An Introduction to American Deaf Culture

TREASURING AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE
We carry a special place in our hearts for American Sign Language. ASL is a visual language created by the Deaf Community, a language that continues to gain acceptance and recognition.

DIRECTNESS
We believe in “straight talk,” being direct with the purpose of being clear. We do not like to beat around the bush or confuse with flowery statements. This includes physical descriptions about a person’s appearance and may be considered too blunt or rude by those who do not identify with Deaf culture.

EYE CONTACT
We value eye contact when communicating with each other. This is essential for clear access to visual communication, shows we are paying attention, and cues us to important subtle nuances in signing and facial expressions.

HUGS
We are often huggers. As a common practice in Deaf culture, we hug in greeting and in parting, though the hug in parting is more important, sealing the farewell.

KEEPING OTHERS INFORMED
We have many practices of sharing information about a wide range of topics, including what may seem too personal to the general public. Nothing is taboo because we value information, especially as a result of missing out on so much auditory information. We also value catching others up on what may be missed in conversation because we know how it feels to be left out.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON DEAF CULTURE, PLEASE CONTACT US AT:
DEAF & HARD OF HEARING SERVICE CENTER
www.dhhsc.org