

THE CANADIAN HEARING SOCIETY
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE L'OUÏE



*The Canadian Hearing Society
Awareness Survey*

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CAMELFORD GRAHAM RESEARCH GROUP

Objectives



- The objectives of this research were to:
 - Investigate the prevalence of hearing loss among adult hearing Canadians
 - Explore hearing Canadians' attitudes about deafness and hearing loss in society





- A national telephone survey was conducted with adults 18+ in five regions (BC/Alberta, Manitoba/Saskatchewan, Ontario, Maritimes, Quebec) during September and the first week of October 2001
 - 800 respondents were recruited to the following specifications:
 - Adults 18+
 - Mix of males and females
 - Mix of ethnicities
 - Cross-section of education and income
 - National
 - Margin of error: $\pm 3.1\%$



Prevalence of deafness and hearing loss

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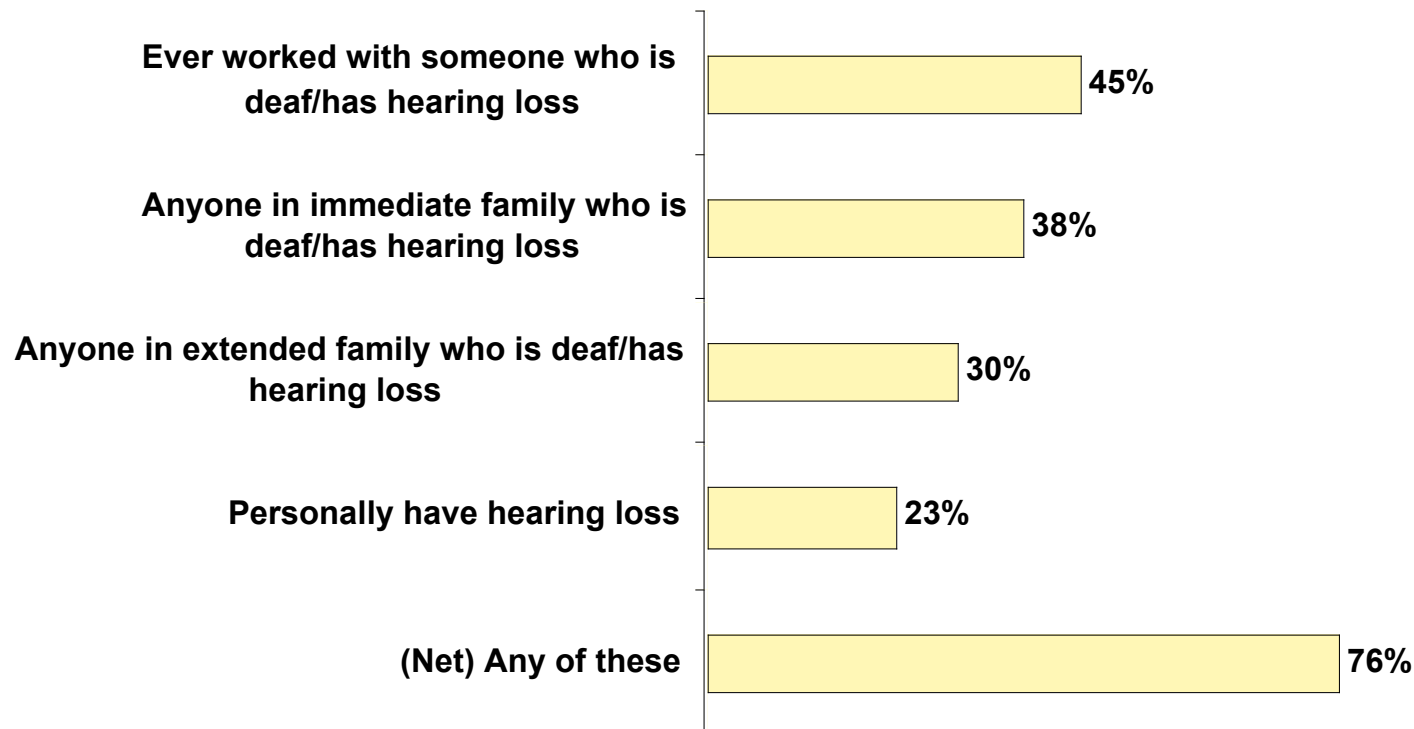


- There are indications that the prevalence of hearing loss is much higher than previously reported
- The experience of hearing loss is reported among people who are much younger than one may expect
- Experience interacting with people who are deaf or who have hearing loss is considerably higher than has been previously understood



Prevalence of deafness and hearing loss

- Three in four Canadians have had personal experience working or living with someone who is deaf or has hearing loss.
- Close to one in four indicates they personally experience some degree of hearing loss



Prevalence of deafness and hearing loss

- The average age of those claiming to have hearing loss is 51
- Seven in ten of those who claim to experience hearing loss are under 60

Age	General public	Have personal experience with hearing loss/deafness	Have hearing loss/deafness
18-24	13%	11%	8%
25-29	6%	7%	6%
30-39	20%	19%	12%
40-49	24%	23%	21%
50-59	18%	20%	24%
60-69	12%	12%	15%
70+	8%	8%	14%
Average Age	45	46	51



Attitudes/beliefs about deafness and hearing loss

- There are significant stigmas that lead many Canadians to report that they would avoid wearing a hearing aid at all costs
- Stigmas such as the belief that hearing aids are for senior citizens and that hearing loss results in social alienation are likely limiting hearing aid use



Attitudes/beliefs about deafness and hearing loss

- One in six hearing Canadians say they would rather live with some hearing loss than wear a hearing aid
- Surprisingly, this number jumps to one in five among those who claim to personally experience hearing loss
- Approximately one in eight avoid dealing with people who are hard of hearing or deaf and link deafness and hearing loss to increased social isolation
- Many associate hearing aids with senior citizens—and 84% say they believe that diminished hearing is a “natural” part of aging. This may limit usage of hearing aids by some who could benefit from them

Attitude/Perception Statements	Agree
I would rather live with some hearing loss than wear a hearing aid	15%
I avoid dealing with people who are hard of hearing or deaf	13%
Most people who wear hearing aids are senior citizens	29%
People with hearing loss find communication so difficult that they typically withdraw	41%

Signing/Learning to sign



- Many hearing Canadians view communications as a significant challenge and wish they knew more about how to communicate with someone who is deaf or hard of hearing
- While many have learned to sign the alphabet, fewer have learned American Sign Language (ASL)
- Many believe signing is valuable and would like to learn it or see it taught in schools



Signing/Learning to sign



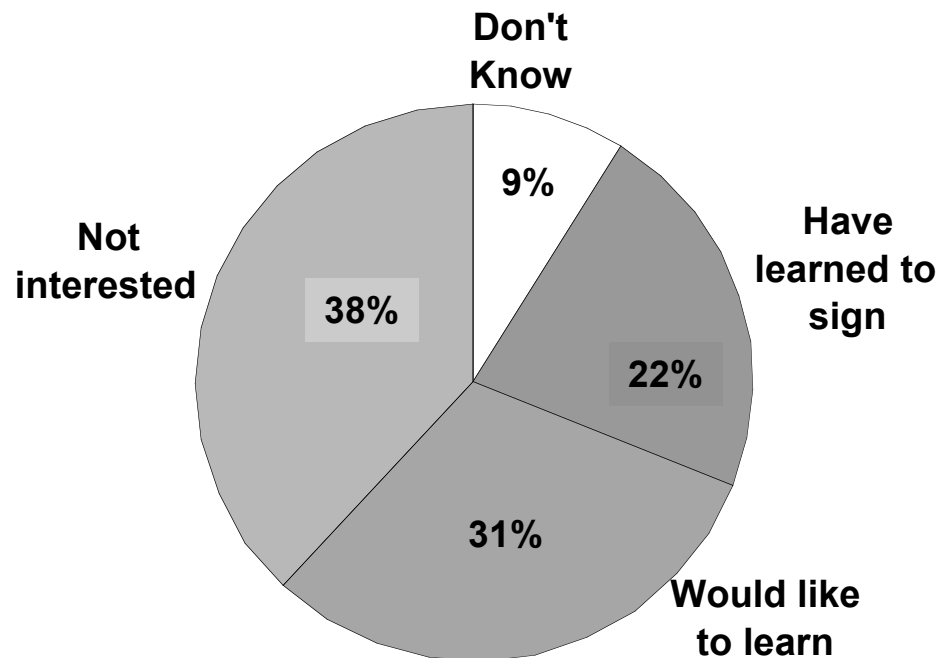
- Almost one in four Canadians has at one time been exposed to learning to sign the alphabet or learning ASL. Learning to sign the alphabet is much more common than learning ASL
- Those who have learned to sign the alphabet or ASL have learned it in school (28%) from a deaf relative or friend (18%), taught themselves (17%) or learned it at Girl Guides/Scouts (8%) or on the job (7%). Their primary reasons for learning to sign are personal interest (42%), or to communicate with a deaf friend / relative / co-worker (31%)
- Experience with learning to sign the alphabet or learning ASL is significantly higher among those under 30



Signing/Learning to sign



- More than half the Canadian population has either learned to sign (22%) or would be interested in learning to sign (31%)
- 46% of respondents believe sign language should be taught to everyone in schools
- 69% of Canadians say they wish they knew more about how to communicate with someone who is deaf or has hearing loss





4.0 Appendix



Demographics – General (n=829)



Gender	
Male	47%
Female	53%

Age	
18-24	13%
25-29	6%
30-39	20%
40-49	24%
50-59	18%
60-69	12%
70+	8%
Average Age	45

Education	
Less than high school	4%
Some high school	9%
High school graduate	26%
Some college or technical school	9%
College/technical school graduate	18%
Some university	7%
University graduate	26%
Post graduate study	3%
Post graduate degree	7%

Annual Household Income	
Under \$20,000	13%
\$20,000 - \$40,000	24%
\$40,000 - \$60,000	20%
\$60,000 - \$80,000	11%
\$80,000 - \$100,000	6%
\$100,000 or more	5%
Refused/not stated	22%
Average Income (\$000)	47



Demographics – Regions/Origins (n=829)



Urban vs. Rural	
Urban	76%
Rural	24%

Region	
(Net) West	30%
BC/AB	23%
MB/SK	7%
Ontario	38%
Quebec	24%
Atlantic	8%

Ethnic Origin	
(Net) Western European	56%
Canadian	31%
(Net) Orient	3%
(Net) Eastern European	3%
(Net) Middle East	2%
African	2%
Native Canadian	1%
Indian	1%

Country of Birth	
Canada	81%
(Net) Western Europe	8%
(Net) Orient	3%
United States	2%
(Net) Central/South America	2%
(Net) Eastern Europe	1%
(Net) Middle East	1%
Other	2%



Demographics – Occupational Information (n=829)

Employment Status	
Employed Full-time	47%
Employed Part-time	12%
Other/refused/not stated	41%

Occupation	
(Net) White collar	48%
Self employed/business owner	7%
Professional	28%
Manager	13%
(Net) Blue collar/Farmer	36%
Skilled trades	20%
Unskilled	14%
Farmer	2%
Sales	8%
Clerical	8%

