



**Northwest School for
Hearing-Impaired Children**



Educating literate,
mature, caring children
who become responsible,
independent adults.

NWSFHIC GRADUATES SUCCEED

Recently, a large number of young adults who had attended Northwest School for Hearing-Impaired Children (NWSFHIC), and were now alumni, were asked about their level of education, their employment, and their independence. Their responses were compared to a national sample of young, deaf adults who were about the same age and gender, and who had about the same levels of hearing loss. **NWSFHIC alumni were significantly better educated, were employed to a higher degree, and were more independent than those represented in the national sample. Details are provided within this handout.**

WE ARE A COMMUNITY, WORKING AND LEARNING TOGETHER



NWSFHIC

15303 Westminster Way
North
Shoreline, WA 98133

Phone: 206 364 4605

Fax: 206 367 3014

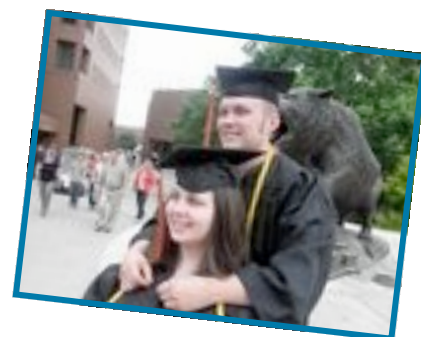
E-mail:

b.luetke@northwestschool.com

AMOUNT OF EDUCATION

HIGH SCHOOL

All of the young adults who had attended NWSFHIC had graduated from high school compared to about 93% of the national sample. In the literature available on this topic, Bowe (2003) noted that many of the students who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) and mainstreamed, do not seem to learn self-care and self-determination as a part of their mainstreamed or included education in public schools. The advantage of an education at NWSFHIC is that the students become well-educated and able to speak, read, and write age-appropriate English. The majority are living responsible, independent lives.



COLLEGE

Lang (2002), as well as Stinson and Walter (1992), found that while many students with hearing loss enroll in college programs in the United States, many do not finish their studies. This was true of the subjects in the national sample as well. That is, although about 67% of the deaf young adults across the country were enrolled in a postsecondary program, about 70% had not graduated. Bowe (2003) also reported that only about 30% of deaf students enrolled in college earn a degree.

In comparison, 88% of the NWSFHIC alumni attended either two or

four-year postsecondary programs, and almost 67%

graduated successfully and earned a degree. “More edu-

cation” was found by Weisel and Kamara (2005) to result in more

autonomy and individualization (p. 58). This finding is also sup-

ported by research by Convertin et al. (2009).





EMPLOYMENT

There 's not much information about the number of young adults who are D/HH and employed (e.g., Houston et al, 2010). Thus, an important finding of the present study was that about **85% of NWSFHIC school participants work (and most work full time) as compared to about 63% of those in the national sample.** In the national sample, employment was almost 34 hours per week; **NWSFHIC alumni averaged 38 hours per week.**

OTHER INDEPENDENT BEHAVIORS

Almost all the participants who had attended NWSFHIC held a driver's license and almost 90% were registered to vote. Only 63% of those in the national sample were registered to vote. Because there is little information in the research literature regarding obtainment of a driver's license or voter registration, this study makes an important contribution to the field of deaf education.

In the national sample, use of a case manager or service coordinator was 61%. Of the former NWSFHIC alumni, 13% used one of these professionals. Thus, **41% fewer NWSFHIC alumni had a case manager or service coordinator,** a statistically significant difference in favor of those who had attended NWSFHIC ($z=6.39, p<.001$).

In the national sample, Social Security for disability (SSI) was received by 22.9% of the subjects. **Only 15% of the NWSFHIC alumni received SSI.**

In the national sample the number of subjects living at home was 58.4%. **Only 22.2% of the former NWSFHIC alumni lived in their parents' homes.** That is, about 64% of the NWSFHIC participants live independently, a statistically significant difference in favor of those who had attended NWSFHIC ($z=7.28, p<.001$).

**THE MAJORITY OF NWSFHIC STUDENTS GROW UP,
GET A JOB, AND MOVE OUT OF THEIR PARENTS'
HOMES. THEY BECOME RESPONSIBLE
INDEPENDENT ADULTS.**



Young Adults Who Participated in the Study

Information describing a national sample of young adults who were deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH) was compared to data from alumni who had attended NWSFHIC, and who had responded to survey questions. There were 510 postsecondary subjects who participated in the 2007 National Longitudinal Transition Study II (NLTS2) study (Newman et al (2009) and 66 potential subjects who were identified as having attended NWSFHIC school for at least four years. Responses were obtained from 46 (70%) of these potential participants.



The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)

In 2001, the U.S. Department of Education funded a 10-year study, the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2. NLTS2 included the post-secondary school outcomes of a nationally-representative sample of youth in twelve categories of disabilities. Wagner and her colleagues (who published reports in 2003, 2005, and 2006) collected data regarding 11 disability groups, beginning in 2001 and continued sampling every two years until 2009 (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey, 2009). The researchers used a questionnaire, and responses were analyzed using a complex series of weightings such that they would represent the various disability categories proportionately. The questionnaire to NWSFHIC alumni was uploaded to an internet-based service for presenting surveys, collecting responses, and analyzing results. Potential participants were sent an email explaining the purpose of the data collection and inviting participation. The alumni were given six months to respond. The national data and the NWSFHIC data were analyzed and compared.