

Discovering *Affordable* Technology Access for Families

Presented by

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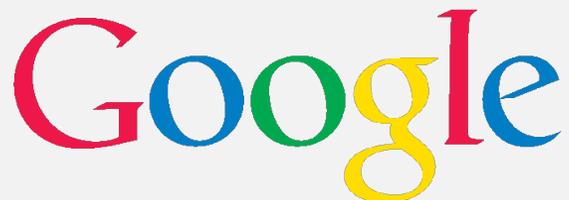
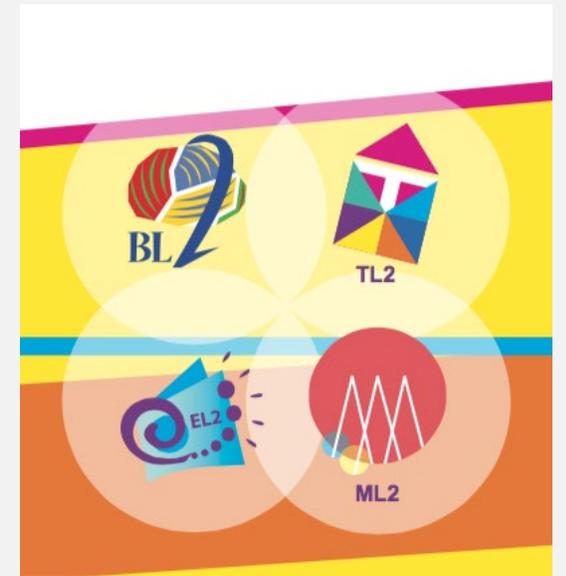
Policy Counsel at the National Association
of the Deaf (NAD)

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Policy Counsel at the National Association of
the Deaf (NAD)



Overview and role of Gallaudet University

- The only university in the world for deaf and hard of hearing students (est. 1864)
- R2 Research Institution
- Recipient of several federal grants focused on technology access specific for deaf and hard of hearing population (captioning, avatars, apps, & etc)
- Partners with Google, Microsoft, Procter & Gamble



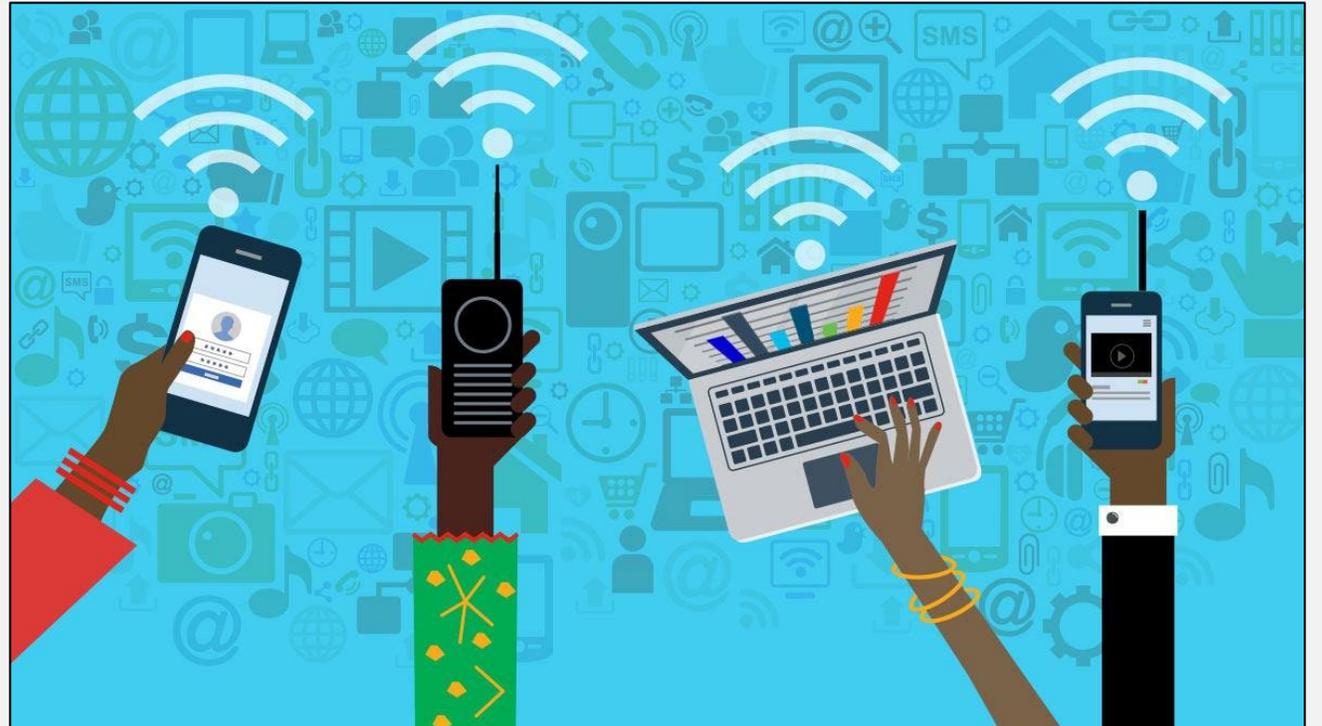
Overview and role of the National Association of the Deaf

- Oldest civil rights organization in U.S. (1880)
- Majority of legal team are deaf attorneys
 - We all use technology to conduct our work
- Develop and promote best practices and policy statements, including technology
- Work closely with federal agencies including the Federal Communications Commission (Our Policy Counsel Zainab Alkebsi is on their Disability Advisory Council)



Recognizing the Need for Technology Access

- Rural
 - Limited access to wireless in area
- Cost of technology
 - Equipment
 - Home
 - Mobile
 - Wi-Fi (3G, 4G, 5G)
 - Data plan & data caps (limited to unlimited)



The U.S. Government's commitment to providing affordable technology

Bridging The Digital Divide For All Americans

- 97% high-speed access in urban areas
- 65% high-speed access in rural areas
- 60% high-speed access on Tribal lands



“Homework Gap”

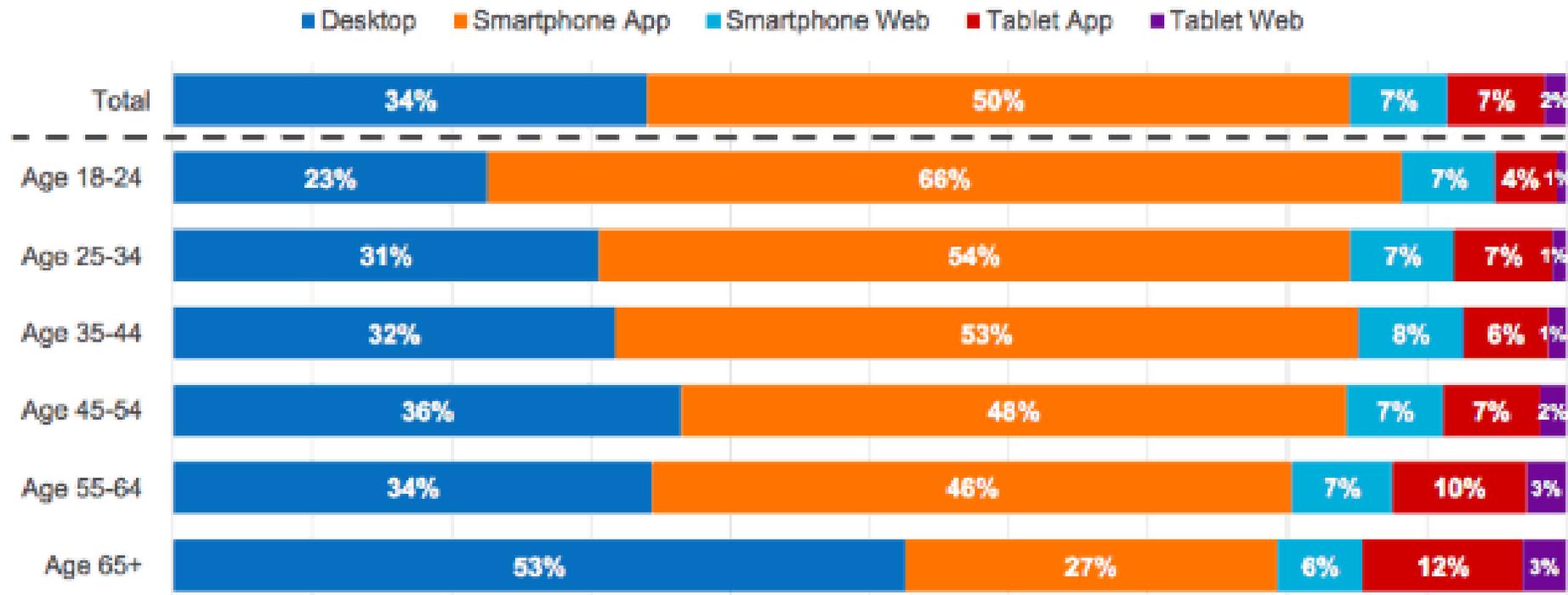
- “Homework Gap” - term coined by FCC Acting Chairwoman Jessica Rosenworcel
 - Refers to the problem facing communities where kids can’t access the Internet because infrastructure is inadequate, their families can’t afford it, or both.
 - Affects 12 million children across the country without reliable Internet access at home
- Broadband solutions



Statistics on technology usage by families

Share of Platform Time Spent by Age

Source: comScore Media Metrix Multi-Platform & Mobile Metrix, U.S., Age 18+, June 2017

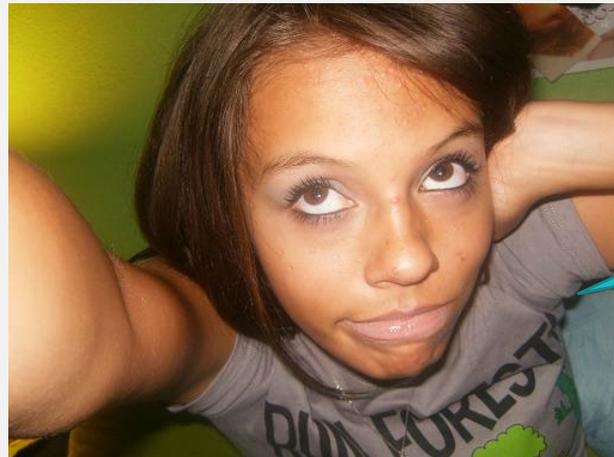


Source: comScore Media Metrix Multi-Platform & Mobile Metrix, U.S., Age 18+, June 2017.

Concept of tele-intervention approach



Wait, isn't that the same as the typical EI process?



Yeah, kinda! Just virtually!

Well... there ARE additional factors to consider...

Examples of tele-intervention in early intervention



Hearing aid fitting, CI mapping, ASL services, Physical Therapy, Speech or Language therapy



Images from Google and NCHAM

COVID-19 impact on EHDI services

- Public safety a paramount concern
- Equitability in services, considering race, location and SES of families
- Increase in tele-intervention without training, e.g. building airplane while it's flying
- Critical window of language acquisition
- Opportunities to interact with other peers and families
- Difficulty for some specific services



The Two A's: Federal resources and private support for technology access

Affordability of Internet:

- Reduced data or wifi internet plan (carrier by carrier basis: Sprint, T-Mobile, Verizon, Safelink, etc.)
- Lifeline
- Fast broadband access at \$10 a month
 - Examples of companies- not a full list
 - Access from AT&T
 - Internet Essentials
 - Internet Basics
 - Connect2Compete
 - Comcast Essentials (\$9.95 a month- minimum requirement: 1 child on Free/Reduced Lunch Program)



The Two A's: Available federal & private resources and support for technology access, cont.

Availability of Internet:

- Contact local provider to advocate for build-out to your area <https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/#/>
- Local public libraries, coffee shops and other establishments do offer free wifi, with or without membership/purchase.



Equipment and services provided to qualifying individuals/families for free

- Fire alarm distribution programs - local fire marshals
- State assistive technology distribution programs
- Videophone- provided free by 4 different companies (Convo, Hamilton Relay, Sorenson, ZPBetterTogether)
- Video relay services covered by the Federal Communications Commission
- Lifeline phone- discounted smartphone



Benefits and Opportunities

- Access to apps (Otter, The ASL app, Parent Advocacy, etc.)
- Online classes/therapy
- Facetime/webcam with Deaf mentor
- Webinars
- Safety at home/school
- Video communication
- YouTube videos
- Facebook discussions





Resources and links

- ASL Connect for Families- <https://www.gallaudet.edu/asl-connect>
- FCC information on requirements for accessible technology
<https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/telecommunications-access-people-disabilities>
- Clerc Center Info to Go: Learning ASL: Books, Media and Classes
https://www3.gallaudet.edu/clerc-center/info-to-go/asl/learning-asl-books_media_classes.html
- “Opportunity for all? Technology and learning in lower-income families
https://www.joanganzcooneycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/jgcc_opportunityforall.pdf
- NCHAM’s guide to tele-intervention <http://www.infanthearing.org/ti-guide/>
- Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association- Find your state! <http://tedpa.org/>



NAD-specific resources and links

- National Association of the Deaf (NAD) webpages with additional information:
 - <https://www.nad.org/resources/technology/lifeline/>
 - <https://www.nad.org/resources/technology/telephone-and-relay-services/video-relay-services/>
- For COVID-19 specifically:
 - <https://www.nad.org/advocacy-paper-for-families-seeking-accessible-prek-12-education/>
 - <https://www.nad.org/documento-de-defensa-para-familias-que-buscan-accesibilidad-en-la-educacion-prek-12-2/>
 - <https://www.nad.org/best-practices-for-wearing-masks-when-communicating-with-dhh/>



Thank you!

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