

Heritage Language Learners Video Transcript

Module 2

Jenny: Hello! My name is Jenny Gough. I am Deaf. This video is for Deaf parents who have Coda (or Koda) child.

You want to support your Koda child going to school but you aren't sure how to be involved and how to build a relationship with your child's teachers, right?

After all, it is important to collaborate with your child's teachers to get their support for you and your child so that your child can feel comfortable going to school. It is so important to collaborate.

I am going to let two Codas share their personal experiences and their suggestions for your child.

Jolene: Hello I'm Jolene Crooks. I'm Coda.

Marian: Me too! Hello I'm Marian.

Jolene: When I was young, I went to school, and that day I took a spelling test. I found myself fingerspelling the words during the test. It was comfortable for me.

But my teacher saw me and asked me why I did this. He thought I cheated. But it is my first language and I wanted to get the correct answers.

Marian: I remember growing up as a Koda, I went to Elementary school and in there my teacher wanted me to teach some basic ASL during lunch time.

I felt good and was proud that they wanted to know my sign language from home. I was like, "Sure!" and taught basic.

But remember, not all Koda children want that. Their teachers can't force them, and they need to recognize that some Koda children do like to teach and share. But some of them don't want to. So, it depends on their personalities. Some are quiet. Some are motivated.

Nobody is right. Make sure teachers honor them.

Jolene: I want to add that as Koda child, I consider myself to be culturally Deaf but I am also part of hearing world. So, parents like you need to understand that Koda children have both cultures.

I personally identified with Deaf culture because I grew up like that.

Marian: Jenny recently shared some tips and ideas about what to do and how to handle your Koda child's school. That's great!

We have two papers to give you as parent to read and keep for your reference and for your child's teachers. It will help them to be familiarize and be mindful of them. Your Koda child will feel like their teachers support them.

Marian and Jolene: Thank you all for watching

Jenny: They explained their experiences and shared their ideas for your Koda child. We talked about how to connect with your child's teachers and how to support your child so that your child can go to school feeling good, just like being at home.

By connecting with the teachers, they will feel comfortable working with you. But how to connect with them?

Simply meet your child's teachers and introduce yourself as your child's parent and share information about yourself to help teachers understand what a Coda is.

Another idea to get your child's teacher to connect with you and communicate with you is to use VRS. This is the first step for any teachers to connect with you and to be able to communicate with you. They will become comfortable using VRS to call you and support your child.

You can suggest your child's teacher and classmates to learn more about your child's culture and language by having your child to do research or to do a project. Perhaps do a family tree. So that the teachers and classmates can learn more, be comfortable and be motivated.

Another idea is to share your culture and what it is like being at home and how your child navigates the cultural differences, so that your child's classmates and teachers can understand more.

So, start packing the tools in your suitcase and be ready to connect your child at school.

Thank you for watching us!