

Agreement on Terminology Between the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People and the World Federation of the Deaf

"Hard of hearing" means: all people who have a hearing loss and whose usual means of communication is by speech. it includes those who have become totally deaf after acquisition of speech.

In a joint declaration signed in Tokyo in 1991 the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People and the World Federation of the Deaf agreed that "hearing impaired" is a term intended to cover deaf and hard of hearing individuals under a single category. However, deaf and hard of hearing persons in most countries reject this definition because it fails to recognize any distinction differentiating these two social categories.

The joint declaration recognizes and respects the right of individuals with hearing losses ranging from mild to severe to regard themselves as either "deaf" or "hard of hearing" and both organizations agreed to recognize the terms "deaf" or "hard of hearing" only in their official terminologies.

IFHOH wishes to make it clear that references to "hearing impaired" people in any document accessed through this web-site is not the responsibility of IFHOH nor are they intended as a contravention of this agreement.