Deaf and Hard of Hearing Adult Involvement in EHDI Programs: 2017-2018 Survey Findings
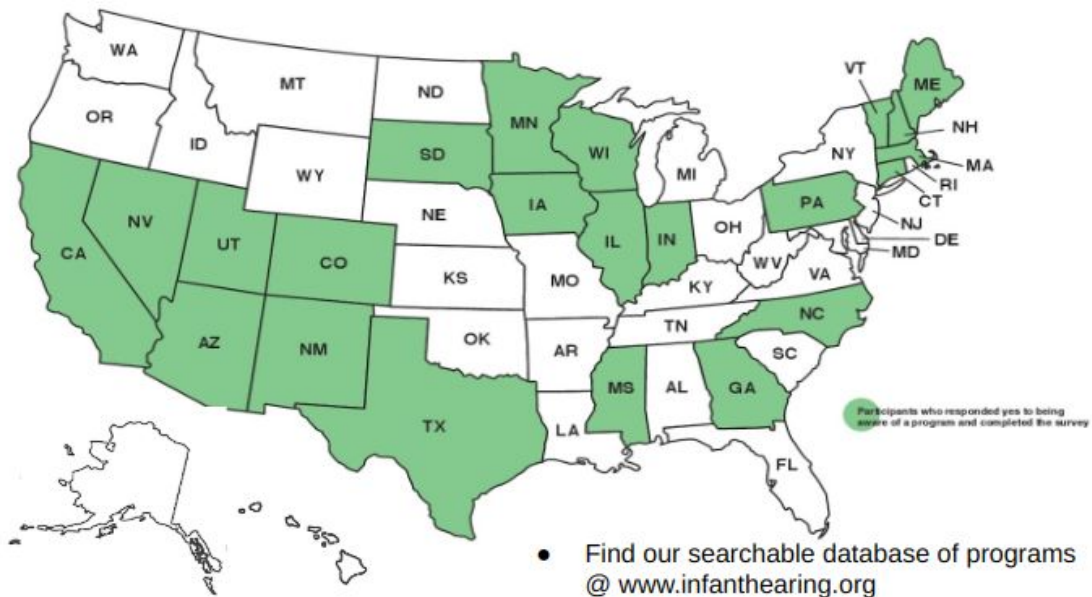
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Introduction

In 2017-2018 NCHAM conducted a nationwide survey to gather information about existing programs that offer families of children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing opportunities to interact with adults who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. We worked to find the best contact in each state to complete the survey about programs in their state. We identified 24 states that have existing programs. 22 of these states completed the survey providing general information about their programs.
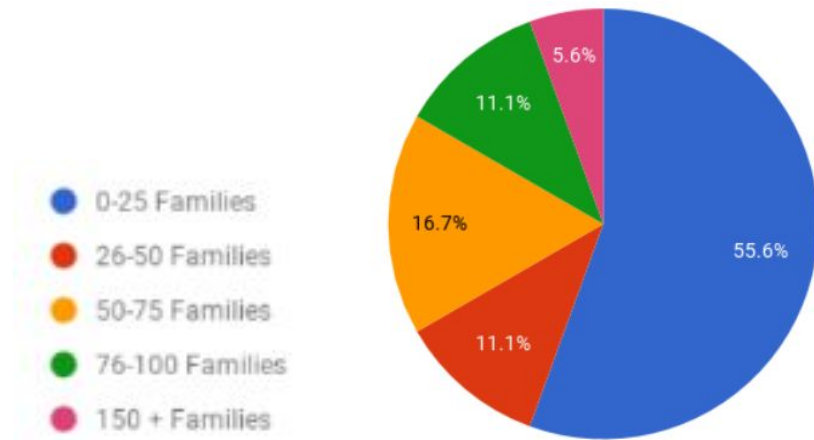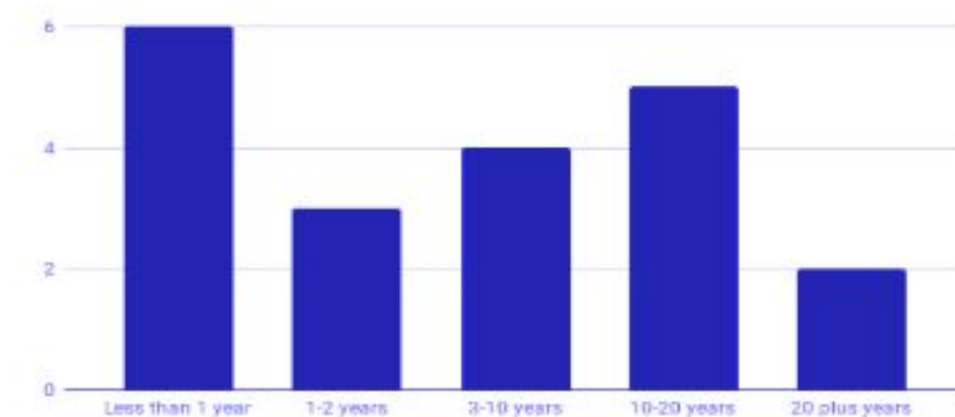
States With Current Programs:

Participants who responded yes to being aware of a program and completed the survey

- Find our searchable database of programs @ www.infanthearing.org

Program Details:

Number of Families Served by Existing Programs:

A total of 380-750 families were served by existing programs in 2017. Ten programs reported serving 1-25 families. Several of these programs noted that they served a small number of families because they were in a pilot year, and expected to serve more families in the next fiscal year. 3 programs reported that they served 26-50 families. 2 programs reported that they served 76-100 families, and 1 program reported serving over 150 families in 2017.
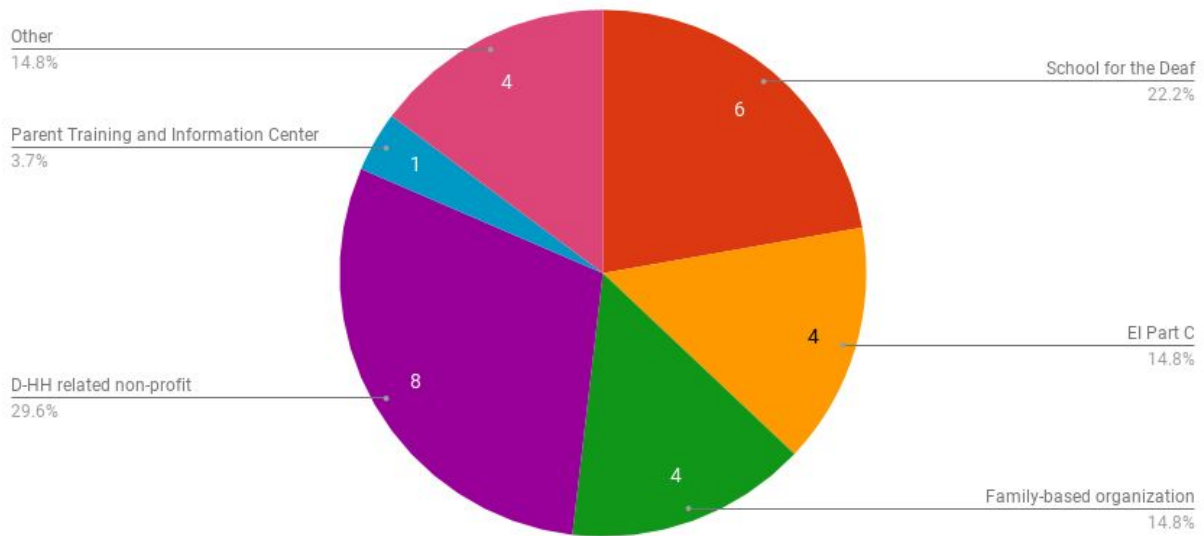
Program Lifespan:

The majority of the programs that responded to the survey were less than a year old. The next largest group were programs that had been running for 10-20 years.
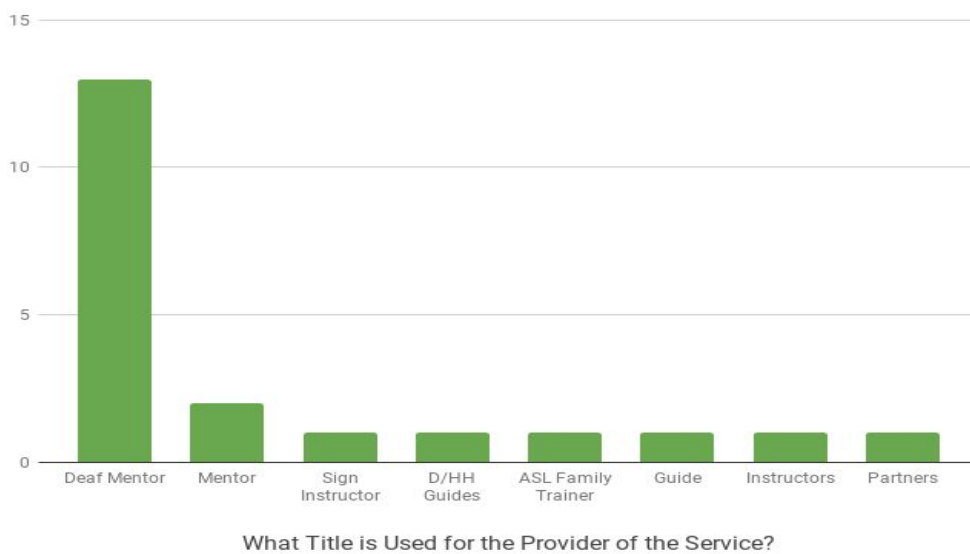
Administrative Affiliations:

Deaf and hard of hearing adult involvement programs are run by a variety of types of organizations. Most programs reported being run by D/HH related nonprofits and schools for the Deaf. There may be some overlap between programs that identified their administrative affiliation as a D/HH nonprofit or a family based-based organization.
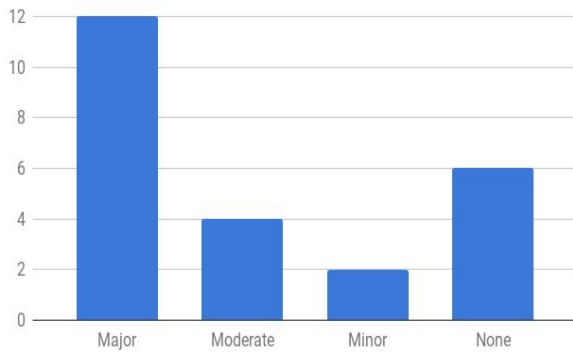
Title Used to Describe Service Provider:

What Title is Used for the Provider of the Service?

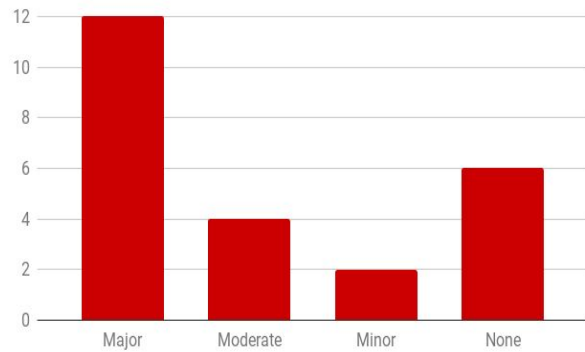Most programs reported using the title "Deaf Mentor" to describe the service provider.

Emphasis on Teaching Children or Families a Specific Language or Communication Modality:

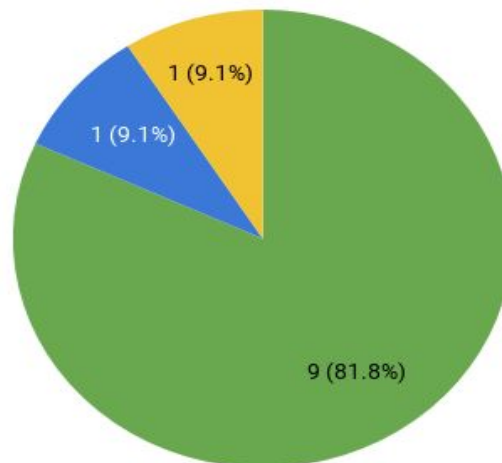Emphasis Placed on Teaching Children a Specific Language or Modality

Emphasis Placed on Teaching Families a Specific Language or Modality

The survey data suggests that programs do not make a distinction between teaching the child who is deaf or hard of hearing vs. teaching the family a specific language or modality. Most programs responded that a specific language or modality instruction is a major component of their D/HH adult involvement program. However, there were also several programs that reported placing no emphasis on a specific language or modality. It is unclear if this suggests that these programs teach more than one language or modality, or if these programs do not provide language or modality instruction at all.

Primary Language and/or Communication Modality Taught:

- ● ASL
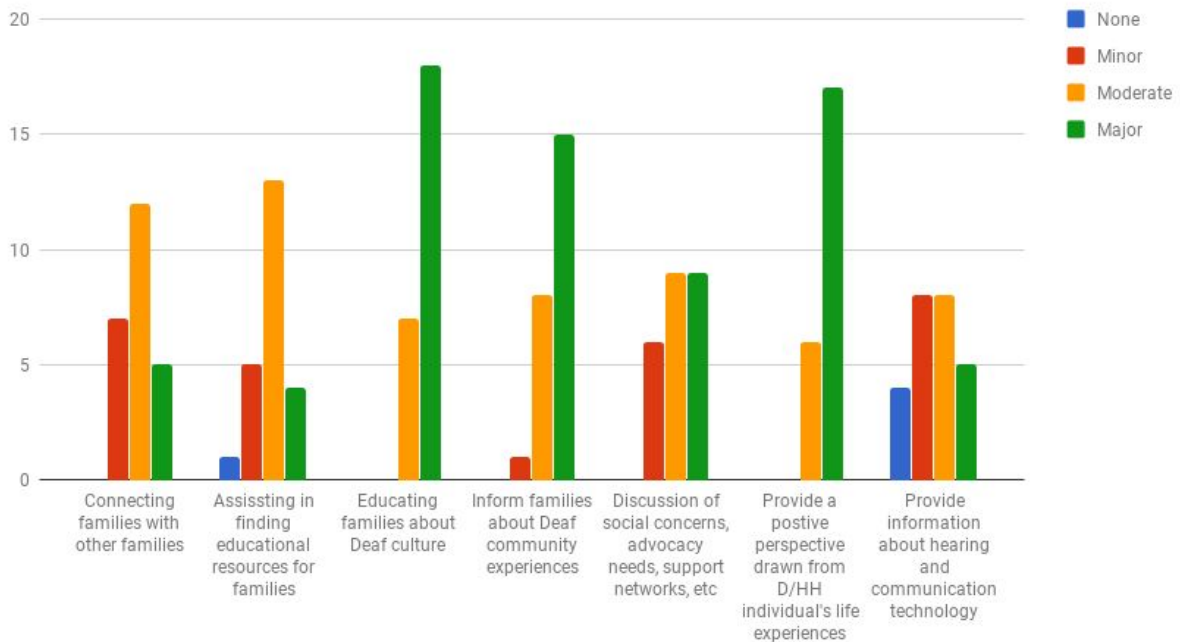- ● Sign Language- Ranges from ASL to Signed English
- ● ASL and English

1 (9.1%)
1 (9.1%)
9 (81.8%)

Of the programs that reported providing instruction in a specific language or communication modality, 9 programs responded that the language of instruction is ASL.

One program reported instruction in "sign language ranging from ASL to signed English" and another program reported instruction in "ASL and English." This question had a low response rate with only 11 of 22 participants providing an answer.

Emphasis on Other Kinds of Family Support:

Programs most commonly reported placing a "major" emphasis on educating families about Deaf culture and connecting families with Deaf community experiences, as well as providing a positive perspective drawn from the D/HH adult's life experiences. Moderate-Major emphasis was commonly reported in discussion of topics such as social concerns, advocacy, support networks, etc. Moderate-no emphasis was commonly reported in providing information about hearing technology and communication technology.
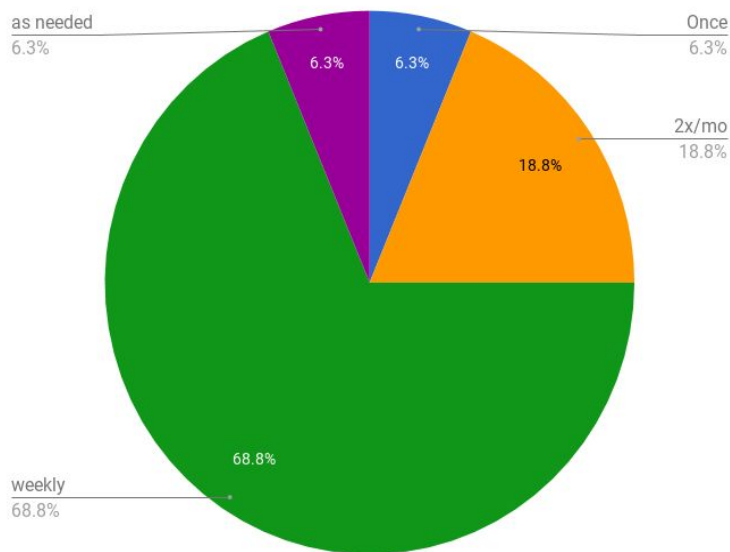
Specified Curriculum or Training Used:

13 programs responded that they use the SKI HI curriculum or have received SKI HI Deaf Mentor training. Two programs responded that they use the Hands and Voices Deaf Guide training. One program reported using the Shared Reading Project curriculum and training.

Age of the D/HH Child Receiving Service:

Children ages 13 months through 24 months were the most commonly reported age group to receive services from a D/HH adult. Children ages 0-6 months and over 5 were the least commonly reported age groups. However, most programs reported serving a wide range of ages in their D/HH adult involvement programs.
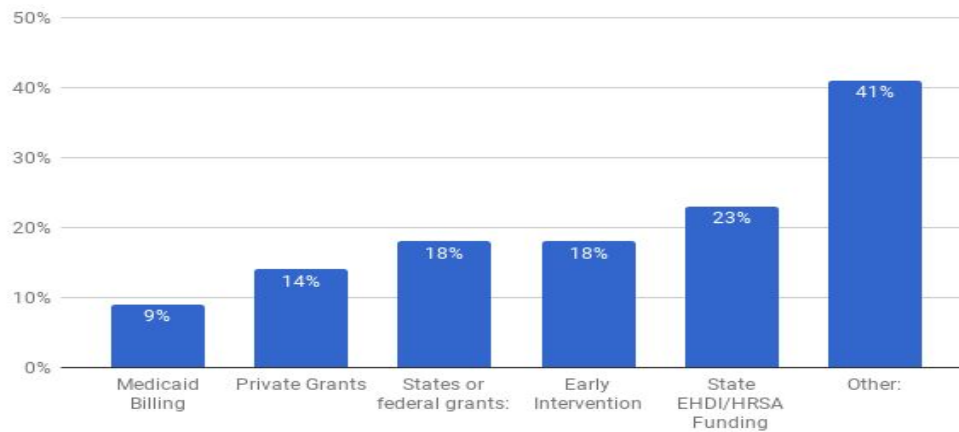
Frequency of D/HH Adult Support to Families:

Nearly 70% of programs reported providing families with weekly 1-1 interaction with a D/HH adult and another 20% of programs reported 2x/mo service. Several programs reported that the frequency of D/HH adult support was based on each family's unique needs.

Funding Sources for D/HH Adult Involvement Programs:

D/HH adult involvement programs reported using a variety of funding sources including private grants, early intervention/Part C funding, state EHDI/HRSA federal funding, Medicaid billing, and state or federal grants. The percentages in the graph below reflect the number of programs that reported using some amount of each source of funding. Several programs reported using
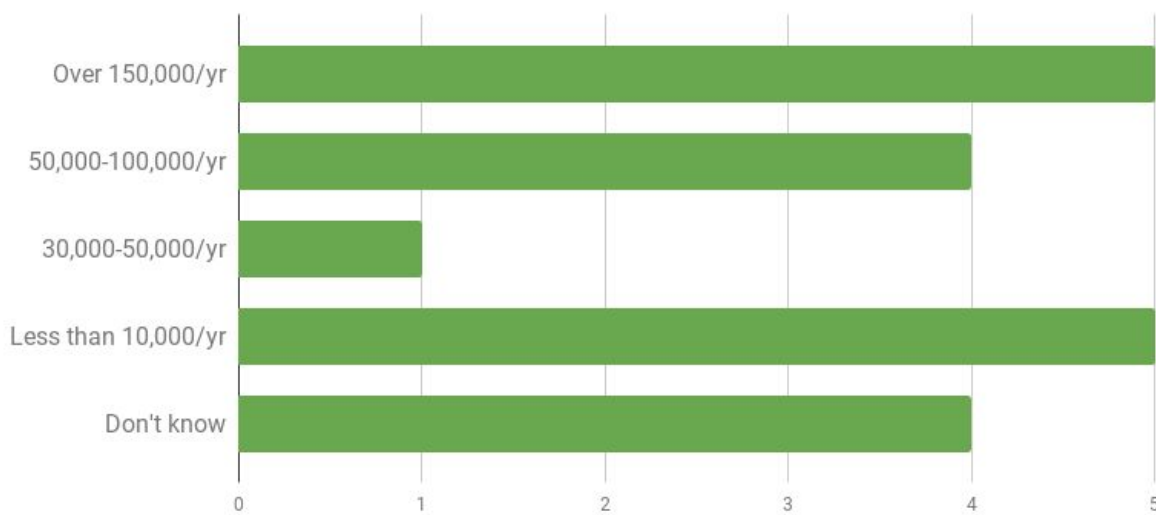
multiple funding sources, and many programs reported using other types of funding.

Other sources of funding mentioned by participants included the following:

- State Department of Education
- State School for the Deaf Enrichment or Outreach Budget
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Resource Centers
- School Districts
- State Association of the Deaf
- State Department of Health and Human Services

Annual Program Budget:

The annual budgets reported reflected the number of families served by the programs. The
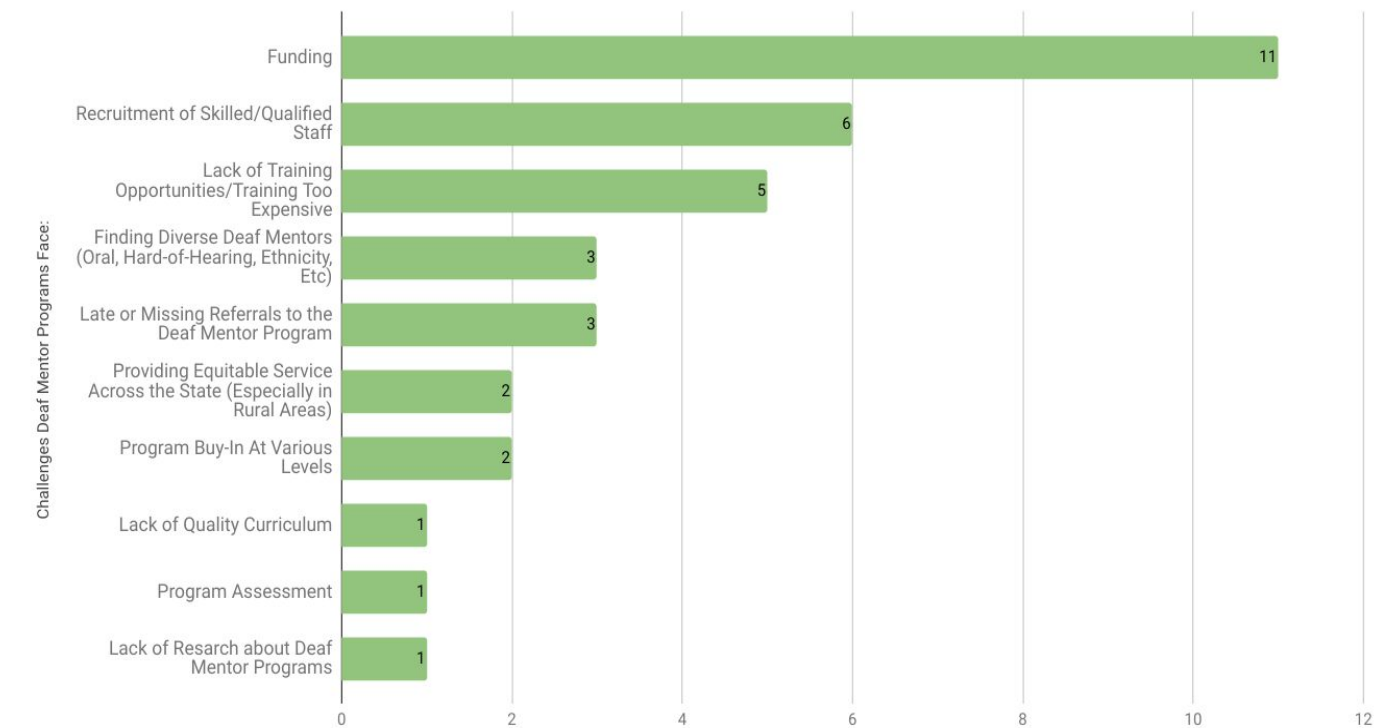
programs that served larger numbers of families had larger budgets. The annual budgets ranged from less than $10,000/yr to over $150,000/yr.

Program Evaluation:

71.4% of D/HH adult involvement programs reported that they systematically evaluate family response to services, while 28% responded that they do not systematically evaluate family response to services. NCHAM is in the process of following up with these programs to learn more about their evaluation processes, and to gather data about family satisfaction with D/HH adult involvement programs.

Program Challenges:

D/HH adult involvement programs cited securing and maintaining funding as the number one challenge they face. Other commonly reported challenges were in the areas of recruitment of skilled/qualified staff, and lack of training opportunities. Some programs mentioned difficulty finding diverse D/HH adults in their state, as well as challenges in receiving timely referrals to their programs. Less commonly cited challenges were providing equitable service across their

state, program buy-in at state or administrative levels, lack of quality curriculum, program assessment and limited research about the value of "Deaf Mentor" programs.

Survey Challenges:

Our goal was to capture as many D/HH adult involvement programs as possible, regardless of the type of support provided. We introduced the survey by explaining that although we would be using the term "Deaf Mentor" throughout the survey for convenience and consistency, we were interested in any kind of deaf or hard of hearing adult involvement. Another challenge was a lack of common definition for the various kinds of support provided by adults who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. Several participants reached out for clarification about what was meant by "Deaf Mentor" or "D/HH adult involvement." Combined, these challenges may have influenced the types of programs that responded to the survey.

We worked to find the best contact in each state to complete the survey. However, given the nature surveying, it is possible that there are programs that were overlooked due to lack of awareness about them in their state.

Next Steps:

- Create and maintain a web-based interactive database of existing D/HH adult involvement programs. **UPDATE 6/18: Visit [Programs by State](#) on NCHAM's website [www.infanthearing.org](#)**
- Continue surveying and follow up with program contacts to find more D/HH Adult Involvement programs.
- Gather more in depth information about existing programs.

Contact Us:

For information or questions related to the 2017-2018 Deaf and Hard of Hearing Adult Involvement in EHDI Programs Survey, please visit the **[contact us](#)** page on our website at www.infanthearing.org.