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EDHI Conference

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The Long Term AAA Impact of El and Preschool: Academics, Aspirations, and Achievements

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>> Good afternoon. I'm your room monitor. Hopefully everyone has an evaluation sheet. At the end of the session please just put on the back table or you can hand it to me. I get to be so horned as to introduce the woman that taught me everything I know in the field, Jean Moog so I'm happy to be here to hear her speak.

>> I'm just turning the slides.

>> JEAN MOOG: Thank you, Betsy. Several factors over the past two decades have contributed to significant changes that have had an impact on the individuals with hearing loss, advancements in hearing technology include implants, hearing aids, FM and DM systems for improved hearing in noise and have provided every‑increasing access to sound for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. The implementation of universal newborn hearing screening has resulted in significantly earlier identification of hearing loss over the years the average of identification of hearing loss has been reduced from three‑year to three months at least in a lot of places. And earlier identification has resulted in earlier intervention.

The enactment of IDEA dramatically increased supports to of services for individuals with disabilities and technology I'm going to talk about later, the impact of technology on every day communication through a wide range of social media.

I didn't have to go through that now that I'm looking at the people in the room. I think you all knew those things, I could have saved myself a minute or two, but I'll move on! Anyway the impact of these may also be well known and you'll say well, I already knew that. Okay, they have had definitely a long‑term impact in various ways. They're mainstreamed earlier with hearing peers and at earlier ages, differences in teaching techniques as teachers capitalize on the advantages provided by changes and individuals have receiving increased support services in mainstream settings and in elementary school, high school and even through college and graduate school.

These services greatly enhance their access to the full curriculum in the school programs. Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing have easier access to the hearing and deaf communities in the world at large.

So this is an overview of our overall study. The alumni were divided into three age groups. Elementary and middle school, ages 8‑13, high school, 14‑18, and college and beyond, 18‑32. So we have some really old people in this.   
(Chuckles.)

50 elementary and middle school children were tested onsite in vocab, language and reading and I reported on that at the EDHI conference last year. 44 high schoolers and 64 who were beyond high school completed surveys online. These 108 older alumni are the focus of the rest of this presentation.

Online surveys were designed to assess educational, personal and professional outcomes for our alumni in high school and in college and beyond. The survey included questions about their high school and postsecondary education, employment experiences, special recognitions that they received, use of technology, and other aspects of their lives.

These 108 responses represented 80% of the potential pool of 135 which we considered a very, very good response and representative of the group. 44 of the high schoolers responded and only 4 declined but they were still living at home and their mother's probably made them do it. We had a harder time tracking down those beyond high school.

We weren't able to locate ten email addresses and ten never responded even though I'm pretty sure I had their right email address. Now, I will give you a description of the participants in this. 108 ranged in age from 14‑32. 91% had implants, 16% wore hearing aids, I'll give you a minute and you can read that for yourself. Everybody in here can read. So you can see most of the children were profoundly deaf and were prelingually profoundly deaf. Of the four who had parents that were deaf, two of the families used only spoken language to communicate with their children and two of the families used spoken language and sign to communicate. The mother's' education, the reason that's there is it correlates with socioeconomic status and in this group a high percentage of the mother's had higher education.

I think 78% you can see, that's really above the norm. High school students, their mean age at first hearing aid was 1 year 5 months and the mean age for their first cochlear implant was 3 years, exactly. The young adults and beyond high school, they got their hearing aids early but implants was a different story. In those days you really couldn't get implants early. So that's why the mean is over 5 years old.

I want to acknowledge that is an advantaged group, the mean IQ is well within the average range and many children were well above average. All the children got their hearing aids by 18 months which was early more a lot of the older kids in those days, and all received some early intervention which was not particularly common 20 years ago.

The date of their first cochlear implant is really a different story because today's children on average are receiving implants of course much earlier. The age of entrance to general education, high schoolers, the mean age was six and a half years old and beyond high school was eight and a half years. Nowadays kids are mainstreaming much earlier than that. The average age of entrance was two years older for children beyond high school than for those in high school.

The difference is even greater when we look at the oldest 25% in comparison to the youngest 25%. The mean of the oldest 25% for mainstreaming was 10 and a half years and for the youngest it was 6 and a half years. So it was a four‑year difference and it's going down. Some of us are going to be out of business soon, I think. This is a clear demonstration of the impact of the changes in early identification, early intervention, and hearing technology.

Now I'm going to talk about how they communicate. For the ones ‑‑ this slide illustrates how they self‑reported their speech intelligibility and comprehension with very familiar people, less than familiar people and people that have little interaction with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. With familiar people such as the immediate familiar, close friends, people they are with a lot, we asked the question, how well are you understood when you talk and 97% responded completely or mostly understood. When asked how well do you understand when they talk to you, 94% responded completely or mostly.

With less familiar ‑‑ they had other choices, I should tell you, that they were 50% understood, barely understood or not understood at all. I just didn't want to make the chart that big, maybe they would have all been that way if I had only given them two choices, okay?   
(Laughter.)

With less familiar people such as extended family and neighbors in response to how well are you understood, 96% responded completely or mostly. When asked how well do you understand them when they talk to you, 88% responded completely or mostly. With those who have little interaction with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, just out in the general public with salespeople, maybe sometimes at restaurants and any of those kinds of things, only 87% responded completely and mostly understood and to the question of how well do you understand them when they talk to you, 69 responded completely or mostly understood.

Now for sign language. We also asked about their sign language use. We asked how well do you sign using ASL? The answer to that, 79% of high schoolers responded not at all or very little. 21% responded average or above average, and out of those, 1 responded excellent, like a native!   
(Chuckles.)

Or like a native, we must have written it that way, I think. For those beyond high school more are using ASL and are signing with their friends. 58 responded very little or not at all, 42 responded average or above, and 5 of those responded excellent or like a native.

So as they got older they got more competent in using sign language and more interested in using it and perhaps broadening their social circles.

Communication through technology. Current technology impact on every day communication through this wide range of social media has enabled individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to be in touch easily with friends and family and to access the world in so many ways. In response to the question, how do you communicate with your friends and family? We had a list of all different kinds of social media and all of these were used by some of the children. 100% used phone texting, mostly, and 83% used phone talking. That was mostly with their families and close friends. 79% used email, 76% Used FaceTime, 42% Facebook, 45 Instagram, 44 used Skype and 13% used Twitter. And it shows that technology goes a long way toward facilitating fuller access to the same opportunities afforded their hearing peers, opportunities I learned from Tommy. Students stated they used technology to stay and feel connected and 20 years ago they did not have this kind of access. Support in school. This slide represents the kinds of supports the students accessed in high school and postsecondary school. I'll give you a minute to look through and get an idea of all the different kinds of services that were available. The interesting thing about this alumni were able to receive support more in high school than in secondary programs. It may be that more resources are available at the high school level or maybe they are easier to access at the high school level. These services provided opportunity for easier access to the general education curriculum.

An important component of adolescent and young adult development is the degree to which one feels a sense of belonging within a community of peers. We had several questions addressing participation in high school activities, to which the responses were 93% of this population participated in sports or in clubs or in both. And we think that's a pretty good indication that they were full participants as a whole in their high school programs.

Responses indicated that when these individuals were in high school, they participated at pretty much the same levels as their hearing peers. There was a wide variety in both clubs and sports so they weren't all at the same place. Sports in which they participated were just about any sport that was offered in high school.

Many students also had leadership roles such as captains of sports teams, student council, leadership council, somebody had something that was like that that was called League of Excellence, I think that's a good name! So they were not just participants, they had opportunities in leadership, also.

In postsecondary outcomes, of the 44 children that responded, 4 stopped ‑‑ only 4 stopped their education after high school. Of the 64 ‑‑ of all alumni only 4 stopped after high school of. 60 alumni attended some sort of postsecondary education program which included 39 different institutions. There were some at ‑‑ a few at what would be considered traditionally more programs for the deaf, such as, I think one was at Gallaudet University, one was at Northridge, one was ‑‑ quite a few were at I think around 10, at RIT and three attended or are attending a technical certificate program, five attended a community college. 52, that's 87% of this population have attended or are currently attending or have graduated from a four‑year college or university.

33 have graduated from a four‑year college or university. Of these 33 college graduates, 13, which is 39% are currently enrolled or have graduated from a graduate program, engineering, architecture, journalism, a variety of majors.

We asked about employment. Of the 38 alumni who have completed their formal education or are no longer in school, 84% are employed, which is really good in today's employment market. Of those, 66% are working full‑time and 34% have part‑time jobs. The salaries reported for full‑time employees are commensurate with their hearing peers. In terms of job satisfaction, 88% being very satisfied or extremely satisfied with their jobs, and 56 reported that being competent in spoken language was important to their job.

They're in a variety of areas, which is unusual that 28 periods of them are in business, all different kinds of businesses, but a lot in retail. Three in government, two in nonprofit, eight teaching somewhere and seven were self‑employed.

We asked some open‑ended questions to get a sense of how alumni perceive themselves in the world and their responses indicated that they feel comfortable and a great part of the world at large. So we asked what are you most proud of? And, of course, I can't read you all of the 108 responses so I just picked a few, Betsy said I picked too many, but that's what I did, anyway.

In high school, just overall, there were many, many academic honors, including honor roll, National Honor Society, Dean's List, 4.0 grade point average, one was Valedictorian of his high school class, one was commencement speaker for her high school graduation. In college we had some other people that excelled. We had a Cum Laude with a major in French graduating from Yale, we had a Magna Cum Laude and commencement speaker and we had an Summa Cum Laude at Arizona State University and in the honors program throughout college. One wrote being second in my training classes and one of the first EMTs with a cochlear implant where one of the requirements is you have to have complete hearing, that was the thing she was the most proud of, she had to talk her way into and pay bachelor's degree in nursing. One wrote a Master’s degree in architecture from Washington University in St. Louis and a job at an outstanding architecture firm. One wrote I am really very confident, I thought that was a nice one and another one wrote my ability to communicate with individuals who hear and with ones who are deaf. I thought that was a nice one.

Okay, then we asked about their aspirations. What would you like to do someday that you have never done? 17 responded with something that had to do with travel. They wanted to travel for lots of different reasons. They wanted to travel the world to learn about other countries, to learn about the history in their country and one wrote and to learn their language. One wanted to visit every major league baseball park in the United States. Then ten wrote that they wanted to sky dive or do cliff jumping. So I think most of those were high schoolers, but I'm not quite sure. I didn't really check that out. One wanted to be a cochlear implant surgeon and implant kids who need implants. One said ‑‑ I think it was a "he" he wanted to be a banker because he's good at math and he has a good personality. Do you know a banker that has a good personality?   
(Laughter.)

That was interesting play hockey for the U.S. Deaf Olympics, find a way to help less fortunate deaf people. We had one who is become a dance performer, be a contestant on American Ninja Warrior, own a ranch with horses and cattle, it's a diverse group and one that sounded old‑fashioned, fall in love and get married. And one said, win the lottery, which I thought was one of the best aspirations.

So what are the take‑aways? This population is very different from the ones that got started 20 or 25 years ago. Expectations are now different, the world is a different place. I would say a better place for all individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. You've got earlier intervention, earlier mainstreaming, increased support in educational settings,more access to friends and family through social media and better communication.

Many educators and researchers, myself included, have focused on how children who are deaf or hard of hearing have progressed in vocabulary, language, reading and other academics and this is important to know. However, when new parents first find out that their child is deaf or hard of hearing, they're also concerned about their child's longer‑term future. For example, they ask questions like will my baby have friends? Will they be involved in sports? Will he go to college, will he get a job, will he get married, et cetera. The EDHI service providers are often the first points of contact for new parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Since they are on the front lines, parents look to them to answer these kinds of questions. The results of this study demonstrate what is possible for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. That was the point of it, what happened after they get out of elementary school.

We have about five minutes, five minutes for questions. Does anybody have any questions? Yes?

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: You did tell us a few things at the beginning that I already knew but it's different hearing it from Jean Moog.

>> JEAN MOOG: Thank you!

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: The very first of of this conference I was in a meeting that someone said that if you don't have data, you're just another person with an opinion. And so it's ‑‑ there's a lot of opinions at this meeting as you may have noticed.

>> JEAN MOOG: I've noticed that over the years, uh‑huh.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: This is great data that takes it beyond opinion. I thank you for a lifetime of work and for being such an inspiration to so many of us.

>> JEAN MOOG: Thank you. Thank you very much.   
(Applause.)

Anybody else?

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have a comment and I'll try not to cry while I'm making it. My son was adopted. We got him when he was 2. He wasn't identified until he was 5. I've read about and you seen things about you and I just want to tell you how much it means to me the work that you've done. I can take that to other parents who are just finding out their children are deaf. This was an awesome presentation, thank you.

>> JEAN MOOG: Thank you. Thank you very much.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: That was nice because a lot of people read things about her and they're not very complimentary.   
(Laughter.)

>> JEAN MOOG: That's good! Anybody else have a nice comment they want to make?   
(Laughter.)

>> I'm not suggesting they're things that I wrote!

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Are the results of all this somewhere printed up that we could get access to?

>> In her head.

>> JEAN MOOG: They're going to be. They're going to be. We're just moving at a slower pace than we should be. It happens when you get older. Yes, we plan to publish these results.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thank you.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I thought your survey was clever. I'm wondering how you came up with the questions you decided to ask them?

>> JEAN MOOG: Okay, well, we came up with them because we wanted to learn about what their life really was like. We were really curious. These were all alumni from the Moog Center, we knew them all and when they were little and we keep in touch with our alumni to the degree we can. We had a lot of early data on the time they were at the Moog Center and even before that. So we said okay what do we ‑‑ we sat around to talk about it. I think some people who are more data‑centered and wanted things where you could count, you know, and say what they did, and we were interested in what their life, you know, had been like. There were lots more that I could have talked about but I think we really wanted to know how they were getting along. We wanted to know how ‑‑ did they learn sign language and why did they learn it and did they want to ‑‑ how it has helped them. We wanted to learn what kind of jobs they were getting, we wanted to go beyond just their academic career, and then we started saying what do you really want to know, you know, and it's interesting. We asked who was married and who wasn't and we happened to have two kids ‑‑ they're kids to me, that went to school ‑‑ went to our school and they married each ear, so that was interesting.

Since then about six are married, I think, and some have married deaf people and some hearing people. So we got ‑‑ they're not old enough to get a lot about their families but I was surprised how it was and what I wanted to present but then I thought ‑‑ Betsy didn't think it was a good idea was that we had something at the very end if you want to make a comment about something that we didn't ask, you may, and they did. A lot were testimonials to our school. I thought why don't I read the testimonials?   
(Laughter.)

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>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I think it's a testimonial how much they like their employment settings, you've got a lot of data that's testimony money to that early education so thank you.

>> JEAN MOOG: Thank you.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: Hi, Jean. I know many families would move to St. Louis to attend the Moog Center. Where are these kids at? How far across the nation?

>> JEAN MOOG: They're across! They're ‑‑ you mean living now these kids? Or when they came to the school?

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: No, no, yeah ‑‑

>> JEAN MOOG: They're in New York, California, across the United States. They're in the midwest, some are teaching in the midwest. One is teaching at a state school.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: They're more independent than my four grown children, I'm not kidding   
(Laughter.)

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Away from mic.)   
(Laughter.)

>> JEAN MOOG: That's right they like to come in for my birthday parties, uh‑huh. Thank you very much for coming and I really appreciate it.   
(Applause.)

(End of presentation.)

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