

Language & Learning

Getting Ready for School

Placements Designed for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

In some classrooms deaf or hard of hearing and hearing children are team-taught by two teachers. Teachers need to plan carefully to be sure neither group of students gets too much or too little attention.

When children with hearing loss live in a large metropolitan area, in public schools self-contained classes may exist for children who need special teaching most of the time. Because these classes are in public schools, there are chances for mainstreaming socially or academically when the teacher feels that a child can learn best in that setting. Self contained classes may use a variety of communication methods, even within a single classroom, depending on the needs of the children.

Day schools for children who are deaf or hard of hearing are different than public school programs because they usually are in separate buildings. Children with normal hearing may be brought in as language models. Although day schools may use a variety of communication methods, they are usually devoted to a single philosophy: oral, total communication, bilingual/bicultural, or auditory/verbal. Some day schools only work with young children, preparing them for a mainstream placement at a later time.

Residential programs for children who are deaf or hard of hearing serve students who need special programs, but live too far away to go home each afternoon. Almost every state has a State School for the Deaf. Other residential schools are private, and some have been well known for many years. Residential schools may use oral communication of some kind, American Sign Language communication, Bilingual-Bicultural education (written English and American Sign Language) or Total Communication (use of speech, a manual form of English, and any other way of communication useful to a student.)