A Short Guide to Running a

Deaf or Deafblind Playgroup



A Deaf and/or deafblind playgroup is a space where children and their parents or carers can connect, play and communicate in ways that are accessible, inclusive and meaningful.

These playgroups support children to develop communication skills and a strong sense of identity within a language-rich environment. This may include Auslan, spoken language and other communication methods used by families.

They are welcoming community spaces where children and families can build connections, share experiences and feel a sense of belonging.

Playgroup Space

- Create a language-rich environment where communication is visible, accessible and supported.
- Ensure good lighting so all participants can clearly see faces, hands and visual cues.
- Arrange seating in a circle or open layout to support shared communication and interaction.
- Reduce background noise and distractions where possible.
- Use consistent layouts, visual supports and clear pathways to support orientation and access.
- Ensure the space is safe and accessible for children with vision, mobility or additional needs.

Partnerships and Promotion

- Partner with a specialised Auslan translator service to assist at your sessions, ensuring all attendees are included.
- Connect with Auslan users, Deaf educators or community members where possible.
- Promote through trusted community networks, support services and social media groups.
- Find a mentor who has run a Deaf playgroup before.

Toys, Resources and Activities

- Use visual and communication supports (for example picture cards, books, communication boards, objects of reference).
- Include toys that support visual, tactile and sensory play (for example textured materials, sand, water, playdough).
- Provide cause and effect toys (for example lights, vibration toys, switches or interactive toys).
- Share stories using Auslan, visual supports, props or tactile books.
- Explore music and movement using rhythm, vibration and visual cues.
- Encourage shared communication activities (for example signing, gestures,

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An Important Note

Communication is central to participation, learning and belonging. Take time to understand and support each child and family's preferred ways of communicating.

Make families your key partner in shaping the playgroup experience. Work with them to build on children's strengths, interests and existing communication skills.

Create a respectful and inclusive environment that values Deaf culture, identity and diverse communication approaches.

For more advice and resources, register your playgroup!

More Information

Deaf Children Australia

A site for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and their parents.

Deaf Victoria

A website offering resources, advocacy and training for Deaf people in Victoria.

Aurora School

A state school website discussing bilingual (Auslan and English) approaches to language, communication and learning.

Expression Australia

Auslan and other resources from one of the oldest Deaf organisations in Victoria.

John Pierce Centre for Deaf

Find information about services and activities, all of which are accessible in Auslan.