



**PUBLIC INPUT
CLERC CENTER**

Public Input 2018 Survey Findings: The Need for More and Improved Resources for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children, Their Families, and the Professionals Working with Them

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The Clerc Center, a federally funded national deaf education center, ensures that the diverse population of deaf and hard of hearing students (birth through age 21) in the nation are educated and empowered and have the linguistic competence to maximize their potential as productive and contributing members of society. This is accomplished through early access to and acquisition of language, excellence in teaching, family involvement, research, identification and implementation of best practices, collaboration, and information sharing among schools and programs across the nation.

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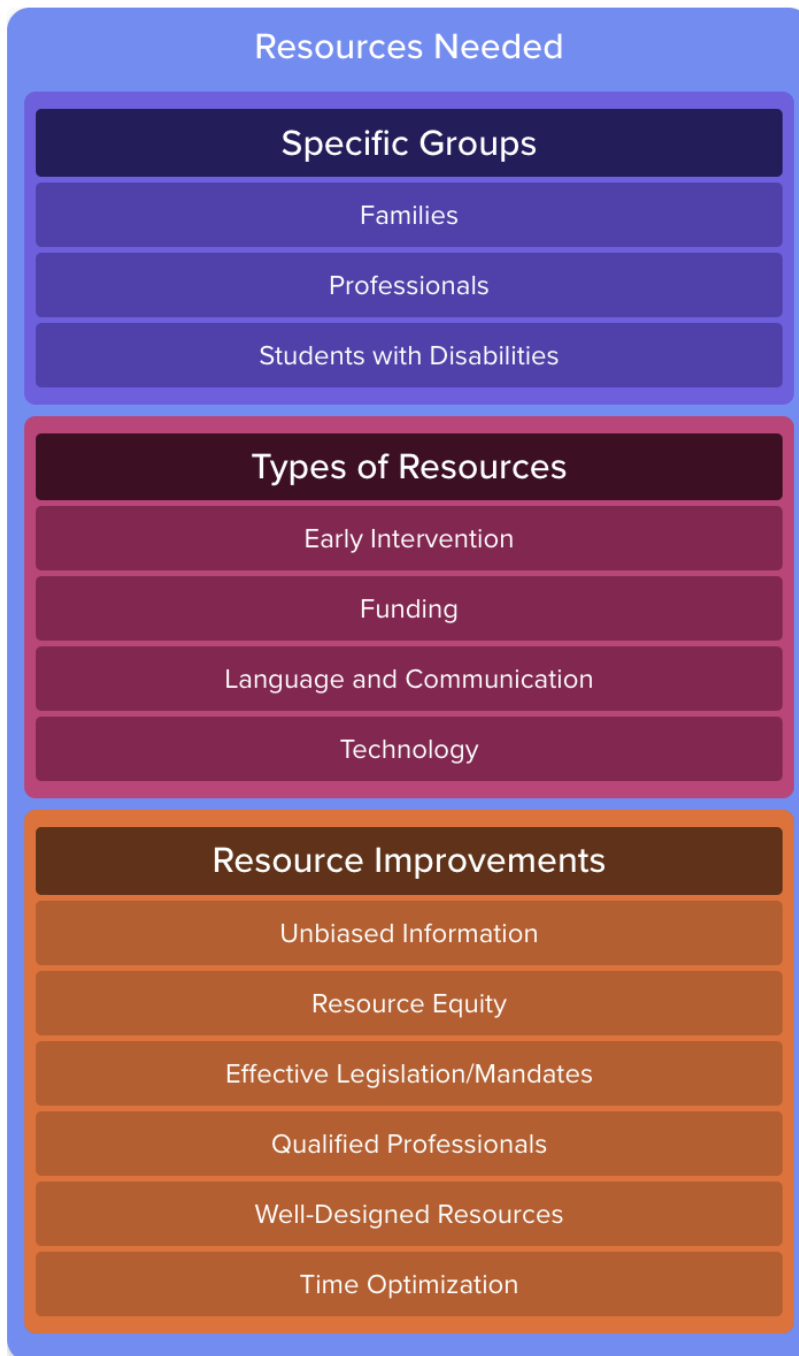
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Overview

This model is an interpretation based on respondents' feedback about Resources, one of the 14 barriers identified in the national public input survey disseminated by the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center in 2017 and 2018. Respondents included parents and caregivers of deaf and hard of hearing children as well as professionals who work with those children and families. In this survey, respondents were asked to answer the question: *What are the barriers preventing deaf and hard of*

hearing students from reaching their potential? Respondents discussed the need for: 1) specific groups of people who need resources, 2) specific types of resources, and 3) needed improvements to resources. These three resource needs are categorized with subcategories in the Resources model:

1. **Specific groups**—families, professionals, and students with disabilities
2. **Types of resources**—early intervention, funding, language and communication, and technology
3. **Resource improvement**—unbiased information, resource equity, effective legislation/mandates, qualified professionals, well-designed resources, and time optimization

These categories and subcategories overlap in the Resources model; however, they are categorized based on the main idea of responses. They provide a glimpse into respondents' perceptions of resources as a barrier that prevents deaf and hard of hearing students from achieving their academic, linguistic, and socioemotional potential.

Specific Groups

Respondents discussed different groups of people who need resources, including families, professionals, and deaf and hard of hearing students with disabilities. Families with deaf or hard of hearing children need resources to support their children but experience challenges in accessing those resources. Professionals who work with families and their deaf or hard of hearing children also experience challenges in accessing resources that allow them to develop as professionals and serve those families. Deaf and hard of hearing students with disabilities are unique, and that creates a challenge for them to access and receive resources that benefit them specifically. Each group's needs and challenges are discussed next.

Families

Respondents shared different types of resources that families of deaf and hard of hearing children need or need more of, such as information, technology, and services:

- Information that families need includes guidance on how to support their deaf or hard of hearing children so they can reach key developmental milestones. An example is how to use insurance to get resources or funds for supporting their deaf or hard of hearing children's language access.

Examples of responses related to families:

- *"... Parents are unfamiliar with available resources and are urged to implant but then not educated with follow-up after implantation"*
- *"... I would like to see teachers provide more information on national organizations, such as AG Bell, to parents and families"* (professional)
- *"... Parents should also be provided with information on how to monitor the progress of their child's language before they start school"*
- *"... We are in need of resources for families, including presentations, guidance, [and] kits for our family events, which also [includes] family retreats."*

- Technology, such as hearing assistive technology (e.g., hearing aids) and communicative technology (e.g., videophones), is needed to support deaf and hard of hearing children’s language and communication access.

Examples of responses related to technology:

- *“Many families I work with do not have the resources (time, money for travel, understanding of need, funding for technology) to adequately support their children. ...”*
- *“... Our deaf daughter will need cochlear implants, but we have no medical insurance and finding the resources available for help has been daunting.” (parent)*
- Services include access to professionals (e.g., counselors) and access to language and communication services (e.g., sign language classes). Families also need networking resources, such as collaboration with professionals, participation in political decision making, interactions with deaf adults, and/or connections with other families for support and resource sharing. They could also use support from health centers, organizations, support groups, and faith-based organizations to meet their deaf or hard of hearing children’s needs. Services also include childcare and transportation provisions so that families can attend various appointments, meetings, and classes to support their children.

Examples of responses related to services:

- *“... We need more mentors for families, access to VP, communication with support for families”*
- *“... In my state, a family advisor is placed with a family via the outreach consultant. The services for a family range from 2x-4x a month, one-hour-long sessions. I don’t believe this is a reasonable time allotment as learning language takes years and immersion” (professional)*

Additionally, respondents discussed challenges families experience in accessing resources. Families may not always know what they need to know or how to find resources. Individual families may experience specific challenges. For instance, families of low socioeconomic status may struggle with obtaining resources, and some families may need resources to be translated into their first language.

Examples of responses related to families accessing resources:

- *“... translated materials for families to understand the impact of deafness on language”*
- *“... Oftentimes as a parent, I am unaware of all of the resources that are available to aid and support my son. This is coming from a parent who works at a deaf school and has a child that attends the deaf school. I am constantly amazed at the resources that are available as I come across them at work and realize without the position I have, I would be completely clueless as to the resources available. ...” (parent)*

Professionals

In addition to families, respondents shared that professionals who work with deaf or hard of hearing students and their families also need resources. Resources include, but are not limited to, professional development and educational resources. These resources would allow professionals to work more effectively with deaf and hard of hearing students and their families.

Some respondents discussed challenges professionals experience in working with families, such as not having the information they need to support families and their children. If professionals have more curricular and assessment resources available, they could become more effective educators. Professionals could also benefit from collaborating and sharing resources with other professionals.

Further, respondents shared that professionals, including Deaf leaders, need more support. Due to limited resources, some professionals may feel overwhelmed, lack awareness of available resources, and struggle in their profession.

Examples of responses related to professionals:

- *“... Teachers in public education could use help to understand the challenges facing our children, information to help understand accommodations to make sure they are utilizing the accommodations for the child correctly”*
- *“... There is a lack of curriculum and resources for teaching those who are deaf and hard of hearing”*
- *“As a deaf educator, I struggle to have adequate time and resources to meet with classroom teachers to support students with their particular needs. ...”* (professional)
- *“... In my 30-year career, I have not been able to meet IEP minutes due to lack of provisions (teachers)”* (professional)
- *“... For those who do read well, often teachers need support to get captioned materials and don’t ask or don’t know how to get information. It just seems like we are spread too thin. ...”*
- *“... There are NOT enough appropriate resources for our students that are D/HH. Teachers are constantly taking the time to make their own resources when time can be spent elsewhere. ...”*

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students with Disabilities

Respondents discussed deaf and hard of hearing students with disabilities and the need for more resources and services for this particular group of students, including those designed specifically for this population and their families. Many resources, including transitioning after school, focus on able-bodied deaf and hard of hearing students and their families, reducing the usefulness of these resources for deaf and hard of hearing students with disabilities and their families. Deaf and hard of hearing students with disabilities also need services that are specifically designed for them. More research and information on how to support deaf and hard of hearing students with disabilities is needed.

Examples of responses related to deaf and hard of hearing students with disabilities:

- *“... Many children who are deaf also have additional disabilities, and there is not enough research, resources, or information on best practice for supporting their success.”*
- *“... Children with disabilities on top of deafness have an even harder time and need appropriate services as early as possible. ...”*
- *“While my son had bilateral cochlear implantation at 20 months, he also has ADHD and finding services to meet the needs of the whole child has been difficult and directly impacted language development.” (parent)*
- *“Secondary disabilities play a significant part in hindering development but might be mitigated or lessened by effective language acquisition and sociolinguistic acquisition and intervention.”*
- *“As a family with a deaf child who has other special needs, we’ve had an incredibly difficult time finding appropriate services and resources for her in our community, even though we live in a major U.S. city and have access to financial and transportation-based resources.”*
- *“Resources for families regarding DHH with additional disabilities are needed, especially transition services for life after high school”*

Types of Resources

Specific types of resources are needed for families of deaf and hard of hearing children and the professionals who work with them. For this resource need, there are four subcategories based on the emphasis placed by the respondents regarding types of resources: early intervention (EI), funding, language and communication, and technology. Discussing types of resources provides an understanding of what respondents perceive as necessary resources.

Early Intervention

Respondents discussed that there are ongoing challenges regarding early hearing detection and intervention (EHDI) resources even though EHDI services and programs are required by law. Families need more resources, such as the Shared Reading Project, and better access to available resources. EHDI resources are limited, not comprehensive, not immediately accessible, biased toward a specific language and communication philosophy, and unavailable after deaf and hard of hearing children reach a specific age. Some respondents discussed that parents are not satisfied with EI programs and resources, and they need to be improved.

Also, there are not enough qualified professionals with a deaf education or cultural-linguistic EI background, especially with EI specialization in deaf and hard of hearing children. A few respondents discussed the need for more deaf professionals in EHDI. Further, some professionals and agencies have experienced restrictions in serving and providing resources to families. These challenges can impact deaf and hard of hearing children’s language development.

Examples of responses related to EI resources:

- *“... Early intervention—I think it would be beneficial to continue to train teachers, develop materials, and teach strategies that help parents realize the importance of early intervention and that their early involvement is key to their child’s success. ...”*
- *“... I work in state EHDI, and once we have an early ID, the EI options are limited in terms of service delivery for the family”*
- *“My daughter would benefit from more 1:1 support at her critical development age (early childhood). One visit every 2 or 3 weeks is hard for sustained development. Early intervention and support are key for understanding and development.” (parent)*
- *“... I feel that Deaf [state] should invest more in EHDI, such as requiring that all deaf babies get equal access by having a Deaf professional on the team, setting up some kind of service, such as the mentoring program, the Shared Reading Project” (teacher)*
- *“... In addition to early intervention services by a DHH specialist, families may benefit not only from access to resources but working with a DHH counselor to help guide them through the grieving process in order to help better support their child in access. ...”*
- *“There are challenges in creating a system of coordinated care for families, and a disjointed early intervention system in the state that is difficult to access”*
- *“... the lack of understanding of superintendents on the needs of DHH students so that teachers for B-3 do not have the time or resources to spend with children and their families for proper support in language and communication development when there is a more significant hearing loss” (parent)*
- *“... Often, these agencies evaluate the needs of children based on to what capacity that agency can serve the children as opposed to evaluating for what the child actually needs”*
- *“... About half the families that eventually come to our program haven’t been able to access 0-3 programming ... due to funding, transportation, and use of a different home language. ...”*
- *“We need more cultural-linguistic early intervention providers, we need more ASL mentors for parents (language-communication), and there are not enough laws with accompanying funding for these issues. ...”*

Funding

Based on respondents’ comments, funding plays a significant role as a type of resource and as a way to allocate resources for families, professionals, and schools. Respondents discussed that: 1) funds are needed, and 2) they may need to be reallocated to be used effectively to support families and their deaf or hard of hearing children (e.g., for ASL classes, transportation, childcare, translation services), the professionals who work with them, and organizations and schools that serve them. Further, families also experience challenges with limited funds or barriers to accessing funds. For example, a few respondents discussed how a lack of insurance or insurance restrictions may prevent families from accessing resources.

Schools vary in their funding abilities and their use of funds, which impacts their resource allocations for professionals, families, and deaf and hard of hearing students. Some respondents shared that funds decrease over time and there are budget constraints, impacting how resources are provided. Despite the decrease in funds, funding is still needed to recruit and retain professionals with specific desired expertise and fluency in various communication modalities as well as to support different types of legislation. Some respondents also shared concerns about how funds are being used and that they are not used well or not allocated appropriately.

Examples of responses related to funding:

- *“... The other primary barrier to students is financial. While health insurance is covering more hearing aid costs than ever before, this is only useful if a student is in the country legally and can access health insurance with this benefit”*
- *“... School districts, too, are financially limited in the amount of assistive listening technology they can afford to purchase and, therefore, are limited when it comes to upgrading technology, replacing lost or broken devices, or expanding the inventory of available devices for use in schools. Increasing available funding to schools for the provision of hearing technology would help to alleviate the school-based issues a lack of access to appropriate amplification can have on student achievement.”*
- *“... Funding in our state is lacking; interpreters and technology are expensive, and we struggle to keep these resources available.”*
- *“... funding is being reduced for early intervention services and is likely to grow worse over time.”*
- *“... when schools lack proper funding, it is difficult to obtain and keep qualified and quality teachers, staff, and admin.”*
- *“... Money for parent training is the resource we are lacking to better provide families with the skills they need to help their children”*
- *“... Also, we are struggling to find sufficient funding to grow our Deaf Mentor program and also better pay for teacher’s aides in the educational system” (professional)*
- *“... Funding is needed for DHH children and their families to learn and use ASL.”*
- *“... Why are our educational systems so “top heavy” with administrators that take away from the ability of schools and programs to provide strong financial support in the classrooms? ...”*
- *“... Is it a fight to see who will pay for what and to have the teachers actually set up individual education tailored to my child’s needs? ...” (parent)*
- *“My son is 3 and I would love to have him in everything he could but financially cannot afford it. Financial resources are a huge barrier for my family.” (parent)*

Language and Communication

Respondents discussed families' and their deaf and hard of hearing children's need for more language and communication resources. This includes auditory-visual therapy (AVT) and American Sign Language (ASL) curriculum and instruction resources, language assessment resources, signed videos, online language resources, bilingual teaching resources, and ASL standards. Some respondents also discussed the need for more literacy resources, and although books (including library books) are available, there is a need for more reading materials for various reading levels. Further, some language and communication resources need to be specifically designed for specific deaf and hard of hearing students, such as those who need language immersion, and for families so they can communicate with their children.

Examples of responses related to language and communication resources:

- *"... There needs to be more resources in ASL for students to tap into—like mini-lectures in math, science, and social studies"*
- *"We do not have adequate assessment tools for deaf or hard of hearing children in the areas of language and communication. We need assessments that can be used in the elementary levels and assessments for the secondary levels."*
- *"... Sign language proficiency should be monitored and structured, leveled, mentoring programs put in place to ensure non-native signers continue to improve"*
- *"... This could include access to sign language classes for families, signed videos for preschool age children, or online sign language resources and increased funding for itinerant services both in early intervention programs AND for students in mainstream classrooms. ..."*
- *"I'm excited to see and use the ASL academic standards coming out soon. We need more resources for ASL/English bilingual lesson planning."*
- *"... Many programs lack resources/training on ASL curriculum, instruction, and assessment"*
- *"Need more Shared Reading Project conference websites and Shared Reading Project books in Spanish."*
- *"... Literacy—there are really, really GREAT library books with tremendous artwork in them that spend far too many hours on the shelves" (professional)*

Technology

Regarding technology, respondents discussed different challenges related to hearing assistive technology, technology resources, and professional development. Families and their deaf or hard of hearing children struggle to obtain hearing assistive technology and access-related services and support. There is a need for hearing assistive technology to be: 1) more affordable, and 2) more consistently used or maintained well. There is also a need for more staff with expertise in the use of hearing assistive technology. Additionally, respondents discussed other technology resource needs, such as: 1) applications being more specifically designed for deaf and hard of hearing students, 2) more digital educational resources, and 3) the use of videophones as a way to connect classrooms.

Respondents also discussed schools' and professionals' need for support with learning about technology and using current technology.

Examples of responses related to technology resources:

- *"... Hearing aids are usually lower end and are not maintained well. Most of my students did not receive amplification until 3-4 and had inconsistent usage until school."*
- *"... Lack of variety in apps for literacy and early learning skills (i.e., wish to have app that matches alphabet letters with sign language letters, numbers, etc.)"*
- *"Students in outlying areas are underserved and lack resources; would like more access to videophones to connect classrooms"*
- *"... We have a tremendous amount of technological resources available, and I see every day how teachers don't use this"*
- *"I want to see more educational equipment for the deaf and hard of hearing students, such as Hooked on Phonics for the deaf. I've always wanted to get that for my son but can't find one anywhere. Does it even exist?" (parent)*
- *"... Schools that have children with hearing loss often do not have adequate information about technology or the financial resources for this technology" (professional)*

Resource Improvements

In addition to specific groups needing resources and types of resources needed, respondents also discussed specific improvements needed for currently available resources. Six subcategories for resource improvements include: 1) unbiased information, 2) resource equity, 3) effective legislation and mandates, 4) qualified professionals, 5) well-designed resources, and 6) time optimization. Resource improvements can begin to address the challenges and gaps that families and their deaf or hard of hearing children experience. These subcategories will be elaborated upon below.

Unbiased Information

Respondents shared concerns about biases regarding resource provisions. Some of these biased resources include information, services, professionals, schools, and agencies. Some parents receive limited or inadequate resources due to bias and, in turn, are not given a full spectrum of information about resources and language options. As a result, they may not be making fully informed decisions. Some responses suggested a need for unbiased information to better support families and their deaf or hard of hearing children.

Examples of responses related to unbiased information:

- *"... Often parents are not given all of the options for language choice, educational placement, and nonmedical interventions"*

- *“... The decision-making process that a family must make is usually based on the teachers’/districts’ biases and available services.”*
- *“Many professionals do not collaborate with each other. It seems they are constantly at war with each other’s philosophies. As a result, the child and family suffer. They are given misleading information designed to promote one philosophy over the other. This will affect the child’s expectations for achievement as well as directly impact their language growth.”*
- *“... When doctors make suggestions, sometimes they do not realize that it is critical that they contact a specialist who has knowledge about deaf and hard of hearing = ASL, deaf schools, resources, etc. ...”*
- *“... Resources are not freely provided to families which all leads to a lack of understanding and ultimately affects the child’s language and communication. All agencies and entities involved are withholding information, resources and services and doing the child a disservice. I’m not sure if there is a true shortage of qualified personnel or misappropriation of funds to employ these individuals.”*

Resource Equity

Respondents discussed that resources are not always allocated equitably for various reasons. Resource inequities include schools’ disparate allocations, variations in program locations and quality, inequitable access to qualified professionals, inconsistencies in resource provisions, and systemic barriers for traditionally underserved families.

First, schools and programs differ in resource provisions and allocation as well as their willingness to provide resources, including accommodations for deaf and hard of hearing students, resources for professionals, and services for families. Some challenges schools experience include budget strains, budget decision making, awareness of resources, resource availability, and infrastructure that may influence equitable resource allocation.

Examples of responses related to schools and programs’ differing resource provisions and allocations:

- *“... There also are inconsistencies in the interpreting services both in the self-contained classroom (Total Communication with interpreter aides) and mainstream classrooms”*
- *“... There are very few interpreters and TODs, so students are sent to schools outside their area or district to provide services for them. At those schools, students are frequently grouped together by class subject and not appropriate placement so we can service more students. Other students go without any support.”*

Second, schools for deaf and hard of hearing students and educational programs also vary in where they are located and in quality, impacting deaf and hard of hearing students’ and their families’ accessing and obtaining resources. Additionally, some respondents discussed that programs and services are not meeting the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students, and some are also disappearing. As a result, there are disparities in resources available to families and their deaf or hard of hearing children.

Examples of responses related to variations between schools and programs:

- *“There are two groups of students: those in districts and those in deaf programs. Students in districts lack proper identification, supports, qualified teachers, resources, and quality access to ASL. Those in deaf schools have access to many of those supports but don’t always begin at young ages, have families that cannot sign, don’t have access to all resources needed, and often have to go through a tug-of-war with districts to attend the deaf program.”*
- *“Teachers lack the understanding when it comes to HOH or deaf children. It is not right that one school district is better than the other; there should be high standards so that children can succeed. Other children should also be educated so that it may decrease bullying. I know that I will be facing this as I am in a school district that will not provide my son with the resources he needs.”* (parent)

Third, the availability of qualified professionals also varies among schools and programs. Thus, the services they provide may differ or may not be available. This resource issue also includes limited access to deaf adults and role models for families and their deaf or hard of hearing children. Another important consideration is ensuring resources are available for all deaf and hard of hearing students of all ages and for those with varying abilities and needs instead of providing them with only what schools, programs, and/or agencies are willing to offer.

Examples of responses related to varying availability of qualified professionals:

- *“In our county, we have finally opened an allocation for an itinerant teacher of the deaf to provide the expanded curriculum to our DHH students, but we have not been able to fill the position yet. Not having that qualified position in our schools leads to a lack of understanding and collaboration, both with the teachers and parents.”*
- *“The districts I support cannot find teachers of the deaf/hard of hearing, ASL interpreters, or SLPs with knowledge of D/HH to provide appropriate instruction to students who are D/HH”*

Fourth, resource provisions and allocations vary from state to state, creating inconsistencies in access to and provisions of services to families and their deaf and hard of hearing children. A few respondents suggested that it might be beneficial to establish community centers to coordinate resources and educate professionals and families including providing hearing detection services.

Examples of responses related to varying resources provisions and allocations from state to state:

- *“... Resources in [state] are few. Options for families in regard to communication options, amplification options, [and] cultural experiences are limited.”*
- *“... We are moving to another state for our child to go to deaf school because the district we are in will not provide interpretation to our profoundly Deaf child”* (parent)

Fifth, another equity challenge is considering systematic barriers for families of deaf and hard of hearing children who are members of traditionally underserved groups. Barriers include poverty, lack of insurance, and a lack of U.S. citizenship.

Examples of responses related to systematic barriers:

- *“There is a significant difference in the support and technology available to children in richer areas and those in poorer areas”*
- *“... Also, I live in a rural area and there were no options for me to learn sign language. I have to travel 45 minutes each way and pay \$300 a credit hour to take ASL classes from the community college in the nearest big city. My 4-year-old son also travels 45 minutes each way (by car ... it’s 2 hours each way by school bus) to attend the deaf school since it’s the only way he can have access to ASL while living in a rural area.”*

Also, there is a lack of public awareness; the society needs education about deaf and hard of hearing people in order to address resource inequities. Overall, there is too much variability in how resources and services are provided. This creates challenges for families with deaf or hard of hearing children and for the professionals who work with them to ensure the needs of these children are met.

Effective Legislation/Mandates

Respondents discussed the need to strengthen legislation and mandates to better serve families and their deaf or hard of hearing children and the professionals who work with them. Some respondents discussed that existing legislation needs to be implemented willingly and monitored by various groups. There needs to be more lobbying by Deaf and hard of hearing communities. Further, there is a need for legislators and government officials to better understand the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. Respondents also shared that there is a need for legislators to: 1) clarify the intent of some mandates, 2) provide more resources (e.g., hearing assistive technology and funds), 3) ensure deaf and hard of hearing children are referred to centers with resources, 4) improve resource provisions for schools, 5) better support schools and programs serving deaf and hard of hearing students, 6) increase teacher salaries, and 7) include ASL on assessments as a language of modification. Respondents believe that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and least restrictive environment (LRE) need to be strengthened to ensure there are more resources available and fewer barriers for families and their deaf or hard of hearing children’s access to resources.

Examples of responses related to effective legislation and mandates:

- *“... Policy and legislation with FUNDING are also necessary to provide services and qualified direct service personnel who are training and fluent in ASL and other modes of communication”*
- *“... Policy and legislation—I have seen so much in-fighting in the Deaf and hard of hearing communities that no one is lobbying together for hearing aids or therapies/ classes to be covered or financially supported.”*
- *“In my opinion, ... LRE is being used to shunt proper education to rural deaf children. Limiting their access to the nearest school with minimal staff support is slowly killing off deaf education by qualified direct staff”*
- *“... POLICY and LEGISLATION can certainly help address the newborn screening and detection needs for children, but any laws passed need to be funded and carried out by willing states, agencies, medical, etc. ...”*

Qualified Professionals

Respondents suggested a need to increase the number of highly qualified professionals with specific expertise who are administrators, teachers, audiologists, oral facilitators, language models, mentors, interpreters, specialists, deaf professionals, mental health professionals, and early intervention providers. Finding highly qualified professionals with expertise in cultural-linguistic competency, special education, and various language and communication modalities is a challenge for several reasons. First, highly qualified professionals are retiring but are not being replaced by similarly qualified professionals in proportion. Second, some professionals are not getting the needed certificates, so they are less likely to be hired. Third, the number and expertise of qualified professionals vary from location to location, and there is a need to ensure there are qualified professionals at every school and program with deaf and/or hard of hearing students. Therefore, families and students accessing qualified professionals or those with specific expertise is a challenge.

Overall, current professionals are experiencing challenges due to the shortage of qualified professionals. Generally, they are spread thin, and some professionals take on extra roles or duties to fill gaps. This shortage means current professionals do not have the ability or time to advocate for deaf or hard of hearing students or to collaborate with other professionals. Some respondents discussed that expert professionals struggle to provide training to other professionals to ensure the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students and their families are appropriately met. Respondents also discussed a need for more professionals to be invested in deaf and hard of hearing students. One respondent suggested higher salaries as a solution to recruit and retain highly qualified professionals.

Examples of responses related to qualified professionals:

- *“In [state], we are facing a shortage of teachers of the deaf/hard of hearing. Many experienced teachers are retiring”*
- *“... There is poor understanding by physicians and families as to what to expect, and there aren’t enough qualified providers to educate and support the families”*
- *“As a parent and a professional (public school SLP), I see limited staff available in the public schools to support DHH students. DHH teachers are spread thin (caseloads often span multiple schools and counties), and services are kept to a minimum to achieve compliancy. Local staff are not always aware/educated on needs” (parent-professional)*
- *“... Qualified direct service personnel: There are not enough adults who care for deaf/hard of hearing children who are able to properly care for and handle hearing equipment or who have enough education to teach those children. The teachers who work in the public schools with deaf/hard of hearing children are highly under-qualified. They do not have a high level of education or training associated with Deaf/hard of hearing culture, language, children, communication, etc., and many of those teachers do not have the ability to effectively communicate with deaf/hard of hearing children. ...”*
- *“... The availability of high quality SLP services for children who are implanted is very inaccessible, especially for families with low income”*

- *“... making sure we graduate enough teachers who have early intervention and deaf ed certification qualifications.”*
- *“We need more cultural-linguistic early intervention providers, we need more ASL mentors for parents (language-communication), and there are not enough laws with accompanying funding for these issues”*
- *“... Often, it is only the TOD and SLP providing services (audiology as needed). Students would benefit from having literacy specialist or resource specialist providers” (professional)*
- *“... There are not enough Deaf professionals in the field. There also needs to be more support for Deaf leadership.”*
- *“... Increase the pay for educators and direct service personnel so that they will STAY in their jobs and care about the service they provide. If you offer minimum wage, they will not stay, they will not feel valued. Their skills are specialized, and they should be compensated for their service accordingly.”*

Well-Designed Resources

Respondents discussed that resources need to be better designed for deaf and hard of hearing students and their families (even though they are a small population) and for the professionals who work with them. Services, programs, language resources, assessments, educational equipment, and curriculum could be designed more effectively to align with the needs and abilities of deaf and hard of hearing students and their families with different backgrounds. Also, resources need to address deaf and hard of hearing children’s overall development instead of focusing solely on their auditory challenges. These improvements could result in better support, services, programs, placement, and opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing students and their families. Additionally, there is a need for current research to ensure resources are maximally designed to meet their needs.

Examples of responses related to well-designed resources:

- *“There doesn’t seem to be much put there for deaf, adopted, late language learners nor are there materials geared toward deaf homeschoolers.”*
- *“... Resources, such as access to quality programs designed for deaf and hard of hearing children, are often limited.”*
- *“... Development of literacy is crucial to education, but language acquisition and explicit theory of mind development, critical thinking, and problem solving must come first and be supported throughout a child’s life by both family and educational resources. ...”*
- *“... There is very little research in deaf education and best practices”*
- *“... Because the students are 1% of the student population, the districts do not want to invest in materials that are different to provide instruction for students who are D/HH. ...”*
- *“...Is it a fight to see who will pay for what and to have the teachers actually set up individualized education tailored to my child’s needs? ...” (parent)*

Time Optimization

Respondents discussed time as a commodity needed for learning about resources, seeking and accessing resources, developing resources, and using resources for educational purposes. Families need time to find resources and learn about how to support their deaf or hard of hearing children, such as learning a language or communication modality or learning about a certain system to obtain specific resources. Deaf and hard of hearing students need more time for language learning. Professionals need more time to work with deaf and hard of hearing students, collaborate with other professionals, participate in professional development, and develop individualized resources.

Examples of responses related to time optimization:

- *“Collaboration—When I was a classroom teacher for the deaf, there was never enough time to take care of all the various levels and subjects of lesson planning I had to do, keep up with IEP reports and progress reports, keep up with professional evaluation requirements and professional development requirements AND all of the staff meetings that didn’t really apply to my program and my students, MUCH LESS find time with my also overworked DHH colleagues AND the general education teachers to collaborate. So, much of that work was done through “volunteer time” outside of the contracted school day. ...”*
- *“Certified, knowledgeable teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing are not being given ample time to work with DHH students as best practices. Itinerant teachers are getting slotted so much time and not being allowed to work with students in quiet pull-out settings.”*
- *“As a parent, finding time and financial resources to learn ASL or Cued Speech. Also, understanding medical insurance benefits is time consuming, as well as learning about and applying for governmental assistance, in tandem with continuous learning about how to overcome such challenges is burdensome while maintaining a full-time job with commute, along with child care.” (parent)*

Conclusion

The Resources model provides an overview of the groups of people who need resources, the types of resources that are needed, and resource improvements. Families with deaf or hard of hearing children, professionals, and deaf and hard of hearing children with disabilities each need different types of resources. Responses related to the Resources barrier identified in the national public input survey provide a glimpse into the experiences and challenges of some families with deaf or hard of hearing children, as well as those of the professionals who work with them, when seeking resources to support the children’s academic, linguistic, and socio-emotional development.