

ROUGHLY EDITED COPY

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEARING ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT  
BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS WITH VISUAL LANGUAGE  
(WITH A FOCUS ON FAMILIES)  
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>> If you are just joined us you are in the right place for today's webinar. Brought to you by the National Center for Hearing assessment and management at Utah State University. We will be starting at the top of the hour in about 15 minutes. Today's webinar is entitled building a foundation of success with visual language. For now just get your volume adjusted for your liking and you should be set to go for participation in today's webinar. Once again, we will be starting at the top of the hour.

>> Pardon my redundancy but we want to give everybody a chance to adjust their volume to their liking. You are in the right place for today's webinar brought to you by the National Center for Hearing assessment and management at Utah State University. Today's webinar is entitled building a foundation for success with visual language. We will be starting at the top of the hour, about ten minutes from now.

>> For those of you who have just signed on you are in the right place for today's webinar. Today's webinar is entitled building a foundation for success with visual language. We will be starting at the top of the hour. For those of you who have signed on early, you will notice in the lower right hand corner of your screen a box that is entitled today's handouts under which you will find a downloadable PDF which our presenter has prepared for you today. So if you would like to download that,

you have an opportunity to do that now. You can do it at any time during the presentation today. We'll be starting at the top of the hour, in about four or five minutes from now.

Lou Louise, are you still connected by audio? I'm not hearing you. Louise? Uh-oh. Well, let me make sure that others are hearing me okay. Louise, is that you?

>> Yes, I'm back on.

>> I wonder what happened.

>> I'm not sure. Sorry about that.

>> No. Okay, so we are just going to do a quick audio check here. If everybody who has signed on could please indicate if you are hearing us or not, that would be great. It appears that people are hearing us so I need to write a little note to the two indicating that they don't. Thank you for your feedback, everybody. We will be starting in just a few minutes. It looks like everybody is in fact hearing our audio except for one person. If your audio signal is not sufficient for you, of course, the first thing you want to do is adjust your volume on your computer speakers or headset volume settings. If that's not adequate, it may have to do with your internet connection in which case you can sign off and try to come back on and hopefully establish a stronger connection. Never fear, though. If something is preventing your full participation in today's webinar, whether it's technological or something else, this webinar is going to be recorded and posted on [infanthearing.org](http://infanthearing.org) so you can view it at another time. Keep that in mind also as you participate in today's webinar should there be people not in attendance that you think would benefit from what you experienced today so that you can also direct them to the on-line recording of today's webinar.

With that said, we are going to give everybody just a minute more and then we will get started. How does that sound to you, Louise?

>> That sounds great. Thanks.

>> While we take one more minute or so, I am going to pull up our poll question. If you could take a minute, everybody, to answer this question about what is your primary role in the lives of

children who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing children. Your primary role that brings you here today. It's always nice for our presenter to have a little bit of a sense of your perspective of the lens through which you are participating in today's webinar. Great. Thank you for that. I will initiate recording of today's meeting and we will get started.

>> Good day, everyone. My name is William Eiserman at Utah State University. I would like to welcome you to today's webinar that is entitled building a foundation for success with visual language presented by Louise Rollins from the American society for deaf children. We will have Louise present to us for a bit first, and then once she wraps up her comments we will open up a text field into which you will be able to type your comments or question that you would like to have Louise respond to. I would like to draw your attention to the lower left hand corner of your screen beside where you see the captioning happening. In that field you will see a header in the box saying, today's handouts. That's a PDF that Louise has prepared for you today. So you can download that at any time that you would like.

Today's webinar is being recorded so if -- and will be posted on [infanthearing.org](http://infanthearing.org) within the next couple of days. So if it disrupts your full participation in today's webinar, whether it's technical or anything else, you will be able to access this webinar at another time. And keep in mind also that should there be others that aren't participating live that might benefit from what Louise will be presenting today. So -- and one other thing I want to make sure I don't overlook and that is a giant thank you and acknowledgment to our captioner. That's a real live person who is captioning for us today and we always like to make sure we make note of that skill and availability. So thank you to you for your efforts and helping make our webinars more accessible.

Without further delay, Louise, I will hand it over to you. This is Louise Rollins, everyone.

>> Hi, good afternoon. Thank you, Will. I am Louise Rollins. I'm here in a partnership with NCHAM and the American society for deaf children. To give you a little bit more about my background. I have been working with families with deaf and hard-of-hearing children for a little over 15 years now. I'm from Maryland. Have worked in two different state for the Deaf and partnered with ten different counties or school districts and

worked for two different public school systems -- public school systems and I work for the Montgomery county school system in Maryland. The bulk of my experience has been in early intervention, home base services, kids under five or under three. I see we have some families that have slightly older children and some professionals that may or may not be home based. We will talk about a little bit broader lens than just early intervention but since we are talking about a language foundation, the youngest children.

Our overview board today is our first component will be just how can we build a strong language foundation and we will look at strategies for that. And then we will talk about how we evaluate children's progress and if we are being successful. And then we will look at what we will do if we are not being successful.

>> So to begin, we will look at how can we build a strong language foundation. And it's this language or with or without amplification so it is so much more than providing just access to the language. We have specific strategies we can use for intentional language teaching. And that's the fruit of what we are doing, what we need to be doing with our kids at home. But why. Why do we need to do more than just giving access to language. The communication is different and especially for those many, many here with Deaf children we know that doesn't necessarily come to them to modifying and how they can give attention when you talk about them in a few minutes. Some are very natural. Some are not. -- even the natural parents need to be validated and need to have an explanation of why are you doing what you are doing? How is working and why is it working so that you look to keep doing the same things and you can feel effective in your homes. -- some language strategies. Some children we can look at as dandelions and some as orchids. This is a analogy from a book by the same name. The orchid and the dandelion by Thomas Boyce. The book says -- the finicky care that an orchid needs. An ice cube a week and filtered light or whatever it is that orchids need. I'm not familiar and I'm not a great guard gardener. Some children need specific care to thrive and flourish. Some children can take scraps of attention and take scraps of education and just flourish. Most of our children with what he calls tulips where they are somewhere in between. They don't grow in the cracks and don't grow like weeds but they are not as finicky as an orchid. But some of our children just need more love from us and -- it's up to us to provide that.

Now let's jump into the strategies. What can we do to make that language -- to build this language foundation. The first thing we want to do is make it interesting. We need to give our children a reason to watch you. So maybe you learned all of these signs and convert your ASL teacher and converse with your adult friends that you made or even your Deaf friends. Your child is not watching you. The first thing to do is to use child directed signing or what some people call in spoken English parent-ese. It's interesting. It comes naturally to some parents and it doesn't to others and that's okay if it's not your thing, but you need to learn how to make it -- sort of fake it until you make it. Rhythm and music is another thing we can do to make signing interesting and interesting for children and yes, I'm talking about using music even in ASL. Some of you may notice the image I have in the corner of the slide here. This is not a plug specifically for that organization, but they are sort of the largest organization of doing what they are doing. Just putting out -- nursery rhymes in ASL with ASL rhymes. There are a few other resources out there. There is an ASL mother goose DVD out there and I don't think it's still being published. Your child's teacher and ask your local librarian to help you location these resources. They are out there.

The next thing we want to do is make the environment accessible. These are things like reducing any visual distractions, reducing glare, reducing back lighting. We are -- you have a window behind you so you are back lit and you can see your child clearly but maybe you don't realize that your child can't see you as clearly. And anything that would be background noise, visual background noise. If your child is using amplification, obviously background noise. Anything that will be competing for their attention. Even if you don't have a TV -- put the TV somewhere. Chances are you aren't going to win over that TV or tablet or screen of any kind.

The next thing to do is optimize your environment. -- [technical audio difficulties] you can sit side by side. You can even sit behind the child. There are things we can do that we will talk about on the slide. There is a very good video tutorial about positioning for access. It's in the references at the end of this presentation. And -- and she does a great job of explaining how to set yourself up with your child and the different options and how to maximize their visual access.

Lastly we can use technology to our benefit. We can -- like the doorbell. Your own phone. And because some hearing parents of deaf children swear that Deaf don't use these technologies. A light signal or when someone comes to their home and ring the doorbell. How young does the child need to be to benefit from it? Right away. Or as you might be able to see in the picture here on the slide, here is somebody I think it's an iPhone -- I'm not sure. I do this on an Android but being into the accessibility to turn on their light flasher so their child knows when the phone is ringing and that gives the child more access to not the signs but the communication, the overall communication going on in their environment. And another bit of low tech is mirrors. Especially in the car. These are great. Especially for rear facing child seats. I know kids need to be older and bigger these days before they can graduate out of those rear facing child seats. A couple of mirrors set up so your child can see you and see your face and be comforted by your presence and have -- it's not signs, it's some communication that does a lot to modify your environment and make it accessible.

So next we want to make the language accessible. And the first thing we have to do as I mentioned a bit earlier is get their attention. Put a star here because I find this is a huge hurdle for many hearing parents. I know the signs I need for this book and I know the signs for this toy and the play activity or whatever it is, but my kid won't look at me. What do I do? Here are some strategies for that. One is just getting on the child's level. Kneeling, crouching, sitting on the floor. Down on the floor if you need to if that's where they are. All of that can work. Just waiting -- and it may be.

The idea is that the child's eye follows up to your face. And you can do the same thing with your hands. I work with a child who at nine months was following her mother's hands when they would tap on an object and bring her hands up to the face to sign about the object. She would follow their hands. And we can -- as children get older -- let me back up to the other strategies for attention getting. We used to shape that behavior with physical prompts. So we can't just expect the first time -- especially if they are closer to a toddler's age. If it's the first time to tap, we can't necessarily expect that they will understand or understand the expectation. Can use some physical prompts. We can tap and then, tap again. And then use a combination of these things. Visual leading. Take a toy away and get on the child's level and move in their line of sight and

then shape that behavior to the point they understand this is the expectation. And then as they get older what we see in the literature from Deaf parents is that Deaf parents rely on -- that set that expectation. If you stay signing it's meaningful and I have a reason to communicate with you and you have a reason to look. If children don't look they back up and use these other strategies. I wouldn't recommend that with the youngest children as they get older.

>> Louise, this is William Eiserman. Your audio signal is breaking up a little bit and I think -- I don't know that we can solve that problem, but perhaps if you slow down just a little bit, it might help people follow you a little bit better.

>> Sure, I can definitely do that, would you like me to try from a land line?

>> Are you on a cell phone?

>> I am. But I was able to move close to a land line.

>> Oh, yeah, that might be good. If you could do that. We will sit tight for a second while you do that. I think it might improve everybody's experience if we take a moment to do that if that's okay.

>> I'm not in my own office. I apologize.

>> That's okay. While you do that don't worry about staying verbal. I will fill in for a minute. What we are doing right now is we are addressing a mild audio signal issue. And our presenter will be right back. Note, if you would in the lower left hand corner of your screen for those of you who signed on a little bit late, Louise has a handout there as a PDF that you are able to download. So it sounds like Louise signed in on another line.

>> I am on another line. Is this a little clearer?

>> I think so. Yeah. Why don't we give that a try.

>> Thank you so much for letting me know.

>> Yes, sure. Okay.

>> Okay. So back to making the language accessible, we've gotten our child's attention with one or many of these strategies. And now we may need to modify those signs. So this is where as I mentioned before we can -- when we position for visual access we might not always be sitting face to face. We might be sitting behind the child, especially in if your child is still on the floor, still a crawler or sitter and you need to sit behind them in the moment and you can move the signs and sign on the object. You can sign on your child. You can make a signing triangle where you sign on your self and then the child and then the object. Or vary the order of that. You can vary the movement of your signs. You can make your signs bigger, longer. That will capitalize on your child's peripheral vision as well. If your sign is a little bigger and you catch your child's attention, your child may alert to that and go there is something important going on and there is language going on. You may resort to some of the more direct attention getting strategies. But the more you set the expectation the communication is happening and I require your visual attention, the more you will get it.

The last way to make language accessible is to talk about -- really think about sequential learning so that's where we talk, do and then talk. Rather than trying to do something -- let's play with the ball, what should we do with the ball. Let's put the ball in the basket, take it out of the basket. We need to give our Deaf children time to look at what we are doing and then look at what we are talking about or vice versa. And the reason for that is somewhat down on this slide I know there is a lot of information to digest here and that's the reason you have the handout. Basically the point of this chart is sequential learning. Children until they are actually much older than we think or much older than we realize really need time to process information before process what's going on before they can take in your language and they are search is not based on Deaf children. This is for hearing children also. So if we add the fact that our Deaf children who are using visual language need to look up and look at you to receive that visual language, we realize even more we need to think about sequential learning. Talk about it. Then do it. Then talk about it. Then do the next step.

Next we want to make our language meaningful. So you know, I know that there are a lot of infomercials and flashy sets at the department store of flash cards that can teach your baby to read and things like that. But that kind of what we call rote



learning, that just learning to regurgitate things isn't as meaningful when you use the language of your home and of your community. Whatever books you are reading, whatever toys you are playing with, whatever daily routines you are participating in, that's the language we want to be emphasizing with your children. We also want to make sure your child has meaningful language models. That means peers which often is very difficult for children in a low incidence group like Deaf children. But children need to be able to have meaningful interactions with their peers so that they can learn not just how to say mom, I want more milk. But they can learn to say things, hey, you took that toy from me. I need it back. That's important for their overall development.

Then adult language models are important. In the child's community but also we can't overlook the importance of Deaf and hard-of-hearing adults as language models for children who are using ASL. Another way to make language meaningful is to use self-talk or parallel talk. Self-talk will be I'm talking about what I'm doing as I'm doing it. Daddy is going to change your diaper because it's really wet and you need a clean one. Parallel talk will be talking about what we are doing as we are doing it. So we are rolling the ball back and forth. Whose turn is it? Your turn. Now my turn. Again we need to keep in mind as we use self-talk and parallel talk. Keep in mind the attention levels and giving kids some processing time and wait time. So that leads into the next bullet point, the wait time. We need to let the child study and process and really make sense of what's going on rather than just giving them a fire hose of information that doesn't make any sense and that they can't connect to the real world. A strategy that we see a lot in the literature with Deaf parents is pointing or tapping the thing you are talking about. So maybe your child is holding a bear and you want to talk about the bear. It's not automatically clear to them what you are talking about. Until you tap or point to the bear in their arms. And along with that we can use reputation. So that's not to say you should say, bear, tap the bear. Tap the bear. Bear. It should be organic. It should be meaningful, natural. But also the child should have many opportunities to see and maybe hear the target word.

Along with reputation, a form of that is bracketing or sandwiching. You will see it called both if you read on the topic. That's just taking something concrete and then something that is new. So usually the object and the new word or say your

child is also using spoken language along with sign language. If they know the sign, you bracket the sign with the spoken word. And then finish off the bracket or the sandwich with the familiar, with the sign.

Next I have restricting language and I put a little question mark and exclamation point because it's unusual for a teacher to say don't give your child too much language. But what I mean by this is we want to increase the quality and decrease the quantity. So again that fire hose of information is not going to make things meaningful for your child but really connecting the language, the vocabulary to the object to the routine to the concept that you are trying to get across in quality ways will help your child make better connections than just reputation for reputation sake. And finally we want to make language meaningful by teaching it and not testing it. So a lot of times we get into a therapy mind set and I have seen families who sort of think of their children's language skills as a bit of a party trick. Oh, well, look, she can point to five pictures in this book. But can she name those objects out in her community? That's more meaningful. That's what we are looking for. Not the testing of the can she do the skill for auntie who came over on Sunday. And I have seen also along with that families who want to test and then say well, he can't do it. Now what do I do? And don't know how to then bridge that. In the next few slides we will talk about how to support children's learning when they don't know it and how do we teach that.

Next we want to make language interactive. So we are following your child's lead. If your child is done talking about the bear, you are done talking about the bear. Especially for the youngest children. Their attention spans are short. That's typical for their age. That's okay. You want to talk about what your child wants to talk about. What your child is interested in. I did a home visit this week where we were trying to work on pointing because it was important for the family and the child seemed ready and she wanted to look out the window and look at the cars. So guess what we talked about. We talked about the car and she got more language out of that because she was engaged in it so she could interact with us.

Then we talk about something called serve and return. In early interactions, early communication interactions with families and their children and this is even before your child starts using any sign. Maybe before you learned sign. Maybe the

first homes you held your child in your arms you communicated with your child. You used facial expressions. You used smiles. You used your eyebrows. You used a lot of different ways to communicate with your child and as your child grew before too long your child started to return your serve. And then your child started to be the one to serve. And the idea is as a parent you need to return every communication attempt. Any communication attempt. Now sometimes especially as they get older we may not accept every communication attempt if we know that for instance they can use two signs at a time and they are only giving you a whine. You are re-enforcing communication attempts that you know are appropriate for that child.

We also want to give children ways to demonstrate their receptive language before they use any or many signs. So we want to teach them gestures they can do. And nod and shake their head. Point to things. Waive good-bye. Put their arms up to be asked to be picked up. Things that show us that they understand what we are saying and signing to them. And again the songs and nursery rhymes, this is where they can really wear that music and rhythm can really help us understand how much our children are understanding. So peek-a-boo, ASL poems -- it's tricky to demonstrate on a webinar, but the I love you balloon where you blow up your fingers and it makes an I love you hand shake and the balloon flies around the room and those are things that the child can interact with you on even before they are using any signs.

Imitation either manual or facial even with your facial expressions again before your children are even using any signs and certainly after. That makes it interactive. That makes communication a two way street as it should be. And at first this will be child-led. They will start waiving their hand at you, blowing a raspberry, smiling, and you can copy and they will continue the conversation. But as they get older, you can start adult-led imitation where you start the raspberry and they copy you and you continue the conversation. As you see there as I mentioned, have conversations. And even if that's not what to do at school today, well, mom, I kicked the ball around with Billy and we had goldfish for snack. You can have conversation with your children where you are returning every one of their serves and every one of their communication attempts with something meaningful. And you may be asking questions during this time. That your child might not answer. Might not have the language to answer yet. What do you do? You model the answer. You may not

know the answer. What did you do in school today? Did you have a good time. I bet you read a book. I bet you played with your friends. Give them something. Model for them so they understand again the communication is a two way street.

Again that wait time is going to be important so they know they need to take a turn. And that communication does involve both of you. And then expectant pause is important here. I really like to name this because a lot of parents do it and they feel like they are doing nothing. It's that wait with a head tilt and your body kind of leaning forward to the child. Maybe your palm is up. Maybe you are gesturing towards them and you are waiting for them to participate in the conversation. You are not doing nothing. You are doing a lot and it's called an expectant pause.

Then we can use cues to tell the child that it's your turn. Whether that's a sign. Just your turn sign. Or a physical cue, maybe you tap their arm, tap their chest gently.

Then we want to make our language supported. And the way we support or sometimes you hear teachers say scaffold children's language which means take them where they are and give them a little boost. We want to make sure we are flexible. If what we are doing isn't working. We have to back up and change strategies. And we will talk a little later about what strategies we can use to change things up. Using predictable language. Language of routines, language of things you do every day. That helps support your child. Again, bracketing and sandwiching with known and unknown things so if your child doesn't know that the neighbor's dog is called a dog because they only know a dog in their picture book, you will sandwich the familiar, here is the dog in your book. Here is the neighbor's dog. Here is the dog in your book. And help support them to expand their language.

Highlighting. Sometimes you will hear this in regards to spoken language, but we can highlight in visual language, too. Emphasize a sign and make it a little bit longer. A little bit sharper. A little bit -- maybe we repeat it once or twice so that your child knows this is the key word I need to focus on. And then a strategy for supporting language is to make sure you give the visual first. So you show the new object, maybe they got a new toy and you pause. Give them that wait time. We talked about. And tell them what it is. There is a way to flip

that and use the language first which we will talk about later. But to support your child's learning when that's what they need from you, you want to show the visual first.

You can give hints and prompts. Things like if your child is just learning to ask for more at mealtime and you shown more and you have shown more and you have shown the sign and you shown the sign, maybe you put your hands like you are getting ready to sign more but you don't make contact with your hands yet. You give them the first part of the sign. And that's just enough of a prompt sometimes to jump start them.

Closure or cloze. You will see it spelled both ways. It's just fill in the blank. So that's the way again when we are using a familiar song, a familiar nursery rhyme. A familiar line from a book, predictable language from a routine, we leave out the last word and we let the child fill it in and then leave out a little more and the child gets to participate a little more and more and more. And then we want to support our children by making the implied explicit. There is a lot that our children don't have access to because they are missing out sometimes on incidental learning. And if that's something that is not a familiar phrase to you, I encourage you to seek it out and learn more about how you can support your child's incidental learning. We don't have the time to cover that today. But an example of that might be if you are reading a book like the doorbell rang and you read the doorbell rang and the woman answered the door and your child thinks, well, how did she know the doorbell rang. So a way to make the implied explicit is to add a quick sentence the doorbell rang and the woman heard the noise so she answered the door. Now once we made our language supported, we want to make it challenging. And wait time is another way we can do that. We want to let our children solve their own problems. We don't want to jump in and rescue. She doesn't know this. She didn't come out with the answer right away. We want their answers to be spontaneous. We want them to come up with it on their own. And certainly we have to use judgment. Is this a time to support or challenge. As a parent, you will get a feel for which this particular opportunity is.

And then this is the strategy I mentioned. We talked about visual first when we want to support our children's learning. We can use language first when we want to challenge our children. So maybe you say something, pause for a moment to give them some processing time and show them. So the one I like to use a lot

for this one is gramma is here. Pause for a second. And then have gramma walk in from the foyer. And that stimulates their abstract thinking and lets them know that language represents things even when you can't see those things.

We can challenge the children's language by expanding. This is called the add one word rule. They say juice, you say more juice. Or maybe you model the correct grammar and you say I want more juice. Reputation again in this case what I mean by reputation is new context. New meaning. So again that dog in the book is the same as the neighbor's dog. It's the same as the dog you see from the pet store and it's the same as a line drawing you see in a new book. Sabotage is a fun strategy that really challenges our children and there are two ways to do it one is where the child corrects the adult. You might sign I'm going to put my boat in the air. Boats go in the air. And you wait for your child to correct you. It stimulates their critical thinking. And it lets them know adults aren't always right. I have to pay attention. Now if the child doesn't correct you, you want to correct them and model correctly whatever it was that you sabotaged. Another way we can sabotage children is by just playing dumb and encouraging them to correct themselves. So maybe you understand your child when they reach out to the cupboard and they go eh, eh, eh and you know he wants the fruit snacks. If he is capable to do more than that. And you need to sabotage and say, I don't understand. What do you want? This is after he is capable of giving you language to make the request. This isn't how we teach them how to make the requests. And we talked about modeling correct language. And we did sort of touch on talking about things that are not right here right now. Again, we want to stimulate their abstract thinking. A lot of times I like to advise parents to give your child signals that you are coming if they are in their bed or crib or pack and play, give them signals before they can see you. So maybe you use a heavy foot fall and they can feel the vibration. Or there is a curtain that you can tug on as you come into the room or a light you can turn on right before they see you. And again this lets children know that there are things in this room that we can think about and communicate about before we can see them. That's really important as they get older. And develop that abstract thinking.

So those are the strategies that I wanted to lay out today. Once we are using all of those, how do we evaluate our children's progress to know whether these strategies are being successful?

So the professionals in your life are probably gathering quite a bit of different types of data. Your family's observations and what your family's goals are for your child assessment data. Data on how they are performing at home, in therapy sessions, at school, and along with their professional opinion. But there is still quite a bit of disagreement in our field about what we are collecting data on. We know we were collecting data on their language. It's not how their hair grows or something like that. There is still quite a bit of disagreement on how we are collecting information and how we are weighing that. That's what we will explore now.

So the joint committee on infant hearing which is a committee that's been around for about 50 years, they are made up of a number of professional associations and they public -- publish position statements that summarize the current research and best practices in order to make recommendations for early identification and intervention for children who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing. They say that our D/HH children should be monitored every six months from birth to 36 months using standardized norm reference developmental evaluations. So not this is a check list I put together that I really like to use although I do that myself in my own practice but a standardized assessment. And what are we looking at? We are looking at language, modality, but also social and emotional, cognitive and motor skills. So the joint committee on infant hearing doesn't think we should look at how many words your child signs or says. They say that we need to evaluate the whole child. We need to look at language motility, social, emotional, cognitive and motor.

And another way that we look at the whole child just to sort of give the parents and the audience a peek behind the curtain in how educator collect this information, for early intervention providers and preschool staff we are tasked with reporting information to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Program on these three areas that you see here and we will go through each one. So we look at positive social emotional skills relating with adults, other children, following rules. We look at acquisition and use of knowledge and skills so this is where that language communication literacy come in thinking, reasoning, problem solving. And we also look at appropriate behaviors to meet their needs. So whether they meet those needs independently, get help and how they get from place to place and how they contribute to their own health and safety.

What the Federal Government asks us to do is report on the global functioning in these three areas. They don't say you have "X" number of Deaf children and tell us "X" number of words they say this year. Or a standard score they received on such and such a language assessment. They want to know about their global functioning. And they want to know about their functional skills. And functional skills are defined as integrated behaviors or skills that enable the child to achieve important every day goals. They are meaningful to the child in the context of every day living. And they are generalized across environments.

So what we are asked as a field to do by the joint committee on infant hearing by the Federal Government is to look at how is this child functioning every day in their family and community? Not how did they do on such and such a check list. And we need to wait as professionals and as parents and as team members on this child's team we need to weight those integrated meaningful and generalized skills much more -- with much more weight and urgency than those isolated prompted imitated skills. All of the spontaneous skills that you see your child using on a daily basis independently and meaningfully are much more important than the things that they maybe can do once in awhile or only in a certain set of circumstances and it's not that is not important, it's a step in the right direction but it's not functional yet. So maybe a child can make the I love you hand shape but can't label an airplane spontaneously. Or maybe a child can label colors on flash cards, my favorite, but can't answer the question do you want your green shirt or red shirt? That's the functional skills that -- those are the functional skills we are looking for. So again as we assess our children's progress, we are looking at the whole child, but language will be naturally our biggest focus. And we can break language down into five different areas and I have sort of used a term that a teacher might use and a term that a speech language pathologist might use in this slide one on top of the other and they both essentially mean the same thing. So the production, how the child produces the words, the vocabulary, how many words does a child know. The morphology, the parts of the word and does the child know that -- what we call sometimes the E.R. marker, the person marker can be combined to make teacher and pilot -- we don't say pli-er in English but we use the airplane and person marker to sign pilot in ASL or worker, does the child understand those parts of words.



Connected language, how does the child put words together. Do they make sense. Can they combine words to create new meanings and pragmatics, the use of language.

So what I argue here is that teachers and SLP's talk a lot about vocabulary, connected language, about production, but what we are really missing is that pragmatics piece. So we need to make sure that our children can use language for different purposes. Can change language for their partner for situations. And can follow rules for conversations and story telling. And even preschoolers can do this. It is not something that comes in once the other pieces of language are in place. And in the interest of time, I'm going to breeze over the next couple of slides that sort of define further pragmatics. Again, I want to revisit this question that we are trying to talk about. How are we evaluating children's progress. I told you what we need to look at and how we need to weight it and how we evaluate children's progress. So the question is Ho what is success and what is success to that family and that child. And I'm really not going to answer that question today because research has not conclusively demonstrated when more or different intervention is needed. It's not a certain number of month delay or percentage of a delay or could it be if they are not making six months of growth in six month's time and in that case are we looking at chronological age or are we looking at the compounding factors of late identification or listening age for children who are using the amplification. What we need to do is use a combination of family values and good judgment and a sense of urgency to look at that whole child as I mentioned before. And the cognitive and social skills of your child should not be held back while we are waiting for language to click. There is a little bit of guidance from the joint committee on infant hearing again. They say that a child should be within one standard deviation which means a little bit below or a little bit above what we consider the exactly middle -- the exact average so we know that not all children will get the exact same score but everybody will fall in that average -- most children will fall in that average range. And we want to make sure that they meet expectations otherwise they get appropriate adaptations. That's very vague. How do we know if our children are meeting expectations. Here are resources that I would like to start to point you to and I encourage you to ask your teachers and ask your providers, ask the people on your team how do I know if my child is meeting milestones in general child development in overall language

development. In ASL development.

Again, here are some places that I encourage you to start.

And then if our child is not meeting those expectations, if we review those resources and we realize something is not going -- something is not going quite right we could be doing more what can we do? So here are just a few suggestions. We can take a look at the environment and see is there interference? Do we need to make the environment more accessible as we talked about earlier. We can look at input. Always, always check a Deaf child's vision. Always, always think about language models. The Deaf and hard-of-hearing role models as peers. And then we can also look at output, whether there are any physical or medical conditions. Whether we need motor intervention or anything like that.

Additionally, we can see if the expectations are really there. Is there buy-in from all care givers. I know day care is a huge barrier for a lot of children who are using ASL as their primary language. What about those intentional language teaching strategies? Is everybody using them and is everybody using them consistently? And then we can add additional visual support. So these are in ABC order. Just for the sake of not the order in which I recommend them. But alternative and augmentive communication so low-tech might be pictures and that doesn't mean the signs go away. That doesn't mean that you stop using the signs but the signs are only there for the time you are signing and then they disappear where the pictures are there for long enough for the child to process. So sometimes that support is very important for children. And then high-tech might be more of a device, a communication device that a child may need to use in conjunction with ASL. ASL, of course, can be used as an additional visual support if it's not in the picture. Cued language is another visual support to give kids access to spoken language. And speech reading if kids are working on spoken language.

So finally I want to ask what do we do if children -- if parents, you're feeling like, I like those choices for somebody else, but it's not what I picked. It's not what I chose for my family. And the point I want to make just very quickly is that informed choice is really what families need to be thinking of. So it's not just a matter of I picked my baby's name. I picked my baby's nursery color and I picked my baby's communication

method. When the information that you have changes as your child grows and changes, your choice may change. And that's okay.

So there is a book called the gardener and the carpenter by Alison Gopnik. This is the analogy I like it talk. Parenting is not like being a carpenter. You don't get a blue print and you follow the instructions and you know exactly what you are going to get. It's much more like being a gardener where you know what you are starting with and you know what inputs you might need but you don't need if we need a little more of this and less of this and at what time and when we do some pruning. So you may go through some stages of choice and change. Where you start from parent driven and child reactive to ultimately child driven and parent reactive. And what I just want to encourage you to think about is the fact that it's okay to make a change. It's okay to add an additional visual support. It might not be forever or it might be and if that's what your child needs then that's okay. It's just good parenting.

So just in summary, we talked about these intentional language teaching strategies, making things interesting, accessible, meaningful, interactive, supported and also challenging. And then when we evaluate success, whatever success means for that child and your family, we want to look at the whole child and their functional skills in all areas of language. And if things aren't working, what do we do? We need to become good gardeners and be responsive to our children.

That's all I have with just a few minutes left for questions.

>> Thank you so much. This is Will again from NCHAM and I'm going to move things around on our screen for a minute. I'm going to open up our questions box here -- over on the left. So that -- woops, sorry about that. All right. There is our questions box. If any of you have any comes or questions for Louise, this would be where you would type those. Give than we are close to the end of our webinar today, Louise, are you open to having people contact you via e-mail if they have something that doesn't get addressed today?

>> Yes, absolutely.

>> Yeah, so Louise's e-mail address is under her name here in the today's presenter field that you see in front of you there.

Our first question is, can you recommend ASL mother goose resources?

>> So the resource that I mentioned is from off the top of my head I think it's the Ontario cultural society for the Deaf or something along those lines. And like I mentioned, it's out of print, but it is not mother goose nursery rhymes as you might be thinking of them in English translated into ASL. But it's ASL nursery rhymes that have rhythm and rhyme that originate in ASL and teach those concepts in ASL and there are copies circulating around. Like I said in libraries, hopefully if you are in an early intervention programs your teachers may have access to it. And it really teaches those concepts in ASL rather than losing the rhythm and rhyme when we translate from one language to another.

>> And the next question is, where can I find information about more than one spoken language in the home for children with hearing loss?

>> What a wonderful question. Off the top of my head I can't answer that question, but if that person would like to e-mail me I would be happy to look into some things and see what we can find together.

>> And once again, Louise's e-mail address is right in the middle of the screen, Louise.g.Rollins@gmail.com.

The next question is about whether beyond the handout that you have available today whether there are any elements of your slides that are available for people and where.

>> I guess that question might be for will. Is my power point presentation available to attendees or can I make that available somehow?

>> You would make it if you would like to and we can send it out to those who registered if you would like that.

>> That would be great. Yes.

>> Okay. Any other questions from folks here as we -- let's see here. Do you recommend Deaf or hard-of-hearing children attend a Deaf or hard-of-hearing preschool or a preschool with hearing children?

>> Whoa, that is the eternal question for children transferring from toddlers to preschool program. It depends on what your child's strengths and needs are at the moment and what your family goals are and so if maybe balanced bilingualism and bimodalism with ASL and spoken language is a goal then time around hearing peers is important to you. Understanding that they also need time around signing peers and sign language models. Or if your child is showing that they have significant delays and really need a first language foundation and really need more access to signing role models then maybe that's more of a priority for your family.

>> What I really hear embedded in both of question and the answer is about is there a one size fits all solution? And I think you have a reaction to that suggestion, right?

>> Right. There really isn't. If there were a program that was meeting everybody's needs we would all know about it.

>> We have a lot of great innovative programs trying innovative things but no one has found the answer yet, unfortunately.

>> Can you give more examples of what you mean by bracketing?

>> Sure. Bracketing can be anything that is less challenging, more challenging, less challenging. That may be signing the word, finger spelling it and then signing it again. Or maybe if it's something that has a synonym, I'm thinking of English examples and not ASL examples. Maybe you use two different signs for strawberry in your community. And so you want to use the known sign and then the new sign that maybe the child will encounter at the baby-sitter or at school and bracket that, close the bracket with the familiar sign. Or the sign -- the spoken word, the signed word. You want to always pair familiar or less challenging with new or more challenging.

>> And the next question and we will have one more after this and then we will be at the top of the hour. This question reads, how does one find peers for the Deaf child to interact with?

>> That really would depend on your geographic area and what resources are available to you. I would say the first place to start would probably be your local Deaf program or state school for the Deaf. And if they are not located anywhere near you,

hopefully they have some outreach programs or some play groups. If your state has a Hands & Voices chapter, that's another great way to reach out to other parents and see if there are play dates either less organized just let's meet up at the park on this day or more formal get-togethers and workshops and family events.

>> The next question is, and this will be our final question for today. I just became a family trainer a few months ago. I am Deaf so I'm curious, what is your advice for me to meet with a hearing family who has no concept of ASL. Communicating without interpreter present. I know there are a few ways for that, but which way is the best?

>> Again, as I kind of implied earlier, I'm not a fan of one size fits all approaches, but I do think that some of the time you need to be writing when the information you have is more in-depth than you want to make sure that family understands it clearly. And then I think other times you need to be gesturing and communicating visually and showing the family it's not just about the sign vocabulary you know, but it's about thinking visually. Because too many hearing people that I see are just so vexed by you are moving your hands and I don't know sign language so I don't understand what you are saying but you may not need to sign to communicate. You may just be able to start with basic gestures and get them some more comfortable and more confident with visual communication.

>> Well, Louise, I want to thank you for your -- all the time you put in today's preparation for today's webinar and for your excellent delivery. And by the way, changing to this other phone worked great. So that would be great for next week. Do you want to make a comment about next week's webinar?

>> Sure. Next week's webinar will be very similar but we will be focused on professionals. I see that we had a couple of professionals here. Please don't feel like you need to repeat but we will sort of balance the information a little bit differently and go into assessment and reporting and pragmatics a little bit more in-depth. If anybody has seen this, they are largely similar.

>> So if you know of anybody who ought to come. It's the same time, same place, same link. Invite people to come to next week's webinar that will be of a similar nature. Before you all go away, there is a live link on your screen. If you could

kindly click on that and answer a few questions for us about today's webinar that always helps us on a steady slope towards improvement. Again, thank you, Louise and thank you to our captioner and our other technical assistants backgrounds folks for your expertise in making this a positive learning experience for all of us. Thank you to all of you who attended and for all you do to support children who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing and their families. Good day, everyone!