

Condensed from a 12 page letter
Dear Mom and Dad

I just wanted to share with you my educational experience from my eyes, my heart, my mind, and my views. The fact that I know your views and you knew your views and that's what I was led through. But now, this is my turn to share my view and tell you how I have felt throughout my educational years.

As you know, I was placed in a Resource Special Program Classroom setting because I was not capable of keeping up with the mainstream hearing students and I need special attention in specific academic fields. While you may have thought that the RSP classroom setting might be a good thing and a very helpful thing for my educational needs, I went through it, and in a way, I don't find it to be very helpful or a good thing in my educational needs. I was not learning the proper materials as my hearing peers at the same level as me were learning.

When I transfer out of the RSP class into a mainstream class, I wasn't properly prepared for what I was about to go through. I really needed special attention on study habits. I didn't receive that in order to help me accelerate into mainstream classes.

I made very few friends. They do not experience what I experience. It made it very difficult to have any good or close friends that understand what I need, and the way they communicate to me. Communication was often the most difficult part in any association with any friends. I had no friends that had a common interest as I did. Only like one or two classmates in RSP that were also hard of hearing. But I didn't associate with them much because we had differences. It was hard for me to get any social interaction, as I continued to get teased and taunted by many hearing students who didn't understand me. The more frustration grew, and you didn't realize it, mostly because you never gave me the chance to speak for my feelings. That's why a lot of my trouble I got in school, was from a lot of frustration. I was often the source of a lot of blame for all the trouble, which brought my self-esteem down.

Sometimes I wonder why you didn't back me up when I was going through hard times. Why didn't you send me to a hard of hearing program or a deaf school for a year maybe. I mean, it doesn't hurt to try things out if I kept on getting in trouble and not getting a good education. Why did you continue me in a school system that made me so frustrated? Is it because you failed to recognize that I am truly hard of hearing and that you think I will lose my capability of speaking English. Why couldn't you make a change in my life for just one year? It's only one year. Maybe I could have done a lot better. Maybe I could have been less troubled and frustrated.

Yeah, you can make all the decisions for me because I am not old enough to make my decisions, but you saw and you know what I did in the school. You didn't know that it was a sign of my frustration and anger from the decisions you made for me in regarding the schooling. You didn't take the time to consider if it would be a good option to send me to a deaf school. You just right on the spot, rejected the option and decided to send me to hearing schools.

At home, where of course, spoken English was very important. Every time when anyone tried to speak to me at home, they get frustrated and yell at me and keep saying "Put on your hearing aids." You keep getting the fact that the hearing aids work, and they are supposed to make the sounds clear. But you never wore a hearing aid, and the only people that you keep

getting information from, is someone who have never worn a hearing aids in their lives. You don't know how the hearing aids work, nor know if they can make speech clear or only to make the sound louder. You are still not convinced that the hearing aids do not work at all for me. They don't help me.

Most of the time, I don't talk a lot in English, all I do is just read and write. That's all I do a lot. Sometimes I feel that speaking English, does not help me much. A lot of other hearing people, sometimes they don't understand what I am saying. I don't know if I am mumbling or not. I don't know if the other person knows or understands what I am saying.

American Sign Language, when I first learned it on my own when I was 13 years old, I was happy that I was learning some American Sign Language, but I couldn't master it because I couldn't remember every single sign that was in the book. So, I put it on hold ofr a while, mostly because you didn't encourage me to continue study American Sign Language. You kept saying "Well , if American Sign Language is easy for you, Why is English so difficult for you?" You don't know how it feels to be in my shoes, you keep saying, "yes, I know that, I've been there before", but truly, you never been in my shoes. You never experienced what I went through. But I was never given the chance to fully learn American Sign Language until I reached my first year of community college, then I started to take American Sign Language and I have become accustomed to it. I enjoy American Sign Language more than speaking English and speech reading because you can see what they are talking about, what they are signing about, and there's no sense of frustration or anger or anything. It's clear and it's there and you can see it. Sometimes I wonder why didn't you give American Sign Language a chance? If you knew that I am going to depend on my eyes, then why didn't you have and encourage me to learn American Sign Language? You could learn it too if you took the time and effort to learn it. But I guess your goals, your happiness, and your control was far more important than what I really needed.

Sincerely,
Xxx