

Abstract: "Deaf and Disability: Is It Just A Label?"

When a baby is born and fails the hearing test, that baby is labeled deaf. With that often comes feelings of sadness, fear, and disappointment. Dreams are dashed and questions are replaced. But this is just one possible scenario. This study will look at what constitutes the label disability in relation to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. Disabled people are seen as lesser, not successful, and often treated as second class citizens. Services may be withheld because of the thought that "disabled" people cannot do what others are expected to do. With a strong culture, language, and history, the Deaf community often rejects that label and the connotations that come along with it. Here we look into a people and a label given to them. Through interviews with Deaf individuals we look at how the label of "disability" has affected their lives. What kind of challenges has the label of "disabled" caused them? Are the people of this community truly disabled, or has a label disabled them instead?