

Helen Keller

Helen Keller at the age of 19 months,(not quite 2 years old) was a happy, healthy child. She was already saying a few words.

Then she had a high fever which caused her to become deaf and blind. No longer could she see nor hear. She felt lost. She would hang on to her mother's skirt to get around. She would feel of people's hands to try to find out what they were doing. She learned to do many things this way. She learned to milk a cow and knead the bread dough.

She could recognize people by feeling of their faces or their clothes.

She made up signs with her hands so she could "talk" to her family. She had 60 different signs. If she wanted bread, she pretended to be cutting a loaf. If she wanted ice cream, she would hug her shoulders and shiver.

Helen was a very bright child. She became very frustrated because she couldn't talk. She became very angry and began to throw temper tantrums . The family knew they had to do something to help her.

They found a teacher named Anne Sullivan. Miss Sullivan herself had been blind, but had an operation and regained her sight. She understood what Helen was feeling.

She taught Helen the signs for the letters of the alphabet. Then she would "spell" the words in Helen's hand to communicate with her.

One day Anne led Helen to the water pump and pumped water on her hand. She spelled the letters W-A-T-E-R as the water ran over Helen's hand. She did this over and over again. At last it dawned on Helen that the word "water" meant the water which she felt pouring over her hand. This opened up a whole new world for her. She ran everywhere asking Anne the name of different things and Anne would spell the words in her hand. This was the key which unlocked the world for her.

She eventually stopped having the tantrums. Anne taught her for years. Helen learned to read Braille . This was a system of raised dots representing letters. A blind person could read by feeling of the dots.

When she went to college, her teacher Anne went with her and tapped out the words of the instructors into her student's hand.

Helen had an amazing memory, and she also had skills very few people have ever been able to develop. She could put her fingers to a person's lips and understand the words which were being spoken.

While she was in college she wrote her book called "The Story of My Life". With the money she earned from the book she was able to buy a house.

She became famous and traveled around the world speaking to groups of people. She met many important and well-known people as she traveled.

Helen Keller was successful because of her determination. However, many people helped her. The most important person in her life was Anne Sullivan who stayed with her for 50 years.

<http://gardenofpraise.com/ibdkell.htm>