



Coalition for Persons with Disabilities

Employment Services Programs



Employment ACCESS: Employment PAH!

2011

About Employment PAH...



PAH is an expression in American Sign Language (ASL) loosely translated as meaning, "Finally, we made it!"



The Deaf community and Deaf culture are important to the sense of identity of individual Deaf people. Although England and Canada share English as a spoken language, ASL is a language in its own right and differs from British Sign Language. ASL has its own distinct syntax and grammar.



Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals face unique challenges in the job market. With communication barriers and the sometimes costly accommodation of a qualified sign language interpreter; employers need to be convinced of the benefits of hiring a Deaf or Hard of Hearing individual.



One of the big issues for Employment PAH! is the employment among Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.



Employment PAH! began in 2004 and is a project of the Coalition for Persons with Disabilities. It is funded through Employment Ontario & Service Canada.



Employment PAH! Offers a 14-day workshop over 5 weeks to learn fundamental employability skills that are specific to persons who are the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the Regions of Peel, Halton and Dufferin; and who are fluent in ASL and are unemployed or underemployed.



Workshops take a holistic approach; and focus on information gathering, majority / corporate culture versus deaf culture, preparing self-marketing materials and setting individual employment goals. Personal belief systems are also examined.



Individual and group support is offered in ASL for Employment Counseling, Pre-employment Preparation, Job Search, Job Development, and Post-Hiring Support.



Speech is not an indication of hearing ability or intelligence level.



The Canadian Association of the Deaf conducted a survey and data collection project in 1998 on the employment and employability of Deaf Canadians. They found that only 20.6% of Deaf Canadians are fully employed; 41.9% are under-employed; and 37.5% are unemployed. By comparison, 60.9% of all Canadians are employed, and only 8.1% are unemployed.

About Deafness...



Six in every thousand babies born in Canada have a hearing loss including profound deafness.



Every year in Ontario, up to about 400 children are born with impaired hearing.



One in ten Canadians experiences some form of hearing loss that require special attention and expertise.



Approximately 40 per cent of the Canadian population over the age of 75 has a significant hearing problem.

Deaf culture is a term that designates a group of deaf people who use ASL as their primary form of communication – it denotes that they are a language-based group, different from the mainstream in many of the same ways that characterize ethnic groups. In North America, deaf people use sign language such as American Sign Language or Langue des signes quebecoise (LSQ). Deaf newcomers to Canada typically need to learn ASL or LSQ in addition to their home country sign language.

Oral deaf is generally used to describe individuals with a severe to profound hearing loss, with little or no residual hearing. Some acquire ASL or LSQ as a second language. Others use speech to communicate, using their residual hearing and hearing aids, communication devices or cochlear implants, lip reading or speech reading.

Culturally Deaf refers to individuals who identify with and participate in the language, culture, and community of Deaf people, based on sign language. Deaf culture, indicated by a capital “D”, does not perceive hearing loss and deafness as a disability, but as the basis of a distinct cultural group. Culturally Deaf people may also use speech reading, gesturing, spoken language, and written English to communicate with people who do not sign. For “essential communication” between Deaf and Hearing Persons, an ASL interpreter is vital.

Deafened describes individuals who grow up hearing or hard of hearing and, either suddenly or gradually, experience a profound hearing loss. Deafened adults usually use speech with visual cues such as captioning or computerized note-taking, speech reading or sign languages.

Hard of Hearing is generally used to describe individuals whose hearing loss ranges from mild to severe, and occasionally profound. Hard of hearing people use speech and residual hearing to communicate, supplement by communication strategies that may include speech reading, hearing aids, sign language and communication devices. The term “person with hearing loss” is increasingly used and preferred by this constituency.



Coalition for Persons with Disabilities
10 Kingsbridge Garden Circle
Suite 403
Mississauga, Ontario
L5R 3K6

Tel: 905-755-9734 or 1-866-969-9734
Fax: 905-755-9953
TTY: 905-755 9958
e-mail: empacc@disabilityaccess.org
<http://www.disabilityaccess.org/>

