Research Summarized!
Promoting High Expectations for Success

High expectations for postsecondary success includes believing in deaf* individuals' capability to succeed and not viewing their opportunities as limited because they are deaf. These expectations are a necessary component of deaf youths' environment to successfully navigate the transition from high school to postsecondary education or training. Many people hold low expectations for the abilities of deaf people.[10, 30] Deaf individuals' expectations about their abilities and future attainment do not develop in a vacuum; teachers, parents, and other professionals make a significant contribution to how those expectations and beliefs are formed.[3, 7, 25]

What can be learned from the existing literature on promoting high expectations for success of deaf individuals?

STRENGTHS-BASED APPROACHES TO PROMOTE HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Using strengths-based approaches, as opposed to focusing on deficits, provides opportunities for deaf individuals to develop autonomy, self-determination skills, and self-advocacy.

Strengths-based interventions that promote self-determination include training in activities like goal setting, problem solving, and knowledge of self and the "soft" skills needed to navigate social interactions.[24, 29]

- Establishing "learning partnerships" with other deaf individuals in the classroom setting may be a beneficial approach to bolstering social and academic skills needed to thrive in postsecondary settings.[20, 14]
- Strong social skills in deaf high school students have been linked to higher rates of postsecondary attendance and graduation. Therefore, activities that promote social skill development in secondary school may have benefits that extend beyond high school graduation.[3]

*In this report, we use the term *deaf* in an all-encompassing manner to include individuals who identify as Deaf, hard of hearing, hearing impaired, late deafened, and deafdisabled.

- Parents' expectations have been found to contribute to a stronger sense of autonomy in deaf adolescents and the likelihood of deaf individuals graduating from college and obtaining employment in the future.[4, 8]
- Many supervisors at internship and practicum sites have doubts about deaf applicants' abilities to perform well. Educating supervisors about the benefits of cultural diversity and the unique communication skills of deaf applicants can help change attitudes toward deaf applicants.[9]

POSTSECONDARY PLANNING PROCESSES TO PROMOTE HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Postsecondary planning includes holding annual individualized education program (IEP) or admission, review, dismissal (ARD) meetings; identifying postsecondary goals; organizing a plan for the identified goals (including alternative strategies); and providing support and resources to achieve such goals. Postsecondary planning is highly individualized, so other planning activities may be warranted.

Comprehensive planning activities (e.g., focus on short- and long-term goal-setting, identification of strengths and areas of growth, exploration of career interests) during secondary grades lays the foundation for student success in postsecondary settings.

- Current research demonstrates a lack of adequate transition preparation and instruction for deaf individuals after high school.[15, 16]
- An estimated 60% of deaf students who enroll in postsecondary settings do not graduate, as deaf students are often underprepared to navigate the postsecondary environment, especially in terms of their academic and self-advocacy skills.[12, 17, 19]
- Educational and transition instruction needs to include tailored strategies and support for deaf students.[26]
- It is critical to integrate self-advocacy training into transition planning for deaf individuals so they are prepared to be assertive when requesting necessary accommodations or clarifying misconceptions about deaf people.[22]

ROLE MODELS TO PROMOTE HIGH EXPECTATIONS

Role models serve as examples of the attitudes, values, and behavior associated with diverse types of roles in a community. Role models can provide comfort, support, guidance, and motivation, especially in cultural minority populations. Deaf teachers, coaches, community members, and professionals are all examples of possible role models.[5]

Role models and mentors address a critical need for deaf individuals and serve an important function in developing social capital. Deaf role models can also positively influence cultural attitudes and expectations held by hearing individuals toward people who are deaf.

- Deaf role models have been found to benefit families, improve parent expectations and attitudes toward deafness, and increase young deaf individuals' self-identity and belief in their capabilities.[5, 20]
- Deaf residential schools provide the opportunity for deaf students to access strong role modeling through deaf faculty and staff members.[18]
- Recruiting older deaf students or members of local organizations to serve as role models or mentors can help students adjust to life in postsecondary settings.[1]

PARENTS AND TEACHERS' ROLE IN PROMOTING HIGH EXPECTATIONS

There is a significant need to educate parents and professionals about deaf individuals' true potential for success.

- Teachers of deaf students can provide support and guidance through sharing high expectations for their students' achievement, teaching them to be self-advocates, and supporting their healthy self-concept and socioemotional development.[25]
- Professionals who were previously trained in deafness or deaf issues reported more positive attitudes toward deafness.[6]
- Administrators can support the development of high teacher expectations for deaf students by introducing cultural perspectives from deaf experiences into special education teacher training and preparation programs.[11]
- Parental expectations are an important contributor to long-term outcomes (living independently, enrolling in college, completing college) of deaf individuals.[4]
- Deaf adolescents whose parents have higher expectations about their future potential have a stronger sense of autonomy, are more likely to find their jobs independently, and have more job experience.[8]
- Among deaf students with high expectations for themselves (e.g., the expectation that they will attend college), research provides evidence that their parents tend to have similarly high expectations. Additionally, family support has been found to bolster deaf students' expectations for their own success.[23]

TAKE-AWAYS

Promoting a strengths-based approach works toward shifting the culture to recognizing the strengths of deaf individuals working toward attaining their postsecondary goals. Early relationships, such as those formed with parents, caretakers, and teachers, influence the formation of deaf individuals' self-beliefs and self-concept. Optimistic expectations for the success of deaf individuals can have a big impact on student development, including their motivation to pursue and persist in postsecondary education. The information presented in this brief shows that evidence-based strategies such as comprehensive career and college planning, mentor programs, and parent and professional education have the potential to raise expectations of deaf individuals.

REFERENCES

1   Boutin, D. L. (2008). Persistence in postsecondary environments of students with hearing impairments. *Journal of Rehabilitation, 74*(1), 25–31.

2   Carlson, E., Chen, L., Schroll, K., & Klein, S. (2003). *SPeNSE: Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education. Final report of the paperwork substudy*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

3   Cawthon, S. W., Caemmerer, J. M., Dickson, D. M., Ocuto, O. L., Ge, J., & Bond, M. P. (2015). Social skills as a predictor of postsecondary outcomes for individuals who are deaf. *Applied Developmental Science, 19*(1), 19–30. doi:10.1080/10888691.2014.948157

4   Cawthon, S., Garberoglio, C. L., Caemmerer, J. M., Bond, M., & Wendel, E. (2015). Effects of parent expectations and parent involvement on postschool outcomes for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. *Exceptionality, 23*(2), 73–99.

5   Cawthon, S. W., Johnson, P. M., Garberoglio, C. L., & Schoffstall, S. J. (2016). Role models as facilitators of social capital for deaf individuals: A research synthesis. *American Annals of the Deaf, 161*(2), 115–127.

6   Cooper, A., Rose, J., & Mason, O. (2004). Measuring the attitudes of human service professionals toward deafness. *American Annals of the Deaf, 148*(5), 385–389.

7   Crowe, K., McLeod, S., McKinnon, D., & Ching, T. (2015). Attitudes toward the capabilities of deaf and hard of hearing adults: Insights from the parents of deaf and hard of hearing children. *American Annals of the Deaf, 160*(1), 24–35. doi:10.1353/aad.2012.1602

8   Garberoglio, C. L., Schoffstall, S., Cawthon, S., Bond, M., & Caemmerer, J. M. (2016). The antecedents and outcomes of autonomous behaviors: Modeling the role of autonomy in achieving sustainable employment for deaf young adults. *Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities, 29*(1), 107–129. doi:10.1007/s10882-016-9492-2

9   Hauser, P. C., Maxwell-McCaw, D. L., Leigh, I. W., & Gutman, V. A. (2000). Internship accessibility issues for deaf and hard-of-hearing applications: No cause for complacency. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 31*(5), 569–574. doi:10.1037/0735-7028.31.5.569

10   Jamieson, J. R., Zaidman-Zait, A., & Poon, B. (2011). Family support needs as perceived by parents of preadolescents and adolescents who are deaf or hard of hearing. *Deafness & Education International, 13*(3), 110–130.

11   Johnson, J. R., & McIntosh, A. S. (2009). Toward a cultural perspective and understanding of the disability and deaf experience in special and multicultural education. *Remedial and Special Education, 30*(2), 67–83.

12   Kelly, R. R. (2015). *The employment and career growth of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals*. Rochester, NY: REACH Center for Studies on Career Success, National Technical Institute for the Deaf, Rochester Institute of Technology. Retrieved from http://www.raisingandeducatingdeafchildren.org/2015/01/12/the-employment-and-career-growth-of-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing-individuals/

13   Lombardi, A. R., Kowitt, J. S., & Staples, F. E. (2015). Correlates of critical thinking and college and career readiness for students with and without disabilities. *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals, 38*(3), 142–151.

14   Luckner, J. L., & Muir, S. (2001). Successful students who are deaf in general education settings. *American Annals of the Deaf General Libraries, 146*(18), 435–446. doi:10.1353/aad.2012.0202

15   Luft, P. (2012). Employment and independent living skills of public school high school deaf students: Analyses of the transition competence battery response patterns. *Journal of the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association, 45*(3), 292–313.

16   Luft, P. (2016). What Is different about deaf education? The effects of child and family factors on educational services. *The Journal of Special Education, 51*(1), 27–37. doi:10.177/0022466916660546

17   Marschark, M., Lang, H. G., & Albertini, J. A. (2001). *Educating deaf students: From research to practice*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

18   Moores, D. F. (2001). *Educating the deaf: Psychology, principles, and practices* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

19   Newman, L., Wagner, M., Cameto, R., & Knokey, A. M. (2009). *The post-high school outcomes of youth with disabilities up to 4 years after high school: A report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)*. Washington, DC: National Center for Special Education Research.

20   Rodgers, K. D., & Young, A. M. (2011). Being a deaf role model: Deaf people's experience of working with families. *Deafness and Education International, 13*(1), 2–16.

21   Rogers, S., Muir, K., & Evenson, C. R. (2003). Signs of resilience: Assets that support deaf adults' success in bridging the deaf and hearing worlds. *American Annals of the Deaf, 148*(3), 222–232.

22   Schoffstall, S. J. & Cawthon, S. W. (In preparation). *From theory to practice: Self-advocacy skill development of students who are deaf or hard of hearing who are transitioning into postsecondary settings*.

23   Shaver, D., Newman, L., Huang, T., Yu, J., & Knokey, A. (2011). *The secondary school experiences and academic performance of students with hearing impairments: A report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2* (NLTS-2). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

24 Shogren, K. A., Lopez, S. J., Wehmeyer, M. L., Little, T. D., & Pressgrove, C. L. (2006). The role of positive psychology constructs in predicting life satisfaction in adolescents with and without cognitive disabilities: An exploratory study. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 1*(1), 37–52.

25 Smith, D. H. (2013). Deaf adults: Retrospective narratives of school experiences and teacher expectations. *Disability & Society, 28*(5), 674–686. doi:10.1080/09687599.2012.732537

26 Stinson, M. S., & Kluwin, T. N. (2003). Educational consequences of alternative school placements. In M. Marschark & P. Spencer (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of deaf studies, language, and education* (pp. 52–64). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

27 Walker, A., Kortering, L. J., Fowler, C. H., Rowe, D. A., & Bethune, L. (2013). *Age appropriate transition assessment toolkit* (3rd ed.). Charlotte, NC: National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center.

28 Wandry, D. L., Webb, K. W., Williams, J. M., Bassett, D. S., Asselin, S. B., & Hutchinson, S. R. (2008). Teacher candidates' perceptions of barriers to effective transition planning. *Career Development for Exceptional Individuals, 31*, 14–25.

29 Wehmeyer, M. L., Shogren, K. A., Palmer, S. B., Williams-Diehm, K. L., Little, T. D., & Boulton, A. (2012). The impact of the self-determined learning model of instruction on student self-determination. *Exceptional Children, 78*(2), 135–153.

30 Weisel, A., & Cinamon, R. G. (2005). Hearing, deaf, and hard-of-hearing Israeli adolescents' evaluations of deaf men and deaf women's occupational competence. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education, 10*(4), 376–389.

SUGGESTED CITATION FOR THIS BRIEF

National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes. (2017). *Research summarized! Promoting high expectations for success.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes. Retrieved from www.nationaldeafcenter.org

NDC
National Deaf Center
on Postsecondary Outcomes

IDEAs that Work
Office of Special Education Programs
U.S. Department of Education

TA&D
NETWORK