



Working with Children of Deaf Adults (CODA)

**A guide for schools and
professionals**

Who are CODA UK & Ireland?



Company

We are a non for profit community interest company run by a group of volunteers. Any profits made through our activities are channeled back into providing opportunities for CODAs of all ages.

Our Mission

CODA UK & Ireland exists to provide support and opportunities for children and adults who have D/deaf parents.

Our aims

To raise awareness of the positive CODA experience

To provide opportunities for CODAs to meet

To support professional working with CODAs

Our Provision



Workshops

We provide workshops for children and young people aged from 7-17 years. These opportunities provide young CODAs a safe space to meet, interact and access informal learning activities.

Camps

We run annual camps aimed at children and young people age 7 - 17 years. Staffed by adult CODAs, we are able to create a unique space in which our members can explore their identity whilst meeting new and old friends.

Adult Socials

We facilitate opportunities for CODAs to meet via conferences, workshops, social activities and camps. We also have a strong social media presence which affords CODAs the ability to strengthen their own networks.

What is a CODA?



A CODA is an individual who has one or more Deaf parents. This means they were raised within a Deaf cultural home and may have used British Sign Language as a native language.

Child of Deaf Adult

Deaf culture is a set of social beliefs, behaviours, art, literary traditions, history, values and shared institutions of communities that are influenced by deafness and which uses sign language as a means of communication.

What is Deaf Culture?

British Sign Language



British Sign Language (BSL) is a visual language which incorporates hand shapes, gesture, facial expression and body language. BSL has its own grammatical structure and syntax and as a language, it is not dependant nor is strongly related to English. As a result, some Deaf people do not have high English literacy skills this should not be taken as a reflection of intelligence as the Deaf person will be fluent in their native language.

Some CODAs are not encouraged to develop their sign language skills, and this can limit their ability to communicate their feelings to their parents. Most CODAs learn enough sign language to act as a communication bridge between the deaf and hearing world. This can both be a blessing and a burden but is definitely a responsibility that is given to the child at a young age.

Research indicates children who interpret:

- Adopt nurturing, caregiving behaviours
- Have poorer psychological health than their peers
- Can feel proud and useful when interpreting for parents
- Are more prone to take up risk taking behaviours
- Can often feel burdened with complicated, age inappropriate translations
- Acquire enhanced cognitive and emotional & interpersonal skills
- May not have the vocabulary and cultural mediation skills to express and translate accurately
- Can find themselves in a position of power and responsibility within the family that could shift the family dynamic resulting in the child having authority over the parent.
- Tensions caused by these changing dynamics can also result in an adult feeling resentment or frustration at a perceived loss of authority within the family.

Interpreters



Research suggests that children who translate for their parents acquire enhanced cognitive, emotional and interpersonal skills. CODAs often describe that these responsibilities make them feel proud, helpful and useful.

Despite how willing or good a young CODA may seem at translating, we would advise against using CODAs to interpret for their parents in school or when in contact with professionals. This is a requirement under the Equality Act. You can search for interpreters by visiting:

www.nrcpd.org.uk and searching the directory.



Registered interpreters are:

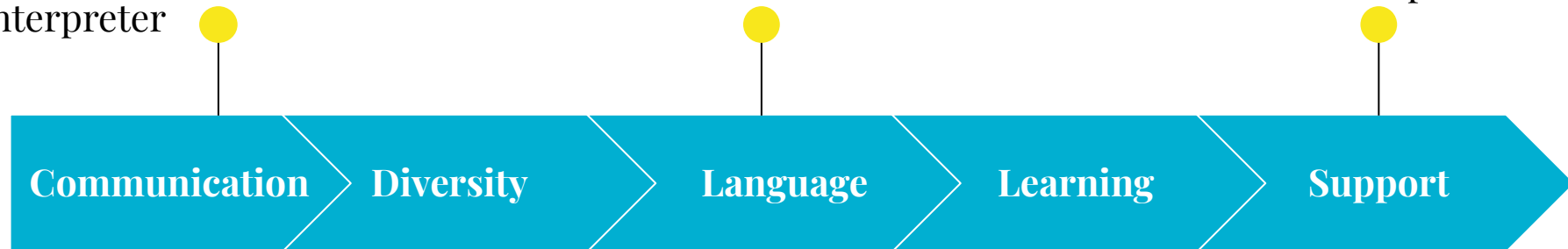
- Trained and qualified
- Confidential
- Unbiased
- Insured and accountable

Information for Schools

Remember not to use the child to interpret, ALWAYS book an interpreter

Remember many parents view English as a second language, therefore the child may need additional support to complete homework.

Consider referrals to services and support to attend events such as CODA UK & Ireland summer camps.



Remember the child is likely to have been raised with different cultural norms and language. This is something which could be explored and celebrated with their peers.

Remember CODAs are raised within visual language spaces therefore may be used to learning in a visual rather than auditory language. Try using more visual and kinaesthetic teaching methods.

Information for Professionals

Remember not to use the child to interpret, ALWAYS book an interpreter

Consider your practise, are you promoting a normal parent child relationship or are you changing the dynamics of the relationship by your interactions with the child.

Consider referrals to services which enable CODAs to meet others with the same cultural identity



Remember the child is likely to have been raised with different cultural norms and language. This is something which should be taken into account during assessments. It is recommended that you seek the assistance of a Deaf Professional.

Does the child need more access to improve their understanding and use of either BSL or English. Remember children aren't taught BSL in schools so they may benefit from formal learning opportunities.

Contact Us

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