

6. The listening room

Here you will find a host of free, fun activities and resources to support the development of speech, language, and listening skills in people of all ages with a hearing loss.

<https://thelisteningroom.com/>

7. The Buzz Website

The **Buzz** gives deaf children and young people the opportunity to check out what's happening and to find out about the things that matter to them.

<https://www.buzz.org.uk/>

8. NDCS

The National Deaf Children Society provides support to families of deaf children and young people .

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/>

The website provides a useful link. <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/>

The National Deaf Children Society is a great resource for advice and support and links on a whole range of issues such as equipment, mental wellbeing, communication, sibling strategies ways to teach maths, sign language etc.

For professionals <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/blog/coronavirus-and-support-for-deaf-children-information-for-professionals/>

For families here: <https://www.ndcs.org.uk/blog/coronavirus-and-support-for-deaf-children-information-for-families/>.

11. Useful apps for the I pad

Signed Songs for children

Nursery Rhymes in Sign with Scarlett

DK Times Tables

Book Creator

Draw Stars

Fireworks

Art of Glow

BSL Signed Songs for children

CBeebies clip for Deaf Awareness Week.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/52564059>