The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Population in Colorado

This information is an estimate based on information from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that estimates approximately 8.6% of the United States population 3 years of age and older were reported not to have total hearing acuity. The Colorado population estimate is from the U.S. Census Bureau annual population estimate.

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<th>Colorado Estimated Deaf and Hard of Hearing Population</th>
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<td><strong>CO Census (2012)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Deaf and Hard of Hearing</td>
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**Facts about the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

- More than 26.9 million Americans are deaf or hard of hearing. (8.6% of the population)
- One in three people know someone who is deaf or hard of hearing.
- Age of onset of deafness or hearing loss: 5.4% before age 3; 14.2% between 3 and 18; 76.3% 19 and over
- Causes of deafness and hearing loss: 33.7% noise; 28% age; 17.1% infection or injury; 4.4% present from birth
- For all ages, 10.5% percent of men and 6.8% of women are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Since 1980, hearing loss associated with excessive noise has tripled. An estimated 20% of young people are regularly exposed to excessive volumes of loud music.
- 1.3 million people are exposed to excessive levels of noise at work. The number of people with noise-induced hearing loss has tripled since 1980. It is the most common occupational injury.
- Only 30% of all spoken sounds are visible on the lips, adding to the challenge of lip-reading.
- It is commonly assumed that lip-reading is widely used by the deaf and hard of hearing as a method of communication. In reality most use little or no lip-reading.

**Facts about deaf people**

- 65% of deaf people were born deaf, 27% became deaf before age 3; and 8% became deaf after 3.
- 93 percent of deaf children are born into hearing families.
- Approximately 1 of every 1,000 infants is born deaf, while 6 of every 1,000 infants are born hard of hearing.
- Children who are born deaf are sometimes called “prelingually” deaf, because they were deaf before they acquired language.

**Facts about hard of hearing people**

- 20-30% of hearing loss in children occurs during infancy or early childhood.
- Age-related hearing loss often begins around age 45-50, and 55% of people over 60 are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Hearing loss is 7 times more prevalent for persons over 65 than for those under 65.
- Hearing loss is the third most common condition in the older population, after hypertension and arthritis
- The hearing aid is the second most widely used assistive technology equipment, after the walking cane. More than 70% of hearing aid users are over 64.
- Majority of the hard of hearing population do not use sign language at all.