

ASHA Early Detection Poll Results (February/March 2018)

Introduction

A Web-based survey invitation was fielded to a random sample of 4,089 ASHA-certified audiologists and 4,100 ASHA-certified speech-language pathologists (SLPs) on February 27, 2018. The survey population was limited to those individuals who indicated that they were employed on a full- or part-time basis as a clinical service provider in the United States. Follow-up reminders were e-mailed to non-respondents on March 6 and March 13. The survey closed at midnight on March 20. The purpose of the survey was to gather professional opinions to help inform an ASHA public awareness campaign. Participants had the opportunity to enter a drawing for a \$100 Amazon gift card.

A total of 1,121 responses were received resulting in an overall response rate of 14.1% (less 264 opt out requests or bounced back messages) ($n=540$ or 13.8% for audiologists, less 173 opt out requests or bounced back messages, and 581 or 14.5% for SLPs, less 91 opt out requests or bounced back messages).

Data for "all respondents" has been weighted according to the proportion of audiologists and SLPs in the survey population (i.e., of which 8.4% are audiologists and 91.6% are SLPs).

1. Please indicate your primary employment facility. (Check one.)

Primary Employment Facility	Audiologists Only ($n=540$)	SLPs Only ($n=581$)	All Respondents
School	14.1%	56.5%	53.1% ($n=595$)
College/university	5.4%	1.7%	2.0% ($n=23$)
Hospital	31.3%	9.6%	11.4% ($n=128$)
Residential health care facility (skilled nursing facility, etc.)	0.4%	4.1%	3.8% ($n=43$)
Nonresidential health care facility (private practice, speech and hearing clinic, physician's office, etc.)	43.9%	17.4%	19.5% ($n=219$)
Not employed (retired, seeking work, etc.)	1.5%	1.5%	1.5% ($n=17$)
Other	3.5%	9.1%	8.5% ($n=95$)

[Note: Individuals who selected "not employed" in Question 1 automatically skipped to the end of the survey.]

2. With which of the following age groups do you work? (Check all that apply.)

Age Group	Audiologists Only ($n=529$)	SLPs Only ($n=566$)	All Respondents
0-6 months	65.0%	14.1%	17.8% ($n=200$)
7 months to 2 years	74.9%	32.0%	34.4% ($n=388$)
3 to 5 years	83.2%	70.1%	69.0% ($n=777$)
6 to 11 years	84.9%	66.1%	65.6% ($n=738$)
12 to 17 years	86.6%	48.8%	50.3% ($n=566$)
18 to 64 years	76.2%	24.4%	27.8% ($n=313$)
65 to 74 years	66.9%	16.6%	20.1% ($n=227$)
75 years and up	66.7%	16.4%	19.9% ($n=225$)

3. Are your patients aware of the importance of early detection of speech/ language and hearing issues when you first see them?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=528)	SLPs Only (n=566)	All Respondents
Yes	12.5%	10.4%	10.6% (n=116)
Somewhat	65.9%	58.5%	59.1% (n=645)
No	13.1%	21.2%	20.5% (n=224)
Do not know	8.5%	9.9%	9.8% (n=107)

4. On average, how long do symptoms of hearing loss go undetected in children?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=519)	SLPs Only (n=560)	All Respondents
Less than 6 months	22.4%	10.0%	11.0% (n=119)
6 months to 1 year	39.3%	29.5%	30.3% (n=327)
1 to 2 years	19.7%	22.5%	22.3% (n=240)
More than 2 years	7.9%	10.2%	10.0% (n=108)
Never detected	0.0%	0.0%	0.0% (n=0)
Do not know	10.8%	27.9%	26.5% (n=286)

5. On average, how long do symptoms of speech/ language delay or disorder go undetected in children?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=514)	SLPs Only (n=546)	All Respondents
Less than 6 months	7.2%	4.2%	4.5% (n=47)
6 months to 1 year	23.5%	24.5%	24.5% (n=258)
1 to 2 years	35.2%	37.4%	37.2% (n=392)
More than 2 years	14.6%	22.5%	21.9% (n=230)
Never detected	0.2%	0.0%	0.0% (n=0)
Do not know	19.3%	11.4%	12.0% (n=127)

6. On average, how long will parents wait before taking action when first observing symptoms of hearing loss in their children?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=506)	SLPs Only (n=539)	All Respondents
Less than 6 months	26.3%	19.5%	20.0% (n=208)
6 months to 1 year	48.2%	39.5%	40.2% (n=418)
1 to 2 years	14.0%	12.4%	12.6% (n=131)
More than 2 years	2.2%	3.7%	3.6% (n=37)
Never take action	0.0%	0.2%	0.2% (n=2)
Do not know	9.3%	24.7%	23.4% (n=243)

7. On average, how long will parents wait before taking action when first observing symptoms of speech/ language delay or disorder in their children?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=502)	SLPs Only (n=541)	All Respondents
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Less than 6 months	13.2%	12.2%	12.3% (n=128)
6 months to 1 year	37.7%	41.6%	41.3% (n=430)
1 to 2 years	25.7%	25.9%	25.9% (n=270)
More than 2 years	6.0%	10.4%	10.0% (n=104)
Never take action	0.0%	0.4%	0.3% (n=4)
Do not know	17.5%	9.6%	10.3% (n=107)

8. Are parents of your school-age patients aware that untreated speech and language development problems impede socialization and academic performance?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=501)	SLPs Only (n=543)	All Respondents
Yes	45.9%	48.4%	48.2% (n=505)
No	41.9%	35.0%	35.6% (n=372)
Not applicable; do not work with school-age patients	12.2%	16.6%	16.2% (n=170)

9. In your professional experience, are parents of young children aware of the early warning signs of speech/ language disorders?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=498)	SLPs Only (n=536)	All Respondents
Yes	22.9%	21.6%	21.7% (n=225)
No	62.3%	69.6%	69.0% (n=713)
Do not know	14.9%	8.8%	9.3% (n=96)

10. How informed are parents of children with autism about the benefits of treatment to improve everyday communication for their children?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=498)	SLPs Only (n=538)	All Respondents
Very	5.6%	12.8%	12.2% (n=127)
Somewhat	35.5%	46.5%	45.6% (n=473)
Not enough	33.9%	34.2%	34.2% (n=354)
Do not know	24.9%	6.5%	8.0% (n=83)

11. Are parents aware that by treating symptoms of communication disorders early, treatment is often less expensive and takes less time?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=491)	SLPs Only (n=536)	All Respondents
Yes	10.4%	14.2%	13.9% (n=143)
No	54.2%	56.3%	56.2% (n=580)
Do not know	35.4%	29.5%	30.0% (n=309)

12. How challenging is it to get information to parents about a school-age child with a potential speech/ language or hearing disorder?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=486)	SLPs Only (n=534)	All Respondents
Very	6.8%	7.7%	7.6% (n=78)
Somewhat	56.6%	53.2%	53.5% (n=549)
Not at all	17.1%	21.4%	21.0% (n=216)
Do not know	19.6%	17.8%	17.9% (n=184)

13. When alerted to a speech/ language or hearing problem, do parents typically take the next step to get their children treatment?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=484)	SLPs Only (n=531)	All Respondents
Yes	35.3%	38.8%	38.5% (n=394)
Sometimes	54.3%	53.3%	53.4% (n=546)
Rarely	1.7%	0.6%	0.7% (n=7)
No	0.2%	0.4%	0.4% (n=4)
Do not know	8.5%	7.0%	7.1% (n=72)

14. In your opinion, what is the leading barrier to early detection of communication disorders? (Check one.)

Response	Audiologists Only (n=483)	SLPs Only (n=532)	All Respondents
Caregiver/ patient inaction	23.8%	16.0%	16.6% (n=170)
Cultural hurdles	8.7%	6.8%	6.9% (n=71)
Financial constraints	10.8%	9.0%	9.2% (n=94)
Insufficient insurance coverage	13.0%	9.2%	9.5% (n=97)
Lack of awareness	35.2%	47.0%	46.0% (n=471)
Other	8.5%	12.0%	11.7% (n=120)

15. Do you think parents' awareness of the early warning signs of communication disorders has improved over the last five years?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=486)	SLPs Only (n=534)	All Respondents
Yes	61.1%	62.4%	62.3% (n=640)
No	16.9%	16.5%	16.5% (n=170)
Do not know	22.0%	21.2%	21.2% (n=218)

16. If yes, to what do you primarily attribute this improvement? (Check one.)

Response	Audiologists Only (n=294)	SLPs Only (n=332)	All Respondents
Greater involvement/discussion with parents from allied professionals (e.g., pediatricians, preschool teachers)	60.5%	55.7%	61.4% (n=358)
Popular media coverage of communication development and disorders	13.3%	16.3%	16.0% (n=102)

Public education campaigns from professional and government bodies (e.g., ASHA's <i>Identify the Signs</i> , CDC's <i>Learn the Signs. Act Early.</i>)	9.2%	6.9%	7.1% (n=45)
Reduced stigma contributing to more open discussion about a potential problem from family members, friends, etc.	9.2%	16.0%	15.4% (n=98)
Other	7.8%	5.1%	5.3% (n=34)

17. If no, to what do you primarily attribute the lack of improvement? (Check one.)

Response	Audiologists Only (n=150)	SLPs Only (n=160)	All Respondents
Excessive and unhealthy overuse of popular tech (e.g., smartphones, tablets) by parents and very young children alike creates the illusion of there being no problems to worry about.	11.3%	26.9%	25.6% (n=79)
Ill-advised advice from peers or others makes parents think they don't need to act early on concerns.	22.0%	13.1%	13.9% (n=43)
Parents are too preoccupied trying to make a living and meeting other challenges.	21.3%	23.1%	23.0% (n=71)
Parents don't want to recognize a problem in their child.	22.0%	12.5%	13.3% (n=41)
Public education campaigns need to be bigger and more constant.	15.3%	11.9%	12.2% (n=38)
Other	8.0%	12.5%	12.1% (n=37)

18. Do you think most parents of young children fully appreciate how vital simple, every day communication (i.e., talking, reading, singing) is to their children's development?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=478)	SLPs Only (n=526)	All Respondents
Yes	20.4%	15.7%	16.1% (n=163)
No	62.4%	70.7%	70.0% (n=708)
Do not know	17.2%	13.6%	13.9% (n=141)

19. Do you think parents' knowledge of the benefits of early identification/treatment for communication disorders has improved over the last five years?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=479)	SLPs Only (n=526)	All Respondents
Yes	45.9%	51.9%	51.4% (n=521)
No	20.5%	18.8%	19.0% (n=192)
Not sure	33.6%	29.3%	29.6% (n=300)

20. Are your patients aware that misuse of personal audio technology may cause hearing loss?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=479)	SLPs Only (n=528)	All Respondents
Yes	52.6%	17.4%	20.2% (n=206)

No	36.1%	47.7%	46.8% (n=475)
Do not know	11.3%	34.9%	33.0% (n=335)

21. Do your patients view untreated hearing loss among older people as an acceptable part of aging?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=477)	SLPs Only (n=524)	All Respondents
Yes	72.1%	53.4%	54.9% (n=554)
No	11.3%	4.8%	5.3% (n=53)
Do not know	16.6%	41.8%	39.8% (n=401)

22. Who has the greatest impact on whether an elderly patient seeks treatment for hearing loss? (Check one.)

Response	Audiologists Only (n=476)	SLPs Only (n=508)	All Respondents
Adult children	29.2%	39.8%	38.9% (n=381)
Friends	5.9%	6.7%	6.6% (n=65)
Physicians	17.9%	15.6%	15.7% (n=154)
Spouse	46.0%	36.4%	37.2% (n=365)
Others	1.1%	1.6%	1.5% (n=15)

23. Do you think there is a greater appreciation among older adults of the importance of treating their hearing loss?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=480)	SLPs Only (n=522)	All Respondents
Yes	48.5%	39.1%	39.8% (n=401)
No	39.8%	23.8%	25.1% (n=252)
Do not know	11.7%	37.2%	35.1% (n=353)

24. In the next five years, what do you foresee in terms of public awareness of the early warning signs of communication disorders?

Response	Audiologists Only (n=475)	SLPs Only (n=520)	All Respondents
Improving	62.7%	68.5%	68.0% (n=681)
Getting worse	0.8%	4.0%	3.8% (n=38)
Staying the same	36.4%	27.5%	28.2% (n=283)