

This summary of the READY study's aims, objectives and methods formed the basis of a poster presentation given at the conference: "Deaf Children Now: Changing the Conversation, June 24th/25th 2019, Manchester, UK.

Title: READY (Recording Emerging Adulthood in Deaf Youth) – a prospective longitudinal study of deaf young people age 16 to 23 years.

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Abstract:

Background: A great deal of research effort has focused on the early development of deaf children and their school years, whether in terms of language acquisition, paedagogical practices, family support, literacy or socio-emotional development. Far less attention has been paid to the years following compulsory education and the diverse pathways deaf children may take into young adulthood. We understand very little about which features in deaf children's early life and school age years may influence not just their educational and vocational outcomes but also their social developmental outcomes as young adults. This is important because if we can understand more about what enables deaf young people to achieve the key developmental milestones of young, autonomous adulthood we are better able to tailor support and resources earlier on in their developmental journeys.

Design: A prospective longitudinal observational research study of 500+ deaf young people first recruited between the ages of 16 and 18 years old and followed for 5 years.

Research Objectives:

- To establish a cohort of at least 500 deaf young people aged 16 to 23 years old, representative of the deaf population within that age band in England, Scotland and Wales.
- To comprehensively profile, track and continually engage this cohort over a period of 5 years in the domains of: personal wellbeing, educational opportunity and attainment, employment, service use, social development and autonomy
- To explore and identify the mechanisms underlying differential development and achievement in these domains from individual, interpersonal and structural perspectives
- To establish comparative data using secondary data sources from hearing population records to contextualise the findings in each domain of enquiry

- To use the project as a means to engage deaf young people as co-inquirers and critical friends providing work-based, paid opportunities to contribute to the project goals.
- To ensure that the practice of the research project reflects the values and goals of the subject of the research project in its execution.

Research Questions:

- What are the risk and protective factors relevant to deaf young people's achievement of autonomy, social development, personal wellbeing and educational and occupational attainment?
- How do these factors operate and interact, and what are their differential effects given the diversity of deaf young people's profiles and varying familial and contextual circumstances?
- Is it possible to predict the elements required to maximise the potential of deaf young people (in the domains of autonomy, social development, wellbeing, education and employment) between the ages of 16 and 23 years and how these might be enabled?

Sample: A stratified sample reflecting SES, degree of deafness, age of diagnosis, communication/language preferences, current educational/employment context. Participants drawn from England, Scotland and Wales only who provide data on an annual basis. All data collection instruments will be available in a choice of: written English, Sign Supported Spoken English, BSL, written Welsh and Sign Supported Spoken Welsh.

Data collection instruments: Repeat annual survey instrument completed 5 times over 5 years; the following standard instruments also completed 5 times over 5 years - EQ5D-5L, SWEMBS, SDI-R. All data collection instruments are available in the following formats: Written English, Sign Supported Spoken English, BSL, written Welsh, sign supported spoken Welsh. In addition 50 deaf young people will be interviewed on an annual basis by young deaf peer co-inquirers to explore in greater depth trends emerging from the national sample.

Data analysis methods:

Longitudinal multi-variate analysis, principal component and factor analysis, Outcome measures:

- Achievement of autonomy
- Social development
- Personal well-being

- Educational attainment
- Occupational attainment

Where possible comparative analysis with results from the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England (LSYE) will be undertaken. Phenomenological analysis in the hermeneutic tradition will guide the qualitative data analysis. Interview data will be used to refine the regression model in subsequent waves of data collection.