



# Factors Influencing Parents' Decisions About Communication Choices During Early Education Of Their Child With Hearing Loss: A Qualitative Study

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Review the full study at: <https://bit.ly/communication-choices-study>.

As individuals working with children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families, we know that making communication choices for their children is a very stressful time for families. It is important to provide resources to families at the time of their child's diagnosis that will encourage the families to explore all of their options in an unbiased way, to allow them to make the best decisions for their families. There is no one way that works for every family.

The objective of this study was to explore the factors influencing parents' choice of communication mode during early education of their child who is deaf or hard of hearing.

The study was a qualitative analysis of semi-structured interviews of parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Fourteen families participated in this Longitudinal Outcomes of Children with Hearing Impairment study.

## There were four themes that were found after analyzing the data:

- 1 Parents make decisions after learning from a lot of different experiences and information, not just from review of one source.
- 2 Parents make choices for their children based on the parent's desired outcomes for the children.
- 3 The child's preferences and their skill with the communication choices play a part in their decision making.
- 4 Parent's fears and worries impact their decisions.

In the end, the study found that parents need unbiased information about each communication choice and the technology available, but also evaluative information on the advantages and disadvantages of each to be able to make informed decisions.