The Language Environment During the Covid-19 Pandemic for Children with Hearing Loss Claire Monroy¹, Molly Cooke¹, Carrie Davenport¹, Kristin Uhler², Andrea Warner-Czyz³, Yuanyuan Wang¹, Derek Houston¹ ¹The Ohio State University ; ²University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus & Children's Hospital Colorado; ³The University of Texas at Dallas

- INTRODUCTION

- We are investigating how the pandemic has impacted (1) the home language environment, (2) intervention early services, and (3) experiences with telehealth for families of children with hearing loss.
- We administered an online parent survey in research cohorts in Ohio and Colorado towards the end of the initial statemandated lockdown periods (March- May 2020).
- 26 parents of children (0-3 years of age) who have hearing loss completed the survey

SURVEY

- 22 items in total
- 4 items about the typical language environment in the home before the pandemic
- 4 items about the home environment during the lockdown period (Figures 1-3)
- 3 items about usual speech-language therapy services prior to the pandemic
- 3 items about speech-language therapy services during the lockdown period (Figures 4-6)
- 3 items about the telehealth process (Figures 7-9)
- Parents listed language activities targeted during therapy, pre-pandemic and during the lockdown (see box on upper right)







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"PRIMARY ACTIVITIES TARGETED **DURING THERAPY:**"

• 12/26 (46%) parents reported no change in therapy activities pre-covid to the lockdown period

• 3 parents (12%) reported "checking in", "discussing concerns" or "things to keep kiddo busy", instead of the language activities reported pre-covid • 3 parents (12%) reported no activities targeted during therapy, when they had reported pre-covid activities (e.g., "Ling sounds" or "pronouncing consonants")

• 6 parents (23%) reported different activities pre-covid vs. during covid (e.g., pre-covid activities were "speech sounds and articulation" while during the lockdown activities were "following directions and bookreading")

- CONCLUSIONS

• The pandemic disrupted some aspects of home activities and early intervention services.

• Families spent more time with their children during the lockdown, which could benefit them. • Storybook reading frequency did not change.

• Some families experienced less frequent therapy sessions, and some reported a change in service goals during the lockdown.

• We do not know how these changes will impact long-term language; future work needs to track these children's language growth to understand the full impact of the pandemic.

