

Signing with people with Learning Difficulties

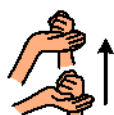
Signing is a visual form of communication.

Signs SUPPORT speech, they do not replace it.

Signs are based on our natural gestures and many signs look like the word they represent.

? Are there different types of signing? ?

Yes, the type of signing we use with people with learning difficulties are most often Makaton or Signalong. The signs are BASED on those from British Sign Language (BSL) which is the language used by the hearing impaired community. BSL is a complex language with dialectal differences, different word order and lots of finger spelling. Makaton and Signalong are used alongside speech, signing the key words only in the same order as they are spoken.



Why signing may help...



It slows down our speech



It provides a visual means of communication which is easier to remember and helps those with hearing loss



It provides a way to communicate for those with limited or unclear speech

It gives confidence to those who have limited verbal communication and relieves pressure on speech



Things to remember when signing



Only sign key words

Use dominant hand to make signs and other hand as a base



Remember to use speech and sign together



Make sure people can see you



Use signs consistently in your daily environment