

Evidence of Best Practice Models and Outcomes in the Education of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing
Children: An International Review

Marc Marschark, Ph.D.

National Technical Institute for the Deaf – Rochester Institute of Technology (USA)
University of Edinburgh and University of Aberdeen (Scotland)

Abstract

Hearing loss in childhood is relatively infrequent, but when it occurs, it typically has real implications for children's development and academic achievement. Many countries have recently instituted newborn hearing screening and early intervention programmes for deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) children. Those programmes offer children and their families services that can help to provide a strong foundation for learning in both formal and informal contexts. Yet, educational programming and support services for DHH children frequently proceed on the basis of tradition, intuition, and administrative convenience rather than being based on research evidence. As a result, the true benefits of various educational/developmental programmes and their generality for various subgroups of DHH children are often unclear, and observed outcomes may be due more to the individual(s) providing or receiving those services than the services themselves.

This review was undertaken in order to provide an evidence base to inform policy advice on the education of DHH. The *Best Practices* report provides a detailed review of what we know and what we do not know about educating DHH children, describing the existing research with regard to various educational practices and their outcomes, IT also points out popular beliefs about raising and educating DHH children that lack research support. The presentation will focus

on four major issues identified as providing the foundations for educating DHH children: early identification and intervention, language (including cochlear implants), educational models, and teaching-learning. For each topic area, a brief summary will be provided concerning the state-of-the-art with regard to evidence-based practice. This will be followed by key recommendations made to the NCSE based on existing research and the implications of those recommendations for the current and future status of educational practice in Ireland.

Marc Marschark, Ph.D., is a Professor at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf, a college of Rochester Institute of Technology, where he directs the Center for Education Research Partnerships. He also holds appointments in the Moray House School of Education at the University of Edinburgh and the School of Psychology at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. Active in research concerning deaf individuals since the 1980s, his primary interest lies in relations among language, learning, and development. His current research focuses on language comprehension and learning by deaf children and adults in educational settings. Dr. Marschark founded and edits the *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education* and co-edits two book series, *Perspectives on Deafness* and *Professional Perspectives on Deafness: Evidence and Applications*, all published by Oxford University Press.