

## Schooling

There are schools designed for students who are deaf. In 1853, St. Mary's School for the Deaf in Buffalo, NY opened to help students develop their language skills. People who are deaf usually fall behind in their language development because they cannot understand or speak words that people hear every day.

Students who are hearing impaired also attend regular schools. These students work with the special education teachers and speech therapists to learn to read new words.

**A Hearing Impairment** happens when there is a problem in a person's ear. This problem can occur in either one ear or both.

People can develop a hearing impairment before or during birth. It can also happen later in life when a person becomes older.

Sign language, lip reading, finger spelling and interpreters are just a few of the ways people with a hearing impairment communicate.

## Causes

There are many different causes for hearing impairment. Infections cause damages to the ear resulting in a loss of hearing. Deafness can be inherited through family members. Injury to the ears either by a serious head injury or by a loud noise or explosion can cause damage to the ear as well.

A Hearing Impairment is when a person can only hear sounds when helped by devices such as hearing aids which make sounds louder.

Deafness is a complete hearing loss and even the use of an aid will not allow the person to hear sound.

When speaking to a person with a hearing impairment it is important to make sure you are looking at each other. It helps to write down information if you and the person are having trouble communicating. It is acceptable to repeat yourself if the person did not understand you the first time.