

# Double Disparity in Deaf and Hard of Hearing College Students' Health Literacy

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HARC

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# Deaf Health Laboratory



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# Introduction

- **Health Literacy**

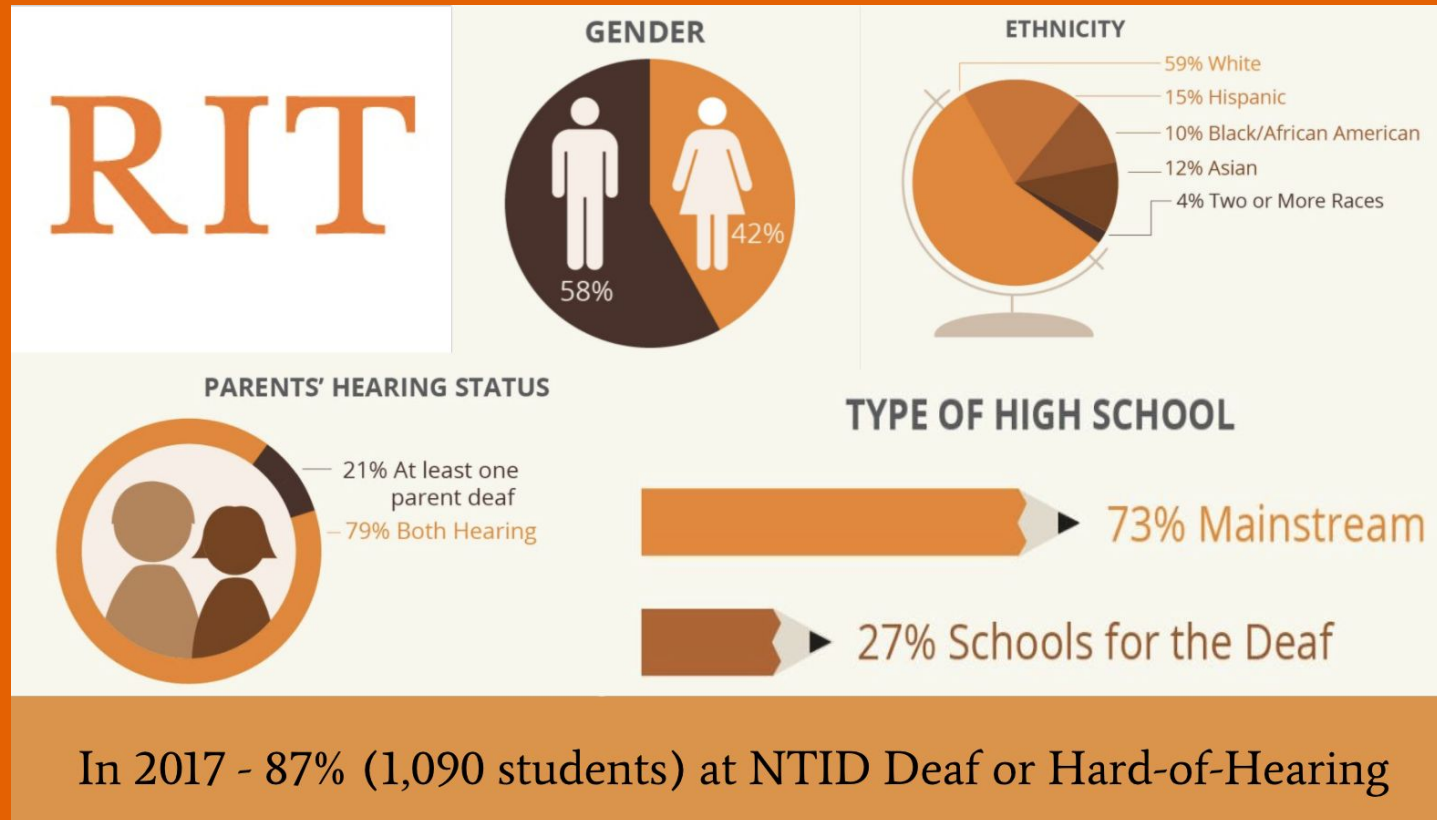
**Deaf ASL users were 6.9 times more likely than hearing non-signing individuals to have inadequate health literacy** (McKee et al., 2015)

- **Deaf/HoH adults at risk for health disparities**

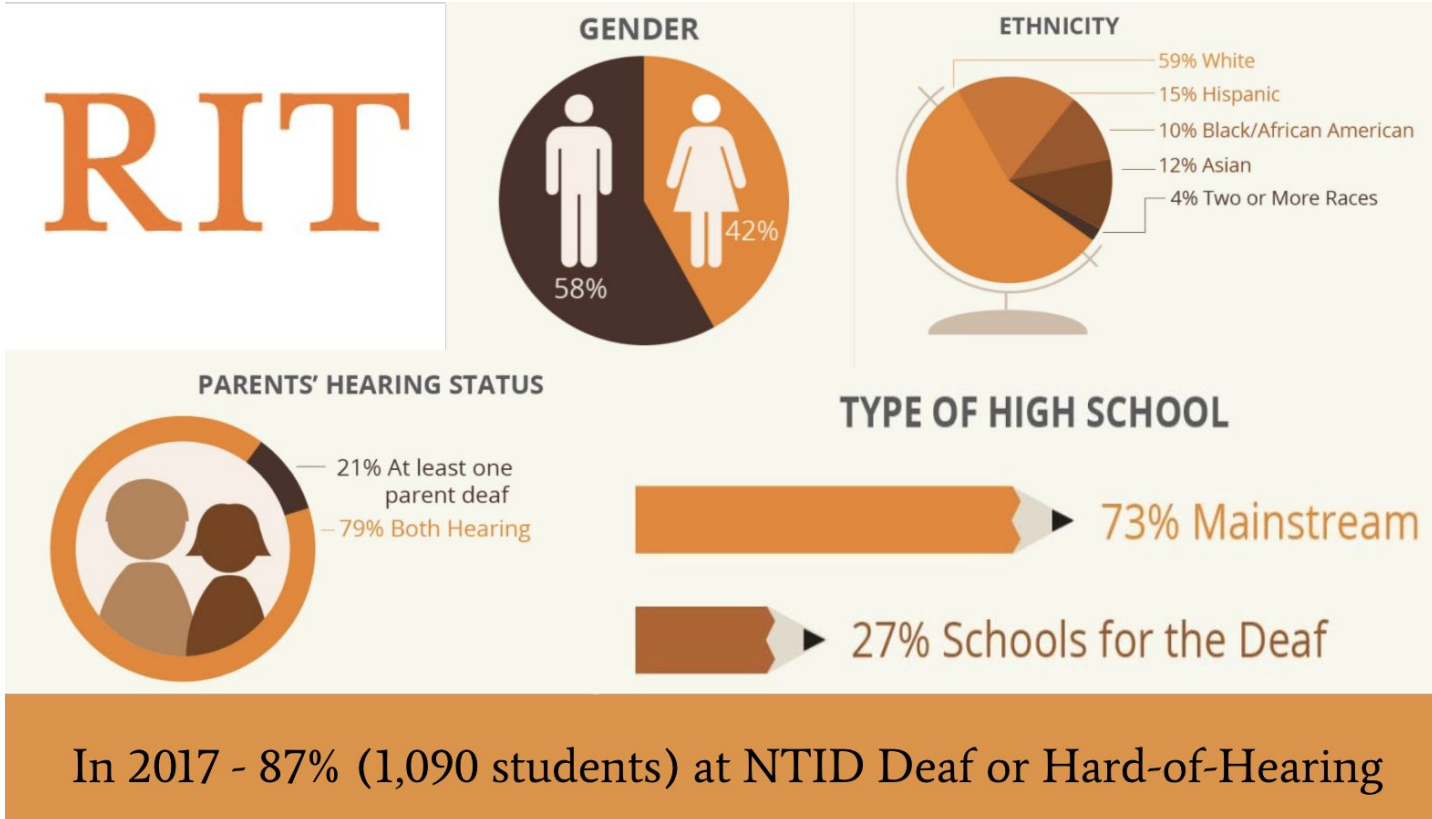
- lower health status- visit ER 2x more often than hearing peers (Barnett et al., 2011; Pertz et al., 2018)
- have gaps in their knowledge about preventive health (Steinberg et al., 2012; Orsi et al., 2007)
- communication and language barriers

# Research Question

Do deaf college students have adequate health literacy?



# Method



## Participants

54 RIT/NTID students

- Mean Age = 23.2 ( $SD = 2.6$ )
- 60% female
- 50% white, non-hispanic
- 15% with at least one deaf parent

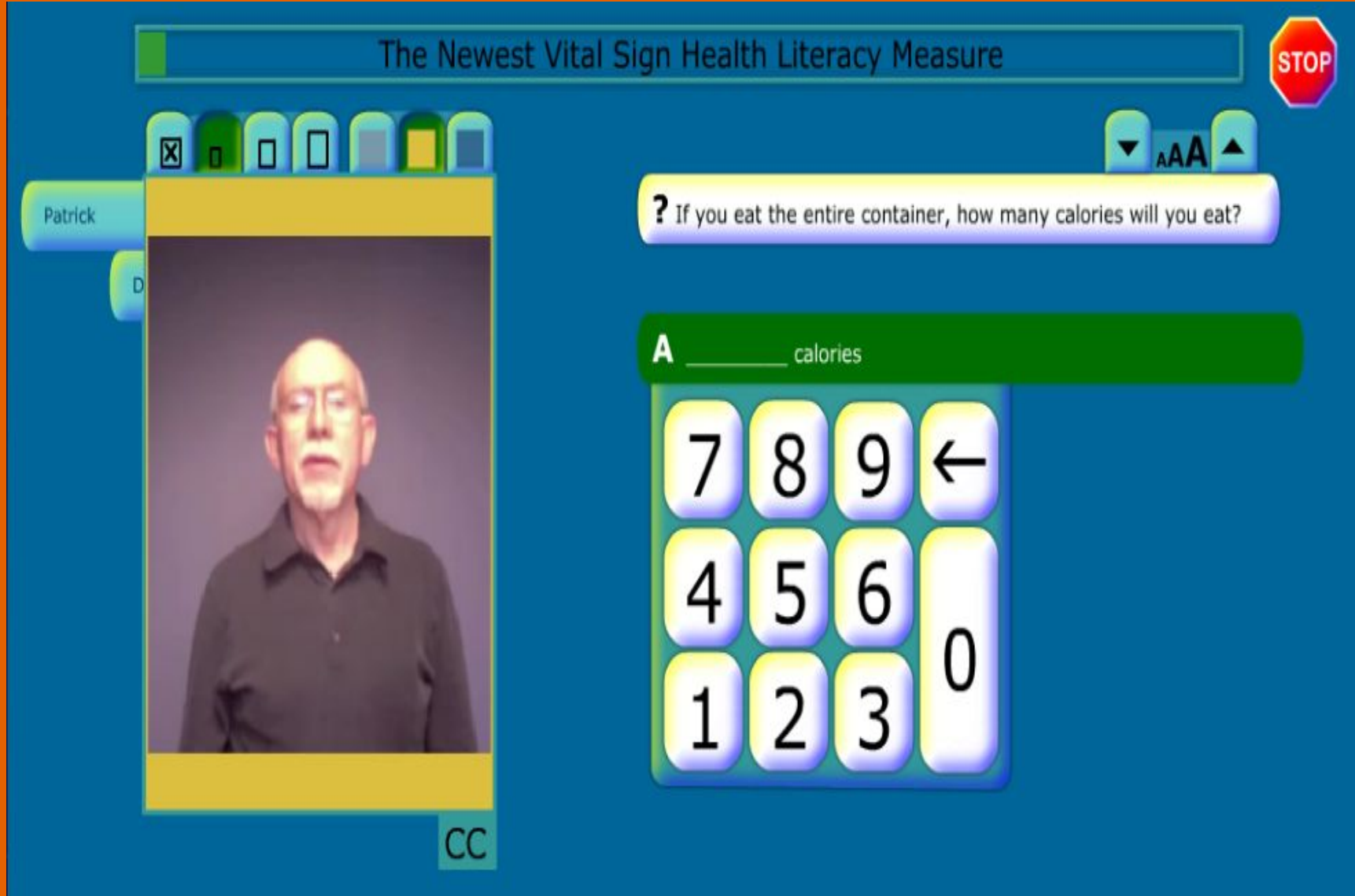
# Method

## Procedures

- Responded to flyers
- Tested individually
- Procedures approved by RIT IRB

## Materials

- Background Questionnaire
- Health Questionnaire created by team
- ACHA National College Health Assessment
- Newest Vital Sign (NVS)



NVS-  
ASL

## Previous NVS research

- a. Out of a sample  $N = 453$  hearing college students, 6.2% had less than adequate health literacy (Mackert, Champerlin et al., 2017)
- b. Using NVS-ASL, 48% of Deaf ASL users had inadequate health literacy ( $N=166$ ) (McKee et al., 2015)
  - Use NVS-ASL to gain insight of health literacy of deaf/HoH people who have access to a college education



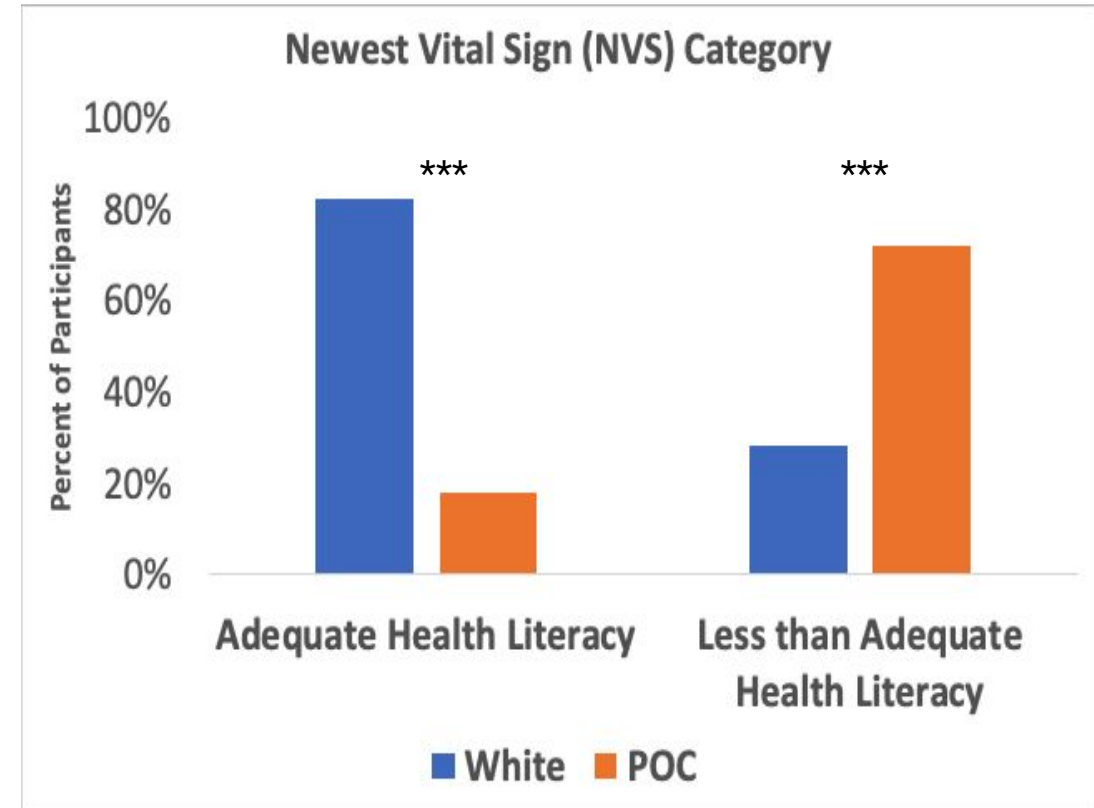
# Results

## Newest Vital Sign (NVS)

- Adequate Health Literacy 40.7%
- Less than Adequate Health Literacy 59.2%

NVS Category	White	POC
Adequate	82%	18%
Less than Adequate	28%	72%

$$\chi^2 (1, N = 54) = 15.032, p. < .001$$



# Discussion

- Deaf/HoH college students represent a fraction of the general deaf population but approximately 60% experience health literacy challenges.
- The challenges are significantly greater if the deaf/HoH individual is POC. Another NVS study conducted at an university discovered Hispanic students had lower average health literacy than any other racial/ethnic group (Acvi et al., 2018; Kutner et al., 2003)
- Future deaf/HoH health studies must take race and ethnicity into consideration when analyzing deaf/HoH population data.

# Conclusion

1. There is a clear health disparity among deaf and hard of hearing college students.
2. Future studies are needed to decrease gaps in health literacy.
3. Secondary educational programs need to provide accessible and culturally appropriate health literacy skill training to deaf and hard of hearing adolescents.

**This is an urgent public health issue!**

## References

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