

FREE DOWNLOAD



The ABCs of Deaf Culture & Inclusion in Jamaica

A **FREE** Deaf Awareness Month resource from Convey. Created to help more Jamaicans learn, reflect, and take practical steps toward more inclusive communication.

www.conveytoolkit.com

About this Resource

The ABCs of Deaf Culture & Inclusion in Jamaica is a simple, educational guide created by Convey for Deaf Awareness Month. It introduces meaningful ideas connected to Deaf culture, Jamaican Sign Language, accessibility, inclusive education, technology and everyday communication in Jamaica.

It is designed for parents, educators, students, community groups, workplaces and anyone who wants to better understand how we can help build a Jamaica where fewer people face barriers to participating fully.

Why it Matters

SDG 4: **Quality Education**

Inclusive education means learners should have access to language, information, resources and support.

SDG 10: **Reduced Inequalities**

Reducing barriers to communication helps more people participate with dignity, confidence and opportunity.



A note on respect

This resource is a starting point. Learning basic JSL does not replace Deaf-led teaching, qualified interpretation, or ongoing learning from Jamaica's Deaf community.

How to Use This Guide

1



Read one letter at a time

Treat each letter as a conversation starter, not a complete lesson.

2



Share it with others

Use it in classrooms, workplaces, church groups, families or community discussions

3



Connect awareness to action

After reading, ask what can be made clearer, more accessible or more inclusive.

4



Keep learning

Visit Convey to practise the JSL alphabet, numbers and fingerspelling tools.



Start small. Keep practising.

One sign can start a conversation.

One conversation can create connection.

Aa Access



Access means being able to understand, communicate and participate. From classrooms to banks and public services, communication access matters.

Bb Belonging



Inclusion goes beyond simply being present. Everyone deserves to feel welcomed, respected and part of the community.

Cc Community



Jamaica's Deaf community is connected through language, shared experiences, culture, relationships and advocacy.



JSL Fact 1: Jamaican Sign Language is a natural language used within Jamaica's Deaf community.

Dd Deaf Culture



For many people, being Deaf is more than a hearing difference. It can also represent a cultural and linguistic identity built around shared language and community.

Ee Education



Deaf children deserve learning environments where language and information are accessible and where they have every opportunity to succeed.

Ff Fingerspelling

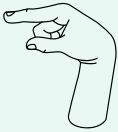


Fingerspelling helps communicate names and words letter by letter. It is also one of the easiest places for a beginner to start learning JSL.



JSL Fact 2: Jamaican Sign Language (JSL) uses handshape, movement, location, orientation, and facial expression to create meaning.

Gg Greetings



Sometimes inclusion begins with something as simple as learning how to greet someone in Jamaican Sign Language.

Hh Hard of Hearing



Hard-of-Hearing Jamaicans may communicate in different ways. Some use sign language, some rely on speech, captions or assistive technology, and preferences should always be respected.

Ii Inclusion



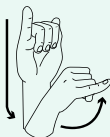
True inclusion means designing with people, not simply designing for them.



JSL Fact 3: Jamaican Sign Language (JSL) is not simply spoken English translated word-for-word into hand signs.

Jj

Jamaican Sign Language



JSL is at the heart of this alphabet. It is the sign language used within Jamaica's Deaf community and an important part of Jamaica's linguistic and cultural landscape.

Kk

Kingston



Kingston is home to important parts of Jamaica's Deaf education community, including the Danny Williams School for the Deaf and Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf, however, Jamaica's Deaf community extends far beyond Kingston.

Ll

Lister Mair/Gilby



Lister Mair/Gilby School for the Deaf has played an important role in Deaf education in Jamaica and represents the generations of Deaf students, teachers and families who continue shaping the community.



JSL Fact 4: Fingerspelling is often used for names, places, and words that need to be spelled clearly.

Mm Movement



Deaf culture can be expressed through much more than language. Dance, performance and visual expression are also powerful forms of storytelling. Jamaica's PAH! Deaf Dance Company is one example of Deaf Jamaicans expressing themselves through movement and performance.

Nn National Access



Accessibility belongs everywhere. In 2026, Jamaica launched JSL training for user-facing staff across the public library network to help remove communication barriers for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing patrons.

Oo Opportunity



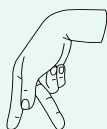
When communication barriers are removed, more people can access education, employment, information, services and opportunities to contribute.



JSL Fact 5: Facial expressions are an important part of how meaning is communicated in Jamaican Sign Language.

Pp

PAH!



PAH! Deaf Dance Company reminds us that Deaf culture in Jamaica is also creative, expressive and vibrant. Deaf Jamaicans should be represented not only in conversations about disability, but also in conversations about Jamaican culture.

Qq

Quality Education



Inclusive and equitable education is central to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4. Deaf learners should have access to the language, resources and support they need to learn.

Rr

Rights



Accessibility is not simply a favour or act of kindness. Equal access, dignity and participation are fundamental parts of building an inclusive society.



JSL Fact 6: Learning basic Jamaican Sign Language (JSL) can help hearing people communicate more respectfully with Deaf Jamaicans.

Ss

Sign Language Interpreters



Qualified interpreters play an essential role in making education, healthcare, public information, workplaces and national events more accessible. Learning basic JSL does not replace professional interpretation.

Tt

Technology



Technology can help remove communication barriers through captions, visual information and accessible digital experiences. Jamaica's JCPD digital platform, for example, includes captioned and JSL introductory videos among its accessibility features.

Uu

UWI



The University of the West Indies, Mona is home to the Centre for Disability Studies, which contributes to education, research and conversations around disability and inclusion in Jamaica.



JSL Fact 7: Deaf culture includes language, identity, shared experiences, creativity, and community.

Vv

Visual Communication



Communication does not have to be spoken. Visual communication, including signing, captions, written information and visual cues—can make information more accessible.

Ww

Workplaces



Inclusive workplaces consider how Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing employees and customers communicate. Accessibility should be part of customer service, meetings, training and digital experiences.

Xx

eXpression



Deaf people express themselves through language, storytelling, art, movement, humour, creativity and culture, just like every other community.



JSL Fact 8: Jamaican Sign Language learning should be guided by respect for Deaf people and Deaf educators.

Yy

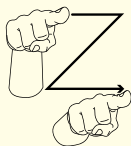
Youth



Deaf children and young people deserve opportunities to learn, communicate, build confidence and see Deaf adults and culture represented positively around them.

Zz

Zero Barriers



A Jamaica with zero barriers may be ambitious—but every accessible classroom, website, workplace and conversation takes us closer.



JSL Fact 9: Written words, captions, and visual cues can support clearer communication with Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing people.

Our first physical learning resource

Jamaican Sign Language Fingerspelling Workbook



A beginner-friendly, activity-based resource designed to help learners practice the alphabet, numbers, and fingerspelling through puzzles, exercises, and guided repetition. Your first step toward learning Jamaican Sign Language.

- **Learn the basics** of Jamaican Sign Language
- **Build confidence** through guided repetition
- **Practice anywhere**, no internet required
- **Support inclusive communication** at home or in class

Who it's for

Designed for every kind of learner

- Deaf learners
- Hearing parents of Deaf children
- Educators and schools
- Students learning JSL basics
- Hearing individuals new to JSL
- Community members and advocates



"The workbook was reviewed and refined with feedback from Deaf students, educators, and community members; shaping its clarity, usability, and educational value."

Community-informed development with the Jamaican Deaf community



For Deaf Preschoolers: A fun and engaging introduction to letters and numbers, designed to make learning sign language enjoyable and interactive.



For Hearing Parents of Deaf Children: A guide to help you connect with your child through basic signing, bridging the communication gap with love and understanding.



For Hearing Individuals of All Ages: A resource to empower yourself with the basics of JSL, helping you communicate effectively with the Deaf community and promote inclusivity.

However you choose to use this workbook, the primary goal is for you to be inspired to embrace the journey of learning and to join in the mission to strive for a more inclusive world, one sign at a time.



JSL Fact 10: Jamaican Sign Language belongs in classrooms, workplaces, public services, and everyday conversations.

About the Author

[Kori Solomon](#) is a Jamaican UI/UX Design Manager, Product Designer, Accessibility Advocate, and Founder of [Convey](#), a Jamaican Sign Language learning initiative created to help Deaf and hearing Jamaicans learn together and communicate with confidence.

Through [Convey](#), Kori is building accessible online and offline resources that make Jamaican Sign Language easier to learn, practise, and share. His work combines human-centered design, digital innovation, education, and community collaboration to support more inclusive communication across homes, classrooms, workplaces, and everyday spaces in Jamaica.

The [JSL Fingerspelling Workbook](#) and the [ABC's of Deaf Culture & Inclusion in Jamaica](#) are part of [Convey's](#) growing effort to create beginner-friendly learning tools that are culturally relevant, visually engaging, and accessible to a wide range of learners.

Kori's approach is guided by respect for Jamaica's Deaf community and a belief that inclusive design should be practical, thoughtful, and community-informed. **Convey does not seek to replace Deaf educators, interpreters, or formal Jamaican Sign Language instruction.** Instead, it aims to create a welcoming starting point for people who want to learn, connect, and communicate more respectfully.

This work also aligns with United Nations Sustainable Development **Goal 4: Quality Education** and **Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities**, supporting a future where more people can access learning, participate fully, and feel included.

Kori looks forward to continuing the journey with educators, parents, students, Deaf community members, advocates, organizations, and anyone who believes that communication should be more accessible for all.



Get In Touch!



Kori Solomon - Founder, Convey
UX Designer | Inclusion Advocate
email: hello@uxcounsel.com
website: www.conveytoolkit.com