



Deaf Awareness Week is taking place on 3rd - 9th May 2021. This week is all about promoting the positive aspects of living with deafness, raising awareness of the isolation that deaf people can sometimes experience and promote social inclusion. We will share useful information, online events plus lots more throughout Deaf Awareness week on our closed Facebook page- search for swindonandnorthwiltsDCS.

**Deafness is a spectrum-** Degrees of hearing loss vary from person to person, from mild to profound loss, in either one or both ears. Conditions like glue ear can also temporarily or permanently affect hearing levels. Some people may wear hearing aids or cochlear implants, and use other equipment to help them to hear in various environments. **Communication-** Each deaf or hard of hearing person will have different ways of communicating, whether this is speech, sign language, lip reading, writing or any combination of these. If in doubt, ask!

### Tips you can share to help others become more deaf aware:

- Make sure you have their attention before speaking to them. Move into their field of vision or give a friendly wave with a smile and eye contact.
- Noisy environments can make it very difficult for a deaf person to make out sounds and words. Try to find a quiet place with little background noise.
- Speak clearly and at a normal pace and volume- exaggerating what you are saying distorts the words and makes it seem as though you are shouting, plus it makes it much more difficult to follow when lip reading. Make sure your mouth isn't covered.
- Good lighting is very important for lip reading. Lip reading can be difficult and requires a lot of concentration and energy, even the best lip readers still miss up to 40% or what has been said.
- If they are struggling to hear or understand what you are saying, explain it differently. Saying 'don't worry!' or 'it's not important' can be seen as annoying and disrespectful.



Whether you're a parent, relative or you work with deaf children and young people, there's lots of simple things you can do to be more deaf-friendly – The NDCS has lots of tips and resources to help you. Visit: [www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/being-deaf-friendly/](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/information-and-support/being-deaf-friendly/)

This is a brilliant video to share with your friends and family- this shows that there are loads of ways to communicate with each other every day.- <https://youtu.be/W6Boas4aRkQ>

Swindon HST have emailed out to their schools and given them links to videos, suggestions for activities, links to resources, book suggestions and offered to support directly where they can. They have also organised a "lunch and learn" session for SBC staff to raise awareness.

The DCS offers two types of funding applications- Individual Member Grants to support our young deaf members and a funding scheme for individuals and organisations, for proposals that benefit deaf children, young people and their families. For more information visit: [www.swindonandnorthwiltsdcs.org/member-support.html](http://www.swindonandnorthwiltsdcs.org/member-support.html)



## Zoom Drop In Sessions

With Audiology, Swindon Hearing Support Team,  
post education/access to work information and a social chat for parents/carers

We have organized a series of drop in sessions through Zoom Video to take place through Deaf Awareness week. Each session will be focused on a different topic and be led by a member of the committee or professional. This is your opportunity to ask any burning questions you have or just join us for a chat! Each session will take place from 6-7pm, you are free to drop in at any time during the session.

**Tuesday 4th May, 6-7pm: Audiology drop in** with Salim Suleman, Head of Paediatric Audiology and the team. Any questions around maintenance of hearing equipment or general questions around hearing loss. They will be unable to discuss specific information in relation to your child as this is an open event but they will be able to arrange a follow up contact with you if this is required.

Meeting details: Topic: Swindon & North Wilts DCS- Audiology drop in .

<https://zoom.us/j/96259243717> Dial in: 0330 088 5830 Meeting ID: 962 5924 3717

**Wednesday 5th May: Swindon Hearing Support Team drop in** with Jo Coote and Claire Tomlinson, Advisory Teachers of the Deaf. They will be there to answer any questions around the support they offer, plus any other questions you would like to ask! They will be unable to discuss specific information in relation to your child as this is an open event but they will be able to arrange a follow up contact with you if this is required.

Meeting details: Topic: Swindon & North Wilts DCS- Swindon HST drop in. Meeting ID: 918 8258 3209

<https://zoom.us/j/91882583209> Dial in: 0330 088 5830 Meeting ID: 918 8258 3209

**Thursday 6th May: Post education and Access to Work** with Martin Kelly, Chairperson of the DCS and CEO of Disability Experts CIC, whose aim is to support people with disabilities including hearing loss into employment, training or volunteering. Martin will be here to answer questions about what support is available to our young deaf members when entering the workplace, including information around Access To Work.

Meeting details: Topic: Swindon & North Wilts DCS- Post education/access to work information drop in

<https://zoom.us/j/99064560729> Dial in : 0330 088 5830 Meeting ID: 990 6456 0729

**Friday 7th May: Social drop in** with Natasha Gallagher, secretary and parent of a deaf child with cochlear implants, plus other committee members who are also parents of a deaf child. Bring a cup of tea or coffee (or a glass or something stronger!) and join us for a chat.

Meeting details: Topic: Swindon & North Wilts DCS- Social drop in . Meeting ID: 938 1092 7145

<https://zoom.us/j/93810927145> Dial in : 0330 088 5830 Meeting ID: 938 1092 7145

You don't need to book, but if you are planning to attend a session and require a BSL interpreter please contact us by email by Friday 30th April so we can try to arrange this, as we will be unable to guarantee their availability if notified after this or in the day.

We look forward to seeing you at one or more of these sessions!