



'Parental Communication Competence and Early Intervention'

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Background

- B.A. in Deaf Ed., M.A. in Early Intervention in Deaf Ed. - Fontbonne University
- Deaf Educator at Carle Auditory Oral School
- Certified as both a teacher and an early intervention provider
- Parent of 14-year-old bilateral CI user



Where this began:

1

Fontbonne University's Master's program "Learning Project"

2

Student poster at 2016 EHDI (won outstanding student poster!)

3

Article to appear in "Volta Voices"

4

HERE!

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graph TD; A[Baby communicates] --> B[Parent responds]; B --> C[Baby learns to trust]; C --> D[Parent confidence grows]; D --> A;
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Parent confidence grows

Baby communicates

Parent responds

Baby learns to trust

1. Crying
2. Eye contact
3. Cooing

Communication
begins the moment
a
child is born.

1. Responds with voice
2. Responds physically
3. Plays

But what happens when the cycle is interrupted?

Parent tries to soothe with voice



Baby gets more upset

Baby begins to lose trust

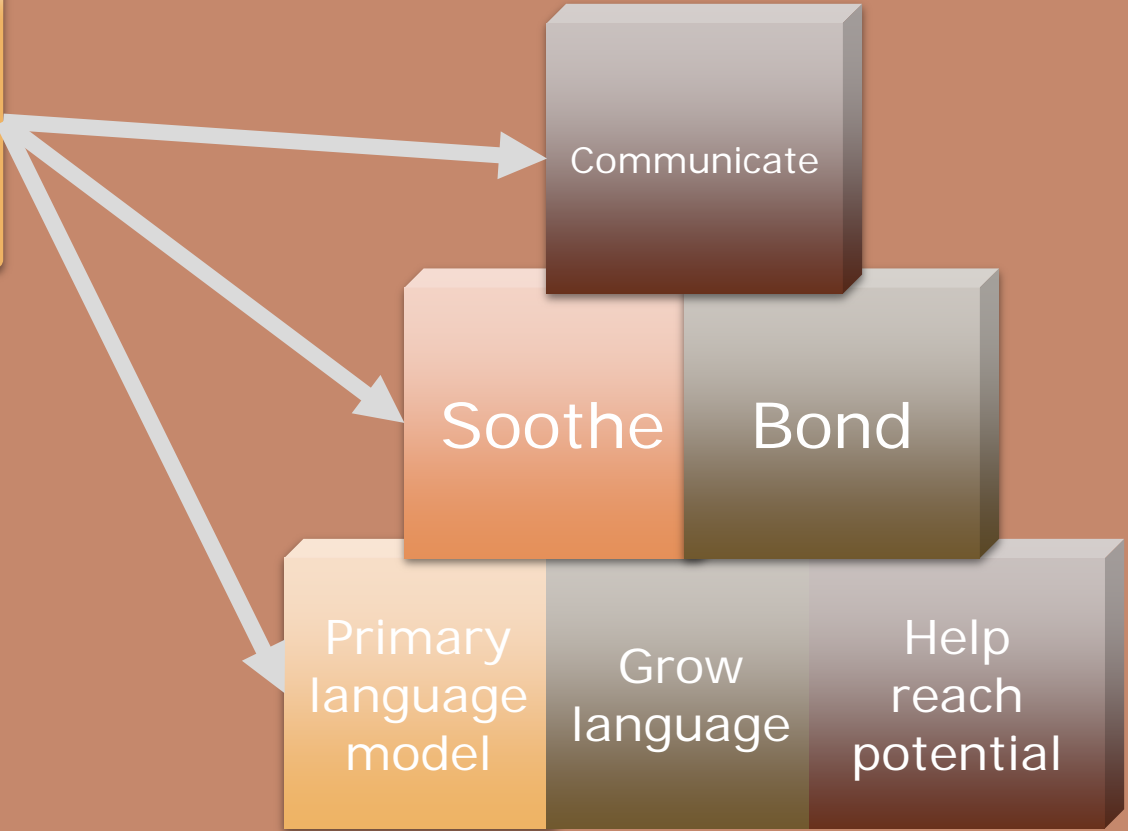
Parent loses confidence

Bonding is affected





Parents of children with hearing loss



Parent quote

“In the beginning, I felt like I'd been given the wrong kid because there was no way I was good enough to meet his needs. I was sure I'd screw up & make wrong choices on his behalf.”





**Ages
>1 to
24
years**

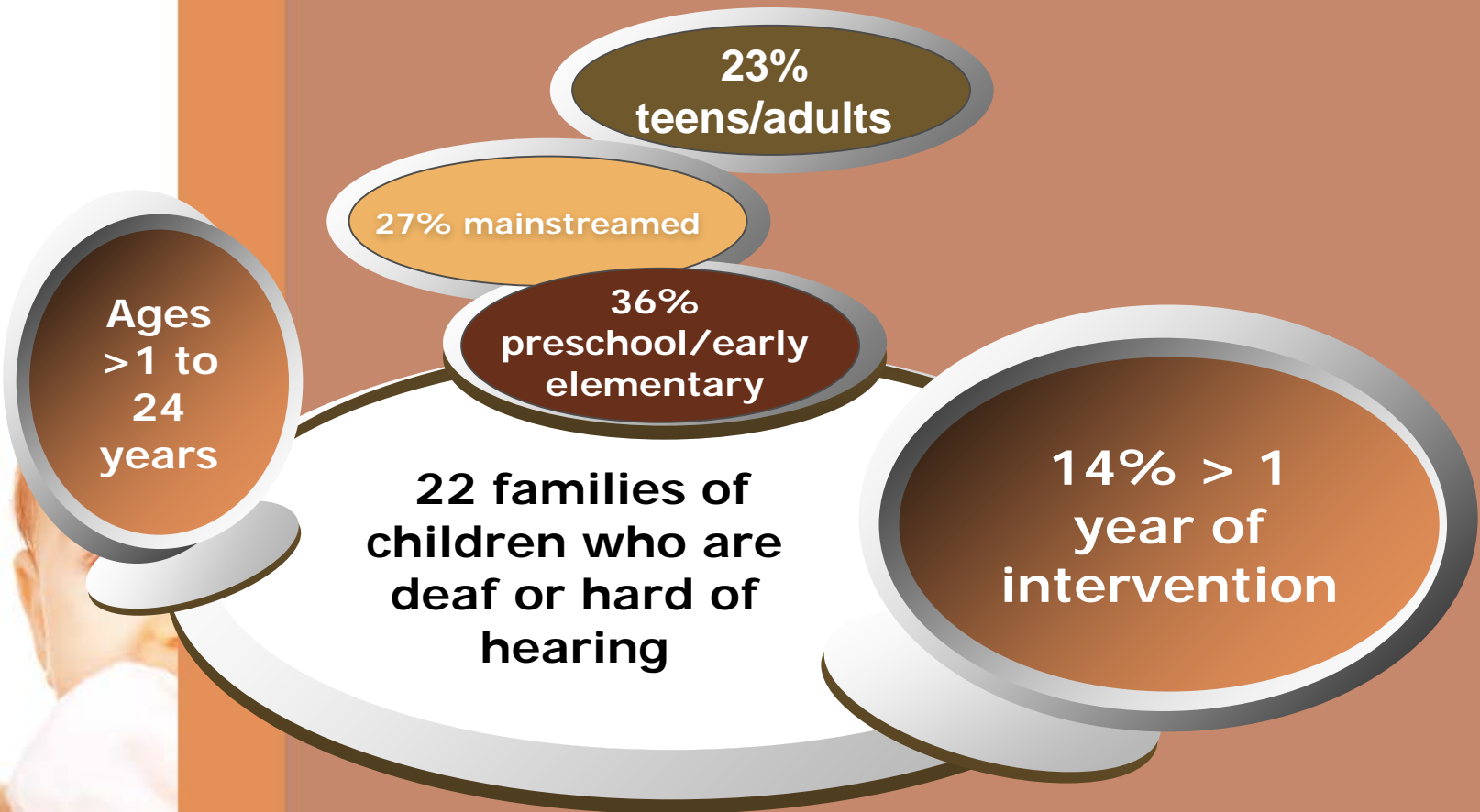
**31% Sign + Spoken
Language**

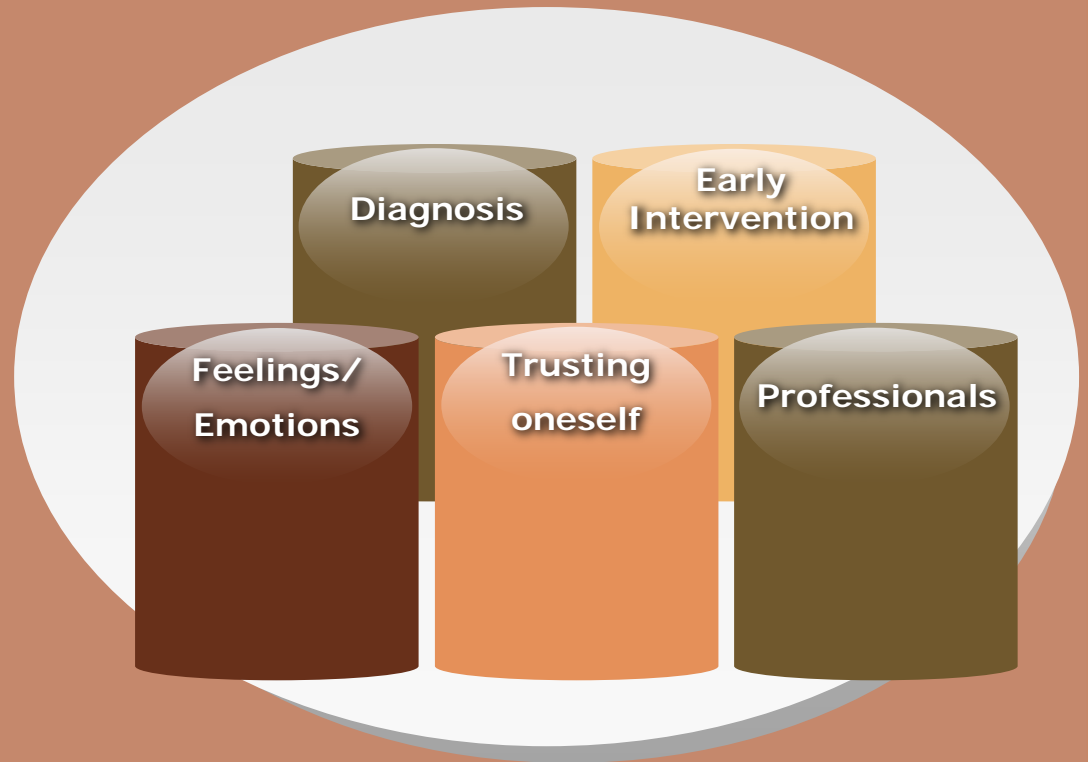
23% ASL Users

**46% spoken
language only**

**22 families of
children who are
deaf or hard of
hearing**

**20 typical
hearing,
1 mixed,
1 Deaf
parents**





Parents described experiences & emotions about their ability to communicate with their child

And role of professionals in building their communication competence

Findings

- Parents were extremely confident in their ability to communicate with their child.
- Many of them expressed that they had struggled with knowing how to develop a shared language and with grief.
- They also reported that once they were given tools they gained confidence and the skills to develop communication in their family.
- This parental confidence was evident regardless of language used or communication methodology.
- The confidence was very dependent on having access to professionals who helped the family build their skills.



Parent quotes

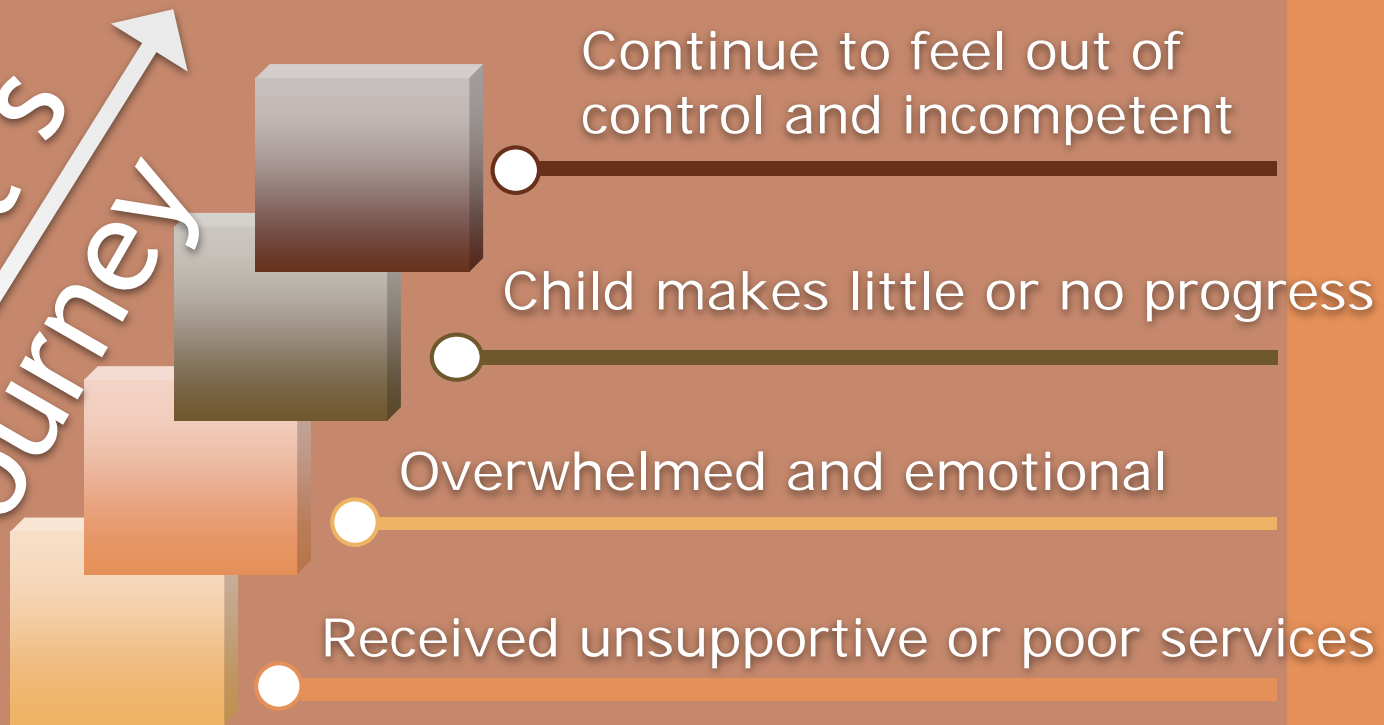
“I feel like diagnosis and the years to follow is like living in a tornado, You're just swept up in a world with new language, life is full of appointments, and you become a fighter.”

“When he was first diagnosed I did not know you could teach a deaf or hard of hearing child to talk. I was devastated. We began early intervention when he was a few weeks old with an oral school for the deaf. At first I felt really uncomfortable, unprepared, uneducated, overwhelmed, angry, sad, and unsure if he would ever talk and be a part of the hearing world.”





Parent's Journey



Parent quotes

“I feel like he's so far behind and I feel like it's my fault. My biggest concern has always been that I won't be able to teach him what I need to...and I was right.”

“EI did nothing for me but harass me. I taught myself sign language. And then I taught him. I had to have a way to communicate with him. So I found it. And I held on for dear life.”





Parent's Journey



Parent quotes

“I am confident in my ability to teach and improve [my son’s] language and communication skills ONLY because we have been an active part of his therapy and appointments since day one.”

“I do feel competent to communicate with my children. I learned so much from our therapist who was amazing. I ended up taking [my child] every week because I felt she really supported our family and was a perfect fit for us.”



Parent quotes

“I really needed the direction of their early intervention specialists at first, but now I feel like I've got it down. It does still help when their SLP's remind me of something they notice that maybe I've overlooked, though.”

“In the last 6-9 months, despite the fact that she has a significant speech delay, I'm worried that I'm not crying and as concerned as I was the first 3 years after she was diagnosed. I know there is not one single thing that I haven't done for helping her develop speech and language. At this point it is just a matter of time.”





Thank You!

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