

# Sociodemographic disparities seen in quality of life in children with hearing loss

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Race and ethnicity and neighborhood disadvantage are associated with hearing-related quality of life (QOL) in deaf or hard-of-hearing (DHH) children, according to a research letter published online Oct. 30 in *JAMA*

*Network Open.*

Brooke R. Warren, from the University of California in San Francisco, and colleagues assessed differences in [hearing](#) QOL across diverse DHH populations. The analysis included 299 patients (aged 7 to 18 years) with [permanent hearing loss](#) seen at a tertiary care center from 2014 to 2022.

The researchers found that pure tone average (PTA) had an inverse association with the Hearing Environments and Reflection on Quality of Life (HEAR-QL) score, with less hearing loss associated with a higher HEAR-QL score. There was an association observed between non-Hispanic white [race](#) and [ethnicity](#) and a lower HEAR-QL score, even when accounting for all sociodemographic and clinical covariates.

In contrast, non-Hispanic Asian race and ethnicity was associated with higher HEAR-QL scores. There was a negative association noted between area deprivation index (ADI) ranking and quality of life. Patients with greater socioeconomic disadvantage were significantly more likely to have a lower HEAR-QL score. For patients aged 7 to 12 years, the total HEAR-QL score was not significantly associated with ADI, while for patients aged 13 to 18 years, high ADI was significantly associated with a low total HEAR-QL score.

"Future studies should elucidate these modifiable factors to enable multidisciplinary health care teams to provide more tailored hearing loss care and improve QOL in DHH children," the authors write.

**More information:** Brooke R. Warren et al, Sociodemographic Disparities and Hearing-Related Quality of Life in Children With Hearing Loss, *JAMA Network Open* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.40934](#)

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