



4-H AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE



In this project, youth learn American Sign Language (ASL), the fourth most commonly used language in the United States. Nationally, more than 15 million people have a hearing impairment and nearly 2 million are considered deaf. 4-H youth will learn that deafness is not simply a physical limitation in hearing ability, but has cultural aspects too.

- Learn how to “talk” with their hands and “listen” with their eyes using ASL.
- Explore the language, culture and history of the Deaf community.
- Interact with the Deaf community by learning the basics of ASL.

4-H THRIVE

Help Youth:

Light Their Spark

A spark is something youth are passionate about; it really fires them up and gives them joy and energy. Help youth find what it is about American Sign Language that excites them.

Flex Their Brain

The brain grows stronger when we try new things and master new skills. Encourage youth effort and persistence to help them reach higher levels of success.

Reach Their Goals

Help youth use the GPS system to achieve their goals.

- Goal Selection:** Choose one meaningful, realistic and demanding goal.
- Pursue Strategies:** Create a step-by-step plan to make daily choices that support your goal.
- Shift Gears:** Change strategies if you’re having difficulties reaching your goal. Seek help from others. What are youth going to do when things get in their way?

Reflect

Ask project members how they can use their passion for ASL to be more confident, competent and caring. Discuss ways they can use their skills to make a contributions in the community, improve their character or establish connections.

Starting Out *Beginner*

- Recognize and produce each letter of the American Manual Alphabet.
- Fingerspell a variety of names or titles.
- Know the common handshapes used in ASL.
- Sign the 4-H Pledge.
- Learn the signs for common words and phrases.
- Recognize and sign numbers 1-10 in ASL.
- Learn to sign phrases you would use in a store (what is the price? Is it on sale?)

Learning More *Intermediate*

- Research the life of Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet.
- Recognize and sign food-related words.
- Learn to sign a song and present your song at a club or community event.
- Recognize and sign a variety of animals.
- Learn how to sign time concepts such as past, yesterday, today, future and tomorrow.
- Recognize and practice appropriate nonmanual markers.

Exploring Depth *Advanced*

- Use ASL to tell a personal story.
- Job shadow a professional ASL translator.
- Change the meaning of signs by modifying the way you sign them .
- For one meeting, agree to only use ASL to communicate.
- Compare and contrast mainstream programs and special programs for Deaf children.
- Learn to ask for and give directions using ASL.

The activities above are ideas to inspire further project development. This is not a complete list.

Light Your Spark

Flex Your Brain

Reach Your Goals

Light Your Spark

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Reach Your Goals



Expand Your Experiences!

Citizenship

- Identify an organization in your state or community that advocates for the Deaf. Partner with this organization to increase community awareness about Deaf culture.
- Learn about the American Disabilities Act and survey how it influences building design in your community. Assist willing businesses in becoming more ADA compliant.

Healthy Living

- Think about how you receive messages about health and nutrition. Identify a health message and create a plan for communicating this message to individuals with impaired hearing.
- Research the sources and decibel levels of noises around the home. Teach others about the dangers of noise and the importance of hearing protection.

Science, Engineering, and Technology

- Visit an audiologist to learn more about hearing tests and how deafness is diagnosed.
- Research modern technologies that assist the Deaf and hard-of-hearing, such as TDD, TDY, cochlear implant, hearing aids and closed captioning.
- Identify and practice signing SET terms. Visit www.shodor.org/deafstemterms for tutorials.

Leadership

- Teach your 4-H community club how to sign the pledge of Allegiance and/or the 4-H Pledge.
- Visit a preschool and read a children's book about the Deaf. Help children understand the unique abilities of deaf individuals.
- Teach others how to fingerspell using the American Manual Alphabet.

Resources

- Book: *Signing for Kids* by Mickey Flodin
- Book: *Signing Is Fun! A Child's Introduction to Signing* by Mickey Flodin
- Book: *Gallaudet Survival Guide to Signing* by Leonard G. Lane
- Signing Savvy www.signingsavvy.com
- American Sign Language Browser aslbrowser.commtechlab.msu.edu
- American Sign Language University www.lifeprint.com
- Deaf Linx www.deaflinx.com
- ASL Info www.aslinfo.com
- Ohio School for the Deaf www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org
- Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center www.gallaudet.edu/clerc_center.html
- National Association of the Deaf www.nad.org

The UC 4-H Youth Development Program does not endorse, warrant, or otherwise take responsibility for the contents of unofficial sites.

Connections & Events

Presentation Days – Share what you've learned with others through a American Sign Language presentation of a presentation on the Deaf community and culture.

Contact your county 4-H office to determine additional opportunities available.

Curriculum

- ASL and Deaf Studies K-12 Curriculum Framework - my.gallaudet.edu/bcswwebdav/institution/ASLCurr/index.htm
- ASL University Lessons - www.lifeprint.com/asl101/lessons/lessons.htm
- Shared Lesson Plans - www.aslpro.com/lesson_plans/shared_lesson_plans.html (open source)

4-H Record Book

4-H Record Books give members an opportunity to record events and reflect on their experiences. For each project, members document their personal experiences, learning and development.

4-H Record Books also teach members record management skills and encourage them to set goals and develop a plan to meet those goals.

To access the 4-H Record Book online, visit www.ca4h.org/4hbook.

