Effective Educational Practices for Young Children with Cochlear Implants:

What We are Learning

EHDI Conference
March, 2010
http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/Clerc_Center/Information_and_Resources/Cochlear_Implant_Education_Center.html
What we have been doing.....

Looking at how spoken language and sign language can support each other for children with cochlear implants
Cochlear Implant Education Center

National Initiatives

Demonstration Schools
Reflections From 2002 Conference
Cochlear Implants and Sign Language: Putting It all Together
2002

THE BIG QUESTION . . .

Is it a conflict to sign with children who have cochlear implants?
Cochlear Implants and Sign Language: Building Foundations For Effective Educational Practices

April 15-17, 2009
It is important to look beyond one “single approach” in achieving optimal outcomes in linguistic, cognitive, academic, and social competence for deaf and hard of hearing children including those with cochlear implants.

Ed Bosso, Vice President, Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center, Opening Remarks, Building Foundations for Effective Educational Practices: Children with Cochlear Implants, April 2009
With growth in the number of children with cochlear implants has emerged a population of children who are similar in the technology they are using, yet disparate in their demographic characteristics and spoken language communication outcomes.

What we are learning

Spoken Language and Sign

It does not have to be a competition!
Early language foundations (signed or spoken) can positively impact “spoken language” outcomes.

Yoshinaga-Itano and Sedley, 2000,
Yoshinaga-Itano, 2003
What the research indicates…

Brain imaging suggests that the brain can readily handle dual language development (bimodal-bilingual)

What the research indicates...

Sign language can have a positive impact on the early language development of hearing babies.

So why not deaf babies ???

http://www.sign2me.com/research.php
A review of research related to sign use does **not** demonstrate that signing in and of itself impedes the development of spoken language.

Spencer, Patricia (April, 2009), Research to Practice, Cochlear Implants and Sign Language: Building Foundations for Effective Educational Practices; April, 2009
Importance of defining “sign”

American Sign Language
or
English based sign system
Varied roles of “sign”

- Early language development until implantation/activation
- Until a child transitions to spoken language
- Continued use as a support to spoken English
- Equal development of both ASL and spoken English
- Primary use of ASL-- spoken English as a supplement

Benefit of early sign....

Age 22 months, 9 months post activation
Using sign as a link to spoken language

Yes, that's the dog..... woof woof... woof woof
Age 3
With purposeful planning, sign and spoken language can support each other in the learning process for children with cochlear implants.
Spoken English Planning Considerations

- Age and developmental level of the student
- Auditory access
- Auditory inclination
- Language and communication competence
- Language Preference/Comfort Level
- Intelligence and additional special needs
- Family attitude and motivation
- Student attitude, personality, and motivation
For more information:

Cochlear Implant Education Center
http://clercccenter.gallaudet.edu/
(keyword: Cochlear Implant Education Center)

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