COMING TOGETHER

WHEN WE NEED IT MOST

SPOTLIGHTS

- DEAF NEW AND NOW
- DEAFANDHOH ARTISTS
- A COMMUNITY OF A MILLION STORIES
- HOLLYWOOD HIGHLIGHTS
- GAMES
- ADS & GIVEAWAY

DeafandHoH.com

COMMUNITY BULLETIN

HELLO & WELCOME

DeafandHoH is an online hearing loss community dedicated to providing users a platform to communicate and share resources with one another. What once started as an outlet for DeafandHoH's founder has now evolved into a much larger online community!

By checking out our website, you will find that we host text-based discussions on predetermined topics at our Open Chat Nights every other Wednesday (9 p.m. to 10 p.m. EST). If you're not able to make these discussions, don't worry! We host ongoing discussions on our Hearing Loss Forum, where users can ask questions or share interesting topics for others to reply to whenever. If you're more of a lurker in the online space, we highly recommend reading our Hearing Loss Blog posts! These blogs are written by members of the DeafandHoH team and discuss important topics as they relate to the community.

At DeafandHoH, we strive to provide our users with accessible resources relating to news, products, finances, and other services. To learn more about them—please check out our website at www.DeafandHoH.com/resources.

This new digital magazine serves as an umbrella for all the things that DeafandHoH offers. You'll find that we share things like technological advances as they relate to the current state of the pandemic. We tell stories of artists, community members, and celebrities that are part of the DHH community. And on top of all that, we even have games for our readers! Additionally, we hope to host giveaways and share them through these magazines. If you or someone you know would be interested in advertising with us, please refer them to the Giveaway/Ad Space sectionon page11of our magazine to learn more.

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DEAF NEW AND NOW

People often wonder where exactly they can get a see-through mask. Should you search online? Check at a local retailer? We're here to tell you that you can make one at home using basic materials. Not only that, doing this is cheaper compared to buying the premium or mass-produced masks you might find online.

Before starting, be sure to print out a copy of the mask pattern template (www.dropbox.com/s/dhmxsbpzoizfova/Mask%20Pattern.pdf?dl=0). Note that you may need to scale the pattern up for larger printouts. To defog your mask, put some dish soap on a paper towel and rub the soap over the vinyl covering until it is smooth. Let us know how this goes for you on our website at DeafandHoH.com! If you'd prefer to follow a step-by-step video tutorial, here is one with closed captioning: www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSM8-hp7o6E&ab_channel=Take2Teaching.

EVERYTHING YOU'LL NEED

- **THE MASK PATTERN**
  You will need to follow the pattern attached by cutting the outer lines and the innermost rectangle. Don't forget to cut up to the small dot at the bottom of the pattern!
- **COTTON FABRIC**
  Choose something colorful or something simple, whatever your heart desires!
- **PINS**
- **SHARP SCISSORS**
- **QUARTER WIDTH OF ELASTIC**
- **SEWING MACHINE**
  If a sewing machine is unavailable, you can substitute thread and a needle for this.
- **CLEAR VINYL**
  It is recommended that your clear vinyl is at least 4 to 6 millimeters thick.

FACE SHIELD

STEP 1: Fold your fabric in half. Make sure that the side of the fabric that you want visible on your mask is on the inside of the fold, and the side you don't want visible on the outside. Once your fabric is inside out like this, iron out any wrinkles or creases.

STEP 2: Fold the fabric in half another time so that there are four layers of it in total. Make sure that the side of fabric you don't want visible on your mask is still showing. Iron the fabric again if desired.

STEP 3: Grab your cut-out mask pattern and fold it in half horizontally. Place the folded side of the cut-out so that it is lined up with the folded side of your fabric. Pin the pattern into place, and cut around the template as you did before. Make sure not to miss any small lines in the cut-out pattern. And avoid cutting the diagonal slips on the inside of the rectangle too far; otherwise, you won't have enough space for the fabric! Remove your fabric cut-out and lay it flat–making sure that everything lines up properly. The fabric should still be inside out with your desired side on the inside, and the side you don't want visible on your mask facing the outside. Feel free to pin the fabric together to keep it in place for the next step.

STEP 4: You can now begin sewing the outside border of the mask. Do not sew the V-shape dips at the top and bottom of the fabric and the inner rectangle–these should be left alone. There should be about 1/8 inch of clearance between the stitch and the edge of your mask. Once you reach the side of your mask, place one end of elastic between your pieces of fabric and overstitch it in place. Continue stitching the side and then repeat this process with the elastic to create a loop. Repeat this process on both sides of the mask, leaving the inner rectangle and top and bottom dips alone.

STEP 5: Flip the mask inside out again so that the desired side of fabric is now on the outside. Iron your mask down to ensure that it lays flat.

STEP 6: Fold the fabric inwards a quarter-inch around the inner rectangle. Then, iron the folds down to ensure that they stay creased. Do this for both sides of the mask.

STEP 7: The hardest parts are over! Now, put the rectangle from the template underneath your clear vinyl (the one labeled Plastic Template). Cut around the template to create the perfect sized rectangle of clear vinyl for your mask. It is recommended that you leave room for a little extra vinyl for your mask, just in case.

STEP 8: Slip the vinyl cut-out into the inner rectangle of your mask. It should sit in the middle of your two sides of fabric. Be careful not to move the quarter-inch folds during this step! If it is difficult to fit the vinyl into the inner rectangle, feel free to cut small corners off the vinyl. Once it is in place, feel free to pin everything down to ensure it doesn't slip during the next step.

STEP 9: Sew around the edges of the inner rectangular window to seal the vinyl in place. Try to sew as close to the rectangular edges as possible to make sure you're getting as much vinyl sewn down as you can.

FINAL STEP: Fold the mask in half horizontally and then sew the V-shape pieces of fabric at the top and bottom together (the ones we skipped in Step 4). Try to keep a bit of clearance between the thread and the edge of the mask. Once complete, you can flip the mask inside out, and it is ready to be used!

NOTE: The shorter section goes over your nose, and the longer one goes to your chin. Again, if you need a bigger or smaller mask, you can resize the template as needed.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Ashley Shaffer

Located in Baltimore, Maryland, Ashley Shaffer has been passionate about art ever since she was a young girl. Her passion soon formed into an online Etsy Shop where she can embrace her talents through colorful, creative pieces made from a variety of mediums such as Sharpie, Prismacolor, and Acrylic Paint.

For Ashley, being a part of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community impacts her work greatly through De' Via or Deaf View Image Art. Ashley writes that this form of artwork "...inspires people to express their identity, expression, experience, and many things through their path between the Deaf and Hearing World." De' Via is a way of turning the Deaf experience into artwork visually, which is what a lot of Ashley's pieces beautifully depict.

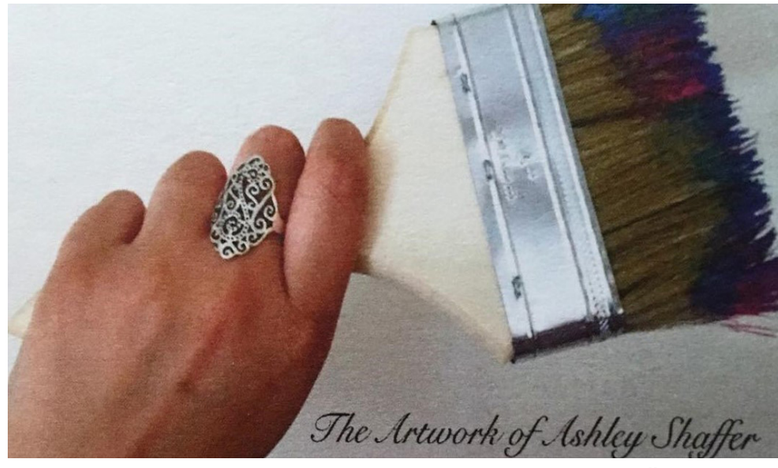
When creating themes for her pieces, Ashley utilizes many different categories that bring meaningful purpose to each one. With heavy inspiration from her identity as being Deaf, many themes follow De' Via, which creates a unique flair to her work.

Check out Ashley Shaffer's work below:

Etsy Shop: www.etsy.com/shop/ashmariesha

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ashleyshaffer.art

Instagram: www.instagram.com/theartworkofashleyshaffer



COMMUNITY OF A MILLION STORIES

Stephii Nortz started to experience hearing loss from a very young age. She struggled with ear infections from the time she was a baby through the 5th grade. The infections caused damage to her ears which led to a gradual decrease in her hearing. Although Stephii could still hear well enough to get by, she began failing her hearing tests at school regularly. It became so normal that they stopped referring her to see a doctor. Being under the impression that there was nothing to worry about, Stephii began ignoring warning signs of something far more serious happening in her left ear.

Stephii had a cholesteatoma growing and spreading from her inner ear. It eventually started to erode her bone.

"For years leading up to sophomore year the cholesteatoma kept growing until one day I was bleeding," she recalls. Upon seeing a specialist, she was told that it was shocking no one picked up on the warning signs sooner and that she'd need surgery. Stephii recalls one day being able to hear her friend say, "good luck," and the next was absolute silence. She thought of herself as a ghost because she could no longer interact with the people around her.

"In hindsight everyone else turned into the ghost," Stephii explains, "I could say things just fine and they understood but I couldn't pick up on their responses."

Although the hearing loss started somewhat gradual, Stephii recalls feeling extremely unprepared to lose her hearing the way that she did. "I was expected to return to my life as if nothing happened," she shares. However, the whole experience helped Stephii discover who her real friends were and who truly cared about her. She found ways to adapt to her new daily life. Stephii became a really good lipreader and would park closer to stores to avoid passing extra cars that she couldn't hear. Things that would have been annoying in the past, like friends tapping on her shoulder to get her attention, quickly became the norm.

One major change in Stephii's life was school. She found herself missing assignments, watching her grades start to slip, and becoming more withdrawn during class time. For a while, she thought that she was the one that needed to adjust. It took some time before Stephii found the resources that were available to her, and she became more vocal about any assistance she needed. Initially, it was intimidating for Stephii to ask teachers for assistance. But now, she loves school and has learned to speak up for her needs.

Stephii has found useful resources outside of school, as well. Her dad helped make the house more HOH- friendly by installing special doorbells and fire alarms. Stephii has found subtitles easy to use with technology and is grateful when creators use them in videos. If you ever need help communicating in a crowded space, Stephii recommends an app called Ava. She's tried other resources like Google Transcribe and has found that although it's not perfect, it can make for a great source of laughter when it doesn't get a word right.

Stephii had a limited experience with the DHH community before her hearing loss. She explains that she knew some people lived with hearing loss but didn't realize that there was such a supportive community behind it. Stephii's story starts with DeafandHoH's Senthil Srinivasan. When Stephii met Senthil, she felt lost and hopeless in this new world that she was experiencing. It wasn't until they connected that Stephii finally felt like she belonged to a community. "Feeling supported by others when times were difficult was so important," Stephii says, "community is so important." She's grateful to have learned so much from this community and now be at a point where she can be a helping hand in other people's lives.

Stephii wishes more people to understand that hearing loss is a not a handicap. She found that continuing activities she did before helped her build confidence and stay connected. Stephii wants to assure anyone experiencing hearing loss right now that:

it

gets

better.

Some of the things that personally helped her succeed include: asking for help, accepting the situation for what it was and moving forward, and staying connected to a community of people that care. There will be times that it's tempting to withdraw from the world and just shut down. But Stephii believes that it's important to continue building your skills and network of people that accept you for you.

HOLLYWOOD HIGHLIGHTS

Celebrity Spotlight: SEAN BERDY

27-year-old Sean Berdy has been a prominent deaf actor ever since his role in the iconic 2005 film The Sandlot 2. His roles continue to bring awareness of deaf representation in the media as well as show off his talent for entertaining.

His most famous role was in the 2011 Freeform series Switched at Birth. He played Emmett Bledsoe, a love interest and crucial character who tackles many issues on the stigma around the deaf community.

Berdy's most recent role as Sam in Netlix's 2019 drama The Society also portrays deaf representation and ASL. The apocalyptic series inspired by Lord of the Flies is about a group of Highschoolers that come back from a school trip to a deserted town with no parents. Sam, portrayed by Berdy, tackles the situation with ease, although he is the only deaf teen and has trouble with his problematic brother.

Overall, Berdy's career is extensive and remarkable, and his activism with deaf representation as well as tackling the stigma around mental health is what the media needs. Berdy also has a youtube channel in which he creates music videos in ASL and other fun videos to educate and entertain his fans.

Photo by Frank Trapper - © Corbis Entertainment - Getty Image

Source: Getty Images North America

FUN FACTS ON SEAN BERDY:

- Born in Boca Raton, Florida.
- Was Mr. Deaf Teen America in 2010.
- Opened up about struggle with Bipolar Disorder and shed light on Mental Health awareness.
- Speculation around him writing a romantic movie that utilizes ASL in which it may go into production within the next couple of years.

HOW TO WATCH

Youtube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/user/seanberdy/videos

The Sandlot 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5HV6dVFjmU

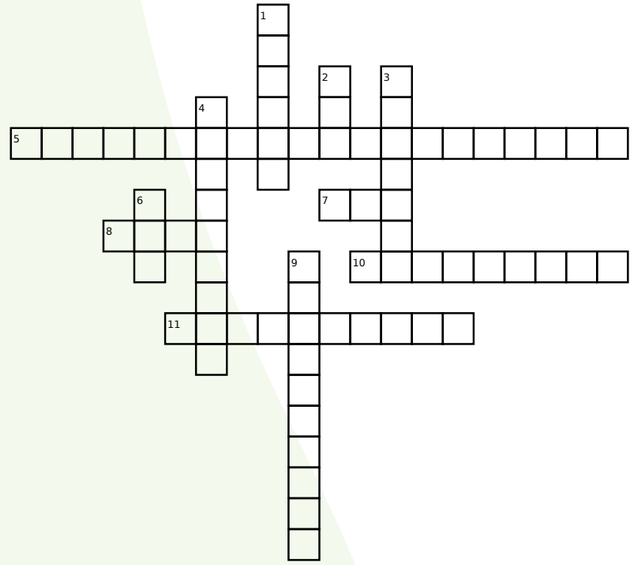
Switched at Birth: https://freeform.go.com/shows/switched-at-birth

The Society: https://netflix.com

SOURCES

https://www.famousbirthdays.com/people/sean-berdy.html
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Switched_at_Birth_(TV_series)
https://time.com/5587386/society-netflix-sean-berdy/
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sean_Berdy#cite_note-:0-1
https://www.imdb.com/name/nm1678587/bio?ref_=nm_ov_biosm#overview

How Much Do You Know?



Down:

1. Discrimination or negative attitude toward deaf or hard of hearing people.
2. A hearing ____ is a specially trained animal that assists people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
3. Deaf and Hard of Hearing have their own _____, or way of life connected to other people like them.
4. The world's first university designed specifically for the deaf and hard of hearing.
6. Short for Hard of Hearing
9. A device worn in the ear and used to amplify sound.

Across:

5. What does ASL stand for?
7. Challenge: First name of an actor who is Hard of Hearing and played the "Hulk" in the TV show that first aired in 1977.
8. The acronym for Child of a Deaf Adult
10. Actor featured in this copy of the DeafandHoH Community Bulletin.
11. The hashtag that appears on a mug by this month's featured artist.

ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE

DOWN: 1. Audism; 2. Dog; 3. Culture; 4. Gaulladet; 6. HOH; 9. Hearing aid
ACROSS: 5. American Sign Language; 7. Lou; 8. CODA; 10. Sean Berdy; deafartist

FINGERSPELLING WORD SEARCH : ZOO ANIMALS

ASL Fingerspelling

SIGN LANGUAGE FORUM

WORDS

-- ELEPHANT -- GIRAFFE -- TIGER -- MONKEY -- ALLIGATOR -- BEAR --

Create your own ASL fingerspelling word search puzzles online at www.signlanguageforum.com/asl/

SIGN LANGUAGE FORUM Created at www.signlanguageforum.com/asl/

GIVE AWAY / AD SPACE

Interested in advertising with DeafandHoH?

DeafandHoH wants to provide advertisers with a platform to promote their products and services as they relate to our mission and business. In addition to our own DeafandHoH website, we also have social media on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Our efforts to increase interaction and engagement on each of these platforms are currently ongoing.

The DeafandHoH website serves as a hub for us to share new resources with our community members. During the 2021 year, our website reached hundreds of users each month. Members of our community use this as a go-to for finding any information they might be looking for as it relates to the DHH community.

Site Statistics

For the period of January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021

- Avg. Monthly users: 657
- Avg. Monthly sessions: 826

When it comes to social media, DeafandHoH has quite the reach. Our Twitter and Instagram accounts are followed by hundreds of users, and our Facebook pages are home to more than 34k members. Since focusing our attention on LinkedIn content, we have seen a 181% increase in followers and a 204% increase in page views.

Social Media Statistics

- Facebook
- DeafandHoH.com likes: 1,157
- DeafandHoH.com followers: 1,207
- Community for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing: 34.3k members
- Youth of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community: 278 members
- Instagram*: 997 followers
- Twitter*: 588 followers
- LinkedIn**
- Followers: 150 (up 181% from January)
- Page views 210 (up 204% from January)

DeafandHoH always strives to serve as a safe, trusted resource to our members. What started as an online place for sharing experiences has transformed into something much larger. We now have multiple platforms for our users to connect on and find beneficial resources at the click of a button. If you have a product or service that you would like to advertise with us, please contact us at www.deafandhoh.com/about/contact/ for more information.

**These numbers are accurate as of February 2022, and efforts are currently ongoing to increase all these numbers.

DeafandHoH
Community Bulletin

With so much uncertainty surrounding the current pandemic, we hope that you continue to take good care of yourselves. If you have questions, the University of Rochester Medical Center has a great website geared toward Deaf and Hard of Hearing at: www.urmc.rochester.edu/coronavirus/more-resources/deaf-hard-of-hearing.aspx.

Thank you for being a part of DeafandHoH! We love interacting with our community. If you want to be featured on our website, please contact us at www.deafandhoh.com/about/contact/. We would also love for you to join us on Facebook at *www.facebook.com/DeafandHoH*. Our newsletter features artists, celebrities, and other voices of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. We also feature Deaf and Hard of Hearing kids on our *DeafandHoHKids.com* page. Use our contact page to reach out to us, and let's talk about your goals and aspirations and how you can contribute to the newsletter or our websites.

If you have a product that appeals to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community and would like to advertise through our newsletter or our social media channels, contact us at *www.deafandhoh.com/about/contact for more information*.