

## Communication

Opening screen: Kevin (a male with short brown hair and black shirt) sits in front of a dark blue background and signs to the camera.

TRANSCRIPT: Hi! Today's topic is Communication. Diversity in the Usher community includes diverse communication choices. Aural communicators may wear hearing aids or cochlear implants and use speech, speechreading, lip reading or cued speech. Individuals who are visual communicators may use sign languages, including ASL, or other sign systems. Some individuals may wear different types of glasses including dark colored glasses to help them see better. For touch communication, there's tactile sign. Or a person may hold your wrists to keep your signs within their visual field. You or they might step back so they can see more signing space, It also helps to wear a dark colored shirt, use a dark background like I have, and good lighting so your signs are easy to see. Some may use haptics or ProTactile (PT). My personal preference is PT. For example, PT uses touch or taps on a person's back, arm or hand to give feedback during a conversation just as you would smile or nod your head with a sighted friend. Maintaining physical contact with your hands, feet, legs or upper arms, is critical with PT. That's another form of tactile communication. Now, let's look at technology: Laptops can be used for two-way communication; there's texting; and so many other ways to use technology to communicate. The list goes on and on... There is a wide variety of communication options in the DeafBlind Usher community, not just speech or sign, but ton of options! If you want to learn more about communication, get out there! Meet others with Usher syndrome or who are DeafBlind! Have a conversation! Just remember - every person has their own preferences. The most important thing is respect and to try to find a common ground. Thank you!