

Cambridge University Press

0521429986 - Deaf Young People and their Families: Developing Understanding

Susan Gregory, Juliet Bishop and Lesley Sheldon

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

---

The period of adolescence and young adulthood is important as a time during which young people come to make sense of the society in which they live, and is a period in which their aspirations for the future become consolidated. This book deals with a specific group: deaf young people, as their deafness will have implications for their communication within both the family and society in general, with consequences for the way in which they come to understand the world.

This is a longitudinal follow up to the study reported in *The Deaf Child and his Family*, now re-published as *Deaf Children and their Families*. Some 18 years on, 75% of the original families have been traced and this new volume provides an account of the subsequent interviews with both the parents and the deaf young people themselves. Participants reflect not only on the consequences of deafness within their own lives, but also on the changing context for deaf people. It includes a comparison of the views of parents with those of their sons and daughters, and an examination of factors in early life that may relate to later development.

In its provision of a unique insight into the deaf young person's perspective on life, it will be a valuable resource for all those concerned with deafness and special education, including deaf people themselves, families, professionals and academics.

---

Cambridge University Press

0521429986 - Deaf Young People and their Families: Developing Understanding

Susan Gregory, Juliet Bishop and Lesley Sheldon

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

*Deaf Young People and their Families: Developing Understanding*

---

Cambridge University Press

0521429986 - Deaf Young People and their Families: Developing Understanding

Susan Gregory, Juliet Bishop and Lesley Sheldon

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

# *Deaf Young People and their Families:*

---

## *Developing Understanding*

SUSAN GREGORY

*Senior Lecturer in Psychology, The Open University*

JULIET BISHOP

*Senior Counsellor, The Open University*

and

LESLEY SHELDON

*Specialist Social Worker (Child Protection),*

*Scunthorpe and Goole Hospital Trust*



**CAMBRIDGE**  
**UNIVERSITY PRESS**

Cambridge University Press  
0521429986 - Deaf Young People and their Families: Developing Understanding  
Susan Gregory, Juliet Bishop and Lesley Sheldon  
Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

---

Published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge  
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP  
40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA  
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, Melbourne 3166, Australia

© Cambridge University Press 1995

First published 1995

*A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data available*

ISBN 0 521 41977 8 hardback  
ISBN 0 521 42998 6 paperback

Transferred to digital printing 2004

SE

## CONTENTS

---

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
1 The young deaf people and their families	1
2 Family life and communication	28
3 Experiences of education	57
4 The world of work	90
5 Deaf young people in a hearing world	122
6 Friendships, relationships and social life	154
7 Being deaf	181
8 The family and the young deaf person	223
9 Reflections	254
<i>References</i>	279
<i>Appendices</i>	282
<i>Index</i>	352

## PREFACE

---

This book is about deaf young people and their families. It is a follow up to the study reported in *The Deaf Child and his Family* (George Allen and Unwin, 1976) republished as *Deaf Children and their Families* to coincide with the publication of this book. In the first study, 122 families of young deaf children were interviewed. The authors of the present book set out some 18 years later to trace as many of a sample of 101 of the original families as possible, and established contact with 91 of them. This book is an account of the interviews with both the parents and the deaf young people themselves, and also includes comparative information from the earlier research and material from group discussions conducted with some of the young people who were interviewed.

The purpose of this book is to give the perspective of the young people and families themselves rather than a professional view. The period from the first interviews to the second set was a time of great change in the understanding of deafness and in professional approaches to it. This book allows participants to reflect not only on the consequences of deafness within their own lives, but also on the changing context for deaf people. It also allows a consideration of the similarities and dissimilarities in the views of parents and their sons and daughters on various issues and an examination of factors in early life that may relate to later development.

### *Notes on the transcription of quotes*

All quotes have been taken from interviews or discussions that have taken place in connection with the research,

- (a) with parents when the deaf young people were six years old or less (Parents C),

Cambridge University Press

0521429986 - Deaf Young People and their Families: Developing Understanding

Susan Gregory, Juliet Bishop and Lesley Sheldon

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

*Preface*

- (b) with parents of the young deaf people (Parents YP),
- (c) with the young deaf people themselves, and
- (d) with some of the young deaf people in group discussions.

Quotes are designated by a pseudonym for the deaf young person which is the same in all publications of the research. For Parents (C) interviews, the age of the child at the time of interview is given together with the page number for the quote in *Deaf Children and their Families* (DCF) if it is included there.

For interviews with the young people, and with the parents of the young people, the preferred language of the deaf young person is given together with the age at the time of the parent interview. Occasionally such information is omitted to protect confidentiality.

Hesitations and pauses in the quotes are indicated by dots. . . Omissions are indicated by parentheses () and supplementary information to clarify is provided in parentheses. A letter plus dots (A. . .) indicates the omission of a name to protect confidentiality.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

---

This research has benefited greatly from conversations, discussions and debates with many people, both those directly involved in the project and other colleagues and friends.

Firstly, we would like to thank our note-takers, who assisted at the interviews with the young people. Not only were they concerned to ensure we had the fairest and fullest possible account of each interview, but their insights into the interview process and the issues we were addressing were very important to us. They were: Sue Barlow, Karen Beggs, Frances Connor, Martin Farrelly, Isabel Gregory, Karen Hale, Brenda Kent, Mike Poulton, Janice Silo, Steve Silo and Audrey Smith.

We would like to thank our friends and colleagues for interesting and constructive discussions which not only stimulated and clarified our thinking, but also encouraged us in planning and developing the research: Doug Alker, Sarah Beazley, Mairian Corker, Ann Darby, Karen Gowing, Gillian Hartley, Carlo Laurenzi, Clive Mason, Michele Moore, John Newson, Elizabeth Newson, Gloria Pullen, Alison Read, Sandra Smith, George Taylor, Alison Wells. The responsibility for the opinions and ideas expressed in the book, however, remains ours.

In particular, we would like to acknowledge the help we received from Jeanette Lilley on computer and statistical matters and Rukhsana Meherali on issues related to minority ethnic groups. We are grateful for the secretarial support we have received from Yvonne Holmes, who not only typed interview schedules, transcribed interviews and prepared drafts of the book, but assisted with contacting interviewees, answering queries and other administrative tasks. We would also like to thank Lin Clark and Julia Montague, who helped with transcribing and typing interviews. We are also grateful to Rosemary Hurdman for allowing Lesley to modify her contract in order that she could work on the research.



Cambridge University Press

0521429986 - Deaf Young People and their Families: Developing Understanding

Susan Gregory, Juliet Bishop and Lesley Sheldon

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

We appreciate the support of our families throughout the period of the study – our partners, Keir, David and Mike; and our sons and daughters, the four who were with us throughout: Tilly, Isabel, Lizzy and Iven, and the four who joined us while the research was in progress, Ben, Abigail, Joanna and Isabella.

The main study reported here was funded by a grant from the Leverhulme Trust; the earlier research was funded by the National Deaf Children's Society. The research was also facilitated by grants from The Open University to allow participation in conferences, and study leave to enable the book to be written. We are extremely grateful to all these organisations for their financial support and also their encouragement.

The book is dedicated, however, to those without whom it would not have been possible, the parents and the young people themselves.