

Social Skills as a Predictor of Postsecondary Outcomes for Deaf Individuals

RS
Research
Summarized

Summary of Cawthon et al., "Social Skills as a Predictor of Postsecondary Outcomes for Individuals Who Are Deaf"¹

Why was this work done?

Social skills are important as individuals navigate the world around them and interact with others.

Previous research has found that individuals' social skills are related to how well they do in school and their likelihood of employment after high school.

There are important differences in the development of social skills for deaf individuals. For example, access to peers, family members, and other important adults who use the same language modality allows individuals to develop and practice social skills.

No studies have examined how social skills affect postsecondary outcomes for deaf individuals.

How was this work done?

Researchers used data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study 2, a national-level study of students with disabilities.

Statistical analyses assessed whether parent ratings of their children's social skills predicted postsecondary outcomes, specifically the following:

- **Life:** Living independently and self-beliefs
- **Employment:** Having a job, hourly wage earned, and job satisfaction
- **Education:** Enrollment and completion of any postsecondary program

What did researchers find?

Individuals rated by their parents as having well-developed social skills were more likely to graduate from a postsecondary program (i.e., 2-year college, technical college, or 4-year college or university).

Parents' ratings of social skills did not significantly predict any other outcomes.

High school students with stronger social skills are more likely to graduate from a postsecondary institution.

What are the implications of this work?

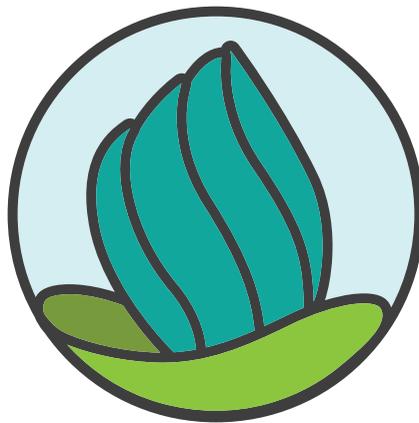
It may be helpful to monitor and support opportunities for social skills development for deaf individuals before they graduate from high school.

Important future research may include comparisons between students who attend schools for the deaf versus mainstreamed settings.

¹Cawthon, S., Caemmerer, J. M., Dickson, D. M., Ocuto, O. L., Ge, J., & Bond, M. P. (2015). Social skills as a predictor of postsecondary outcomes for individuals who are deaf. *Applied Developmental Science, 19*(1), 19–30.



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