So, today we will be talking about our language assessment program and what we have learned. Many of you may have gone to the presentation yesterday, Matt, Jenny, all the other presenters about language assessment. A few of you. Ok. So, I want to explain briefly about that program. It's the LAP. Language assessment program. LAP.

Oh, my goodness. Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Erin Schuweiler. I am the coordinator of the early intervention program for Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the state of Kansas. And you forgot the other part.

>> Hello my name is Twila Latini. I am also part of the LAP program. My primary work is early intervention, 0-3 age group. Welcome to the last session of the day, survivors.

>> So, we are both heavily involved in the LAP program. And that is why we are here today. To present to you how that applies to our early intervention work.

Just briefly, timeline. How kids get to us. There's a screening. Diagnosis. Direct to early intervention program. Huh-uh. Look. Sorry, we are going to switch.

Ok. I am going to switch back to English. Ok. I think -- gotta it. Sorry.' ok. So, yep. Where do you want to be? Ok. Ok.

So, newborn hearing screening program, diagnosis, all runs just how you think it would. We do a great job in Kansas of getting those kids screened and to diagnosis and they get a direct referral to the statewide early intervention program. Of from there, we hope that the early intervention program will call us and many times they do. And so we provide that specific expertise and support for our children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Once they are in our program, we will then add the language assessment program on top of that. So, they will get the language assessment program that allows us to drive our intervention, what we learn from the assessments and move forward. So our language assessment program, the law passed in 2016 through a lead K bill. I believe we were the second state to pass that bill. And so we were super exciteed about it. Our bill was to assess, monitor and track the language mast oh, n, birth to 8. We took that to mean all Deaf and Hard of Hearing children regardless of hearing levels. We also took it straight through until they turn 9. What we wanted to do is just assess them annually for their whole school life. From birth all the way up. But, we went to nine. So we stretched it as far as we could go. We were assessing in ASL or English. We recognize that there are other languages that families are using and we honor and respect them as part of our early intervention processes and we are also still tweaking and working on language assessment program to honor and respect and work hundred can we better support those families with children. For the purposes of the law, ASL and English are the two which are assessed.

Obviously our outcomes are to make sure we identify the gaps and delays so we can catch them early. We also want age-appropriate language. We don't care which language that is. We just want it to be age appropriate. And we want them to be kindergarten ready.

So, these are -- I'm not going to go through these, I will let you read. And we, I have heard that it's kind of hard to read but hopefully if you need this presentation, we will be happy to send it to you. We were terrible about getting it loaded. But we will share this.

It's not a secret. But these are the assessments we use in birth to 3. There are additional assessments that we use from 3 through 8. But these are the ones that are specifically used for birth to 3. The language samples I want to highlight. We do -- I'll talk in a second about our research but we do a play language sample for 20 minutes. And we are using that to guide our assessments. Or to score our assessments. I am also going to talk about the ASL English language milestones document. For our children with additional disabilities or additional needs, deaf hard of hearing-plus, we also use the communication matrix. Each child is the type of assessment we use is determined by the child.

So this is a picture of one page of our ASL and English milestones document. You will notice at the top there are three different categories. Receptive language, expressive language and social language. So, we know there's lots of pieces of language but when we developed this document we decided those are the three that would really tell us the most about our Deaf and Hard of Hearing children. Those were the three that we identified. At the very top, it's all Black, although I don't think the colors are showing very well. But those top ones are all things that happen in general for almost all languages. So, these are ones that happen in both ASL and English. So, you will notice there's an A and an E so we can check whether they are doing them in ASL or whether they are doing them in English.

At the bottom, we identified things that happen only in ASL or only in English. So the pink is ASL and the blue is English. Depending on the child and the language or languages they are using we may have both checked. This is an example of a child using both languages. So how we determined whether or not they met their milestones is by looking at the milestones at their age level. So, for example, a child, I'll steal Jenna's comment from yesterday. If the child is 32 months we need them to have a check box on every single mark on this particular page and all the ones below it. So 24 to 30 months and below need 100%. We have high expectations for our kids. So we went with that. Until the research shows us that we should look at something different.

So, did I forget anything about that part? So individual skills in ASL and English a are at the bottom.

>> There's a question. Do we use ASL and English in parallel? Do we do that assessment together? And, no.

But then it depends on the kids. We are often looking at them alone. And spending about an hour interviewing with the parents during play. So, it could be a unique case that both of us go maybe with a baby or someone that, a kid that a little bit older but we usually do that separately. The assessment separately. Another question is with English, that's done by an SLP?

>> Not necessarily to be honest. So I do some of the English assessments as well. It's by someone trained to be a language assessment program specialist. So, we go through a very specific training related to the assessments for both the ASL and the English. So whoever is giving the ASL assessment has to have certain criteria and follow a certain training program and same for English. It could be an SLP. It could be an ECSC. That's a great question, though.

So we were fortunate enough to have someone who was interested in what we were doing. So, Dr. Jenna McDaniel, she, when we met her, she was at the University of Kansas. And, so we started a partnership with her. She has since moved to Vanderbilt University but she took our study with her, so our research, so we were very excited to be able to continue. Then we added on Dr. Garret, Sacramento state and Dr. Matt Hall at Temple who is partnering with us to really help us, A, learn more about kids who are deaf or hard of hearing and their language needs, but also to help us drive what we do and be better early intervention providers.

So, we are so excited because we feel like the data is starting to roll and so that's like our picture. Everybody gets data now. So we are so excited. To start seeing the results of what our gut-level has always told us.

I know that as we were waiting for the data to come, waiting for enough data to be available for Jenna to be able to share with us, we were all kind of having discussions in our team and having these like -- are you seeing this pattern? I'm seeing this pattern. Do you see this gap? I'm seeing this gap. So to have it confirmed by the data was super exciting for us. I think I said it over and over. We have been geeing out on the data like crazy. It's been fun. Now we will share with you some of what we are figuring out.

This is a lovely chart that Jenna has put together to help us. On the left just to be clear is ASL. On the right is English. You can't read it and you don't need to. The top is strengths or things that almost all of our kids do or can do when we do the milestones document. And the bottom is skills that maybe not all of our children are getting all the time. So we -- she took that for us and then she -- I love it because we didn't do any of this work. We just get to benefit. So, she took it and gave us like kind of the summary of all of these things. So that we could start getting confirmation about what we are doing.

Am I forgetting anything? Am I ok? I know. Time. Ok.

>> So I'll start, we start recognizing then on the left the English and the age at 18 to 24 months. We recognized some strengths that we noticed that are similar with the kids that use ASL. Or if they use both. 50 words or more. And then using one-word utterances, that's wonderful to recognize. Those strengths in both languages.

One of the things we noticed that was different was with the younger kids, there were more intentional with some of those words. Go ahead with the next one.

>> This is just -- we will just show 18 to 24 months. We have it all the way to forever. But we are just going to give you a quick picture of what it looks like for us when we get the information. And then we are going to just so you know take that, we have pulled out some that we feel are super important that we want to share with you and kind of some ideas of what to do. So we will -- this is just one age group that we are showing you.

>> Yes. Kind of like a snapshot. And then we look and we do a comparison. It seems that, I hate to use the word "weak areas "or those that have yet to be met. But those weak areas or areas of improvement that we see gaps in. Maybe it's our job then to try to help them fill in those gaps. Right? So we see 18 to 24 months if you notice up here, take a look. If you remember the SC stands for social communication and the E is for expressive and the R is for receptive skills. And those are the different categories that we measure.

We want a little bit more here. If you can't read -- ok, let me read it for you. Finding the strengths and weaknesses is great. But how do we do what we really need to do in intervention? So we recognize those strengths and we recognize those weaknesses. But why is it important for us to be involved? That's kind of the question there. And this is what our data has shown us.

So, 84% of our children are not meeting their milestones. They aren't checking all of those boxes on the form that I showed you. That's a big deal. And this is three years of data. We will have more.

>> I thought someone had a question.

>> For the spoken English, for the 18 to 24 months, is that chronological age or listening age?

>> It would be chronological. Yeah.

>> Ok.

>> So, anyway, this -- sorry -- can we just hold maybe hold questions until the end? Sorry, sorry, I just want to make sure we get to the intervention part. And we will stay. There's nothing after us. So, we will chat with you all day.

Ok. So, this is ASL, both ASL and English. These are kids that were tested in ASL and English. Or both SAL and English, or just ASL, or just English, they are not meeting their milestones. Ok.

>> So it's a spiral. As educators it's important for to us think about building that schemata and looking at the gaps and building that spiral so those gaps impact our data and we are absolutely able to recognize that and seeing why those gaps are there and going back to the beginning of that spiral, if you will, using that as a metaphor and look at those gaps and seeing, you know, maybe that we are recognizing more and more gaps along the way. But we want to go back and fill in those gaps from the beginning so that spiral is complete. It's important to be kindergarten ready. Oftentimes we see those gaps later in kindergarten. That really shows us, those snapshots, if you will, really show us where we need those, to fill in those gaps from zero to 8.

>> One example here of a gap is understanding common verbs. Concepts. Understanding time concepts. And, encouraging -- rather than encouraging families to label, we just want them to include, you know, the dog is running. Just include more of those common-used phrases and verbs together rather than pointing. But really expanding on that language and being more involved and purposeful. Oftentimes, hearing parents will think well, I am going to do this tomorrow, I have done this yesterday. But, make sure that you include that timeline, that marker, linguistically. That we will do that when. Tomorrow, we are going to go to such and such. And this isn't age-specific. We looked at 18 months to 48 months. There's a range that we looked at. Often what was missing, we saw even with older high school kids is, that they were not able to define and describe certain things. Even as a young child, they were having trouble with that. Maybe they were not able to see if they missed something, something was gone, they were not able to describe what's missing. We took something off the table. Tell me what's missing. That's basic linguistic skills and that's in the receptive language column.

>> Here are just a few from the receptive portion of English. Completing to requests with one object. Give me the ball. Or actually, throw the ball and give the ball to mom. Something with the ball. I won't come up with great examples now because we are now hurrying. Following commands with two or three attributes. So give me the big blue ball. And then attending to longer stories. 10 to 15-minute stories and like Twila said, it ranges from young kids all the way up. We just picked out a few that were kind of big and we worked on those, we thought it would help you. If we picked out the big ones that we thought needed work. Just some ideas for just realizing we need to increase the intentionality in our use of request from that child.

So I think we often keep it super simple like, you know, no, don't touch. Or, you know -- oh, ball? Ball. Ball. We need to expand our vocabulary with our kids and expand our intentionality around giving them requests. And ensuring those vocabulary's present so that we can practice following those commands. We start with routine items and following routine commands and then expanding those commands that are a little less routine. Families are not used to thinking about how to expand commands beyond just those simple routine commands. And then just increasing the amount of book reading. Trying to emphasize the really importance of the language that we get when we read books with children. That really goes for ASL and English. But --

>> Expressive language, we saw a lot of gaps with lexicolization. That impacts the child to be able to express and even use simple finger-spelled words. And then WH questions is very unclear. They answer but they never themselves are able to ask those WH questions. So, oftentimes if you just ask can you tell me a little bit more? That will encourage them to do that. And then the grammatical structure and the meaning of multiple meaning words, like the bear. I was hungry for a bear or the caterpillar, think about the Apple and the caterpillar. using more details and vocabulary. They may not have skills yet but exposing them how to use those particular parts of language will then encourage their ASL or English storytelling. Using those little details filling that in when you are using the language. I feel like I'm being rushed. We are running out of time.

Ok. So for English, expressive, I will just highlight the asking questions is one that happened in both languages. We thought that was really fascinating. Our kids, we are checking the becomes on they can answer those questions but we were not seeing them ask those questions. And so that's one that really impacted us as a group to say whoa. We need to be working on this and starting earlier with families about hey, why don't you have Johnny go into the other room and ask dad what he's doing. And how could we help families model that? How could we, so we talked about like go with him and model what does it look like when we ask dad what he's doing? And then helping the families encourage that child to independently ask those questions. That was one that I think impacted us just as a whole for both languages. The ability to ask questions. Then think about the spiral. If I ask questions I am more curious, I get more vocabulary back, more language back, when we answer those questions for them. This was one that I think really hit.

The other one to highlight on expressive is the variety of two-word sentences. So, often our kids were getting two-word sentences, but they were the same two-word sentences over and over and over. You know. More eat. More drink. More please. So, "more" was attached to all of it. So we weren't getting the variety of especially with action words and descriptive words which of course we know it's historically a challenge for kids but, the spiral impact of not having those vocabulary in your system means you can't create those longer sentences.

And it starts way back when they are like 18 to 24 months. So just helping families add those vocabulary and being more intentional and determining routines where they can work on those.

>> I'm just going to pick one. Asking for help using two words. So maybe you don't know that the child might be using "help" to mean that ironically asking for help and help, help this and pointing, doesn't include an action word. So, help, help tie my shoes, help mom clean, oftentimes families are not using those particular linguistic skills. They are just taking it on themselves. And that was really fascinating to look at. It's pretty simple. But --

And then I'll just pick one for English, too, for the social communication. So, requesting clarification and again, I think actually this one hit both languages, too. We just didn't highlight it in ASL. But, so saying things like -- what? What did you say? Huh? So our kids aren't doing that. They don't know they are missing it. They don't know they should ask for more information. And it's happening in both ASL and English. I obviously picked it for English just to give us some variety of stuff to look at. But, so we need to really model that. So, I need o to model talking with dad and saying -- wait. What did you say? Huh? Oh, I didn't hear you or I didn't see what you said. So, just I think that was one that really again hit us and what's the spiral effect of that? They can't repair conversations. They can't get more information. They don't know they missed something so they can't ask for that extra information. So -- so those were some that really kind of impacted us and in ways that we need to start modeling in the home. So that when the children get to school age, they know that they need to ask for more information or get that clarification.

So, overall, these were kind of the big keys that we thought, realized, is that we all need, as early interventionists have to be more explicit in what we are helping families with. We need to be clear with families about the general gaps that are showing up that we are seeing and how can we work on those. And we need to be able to help families by modeling it into their daily routines. Again, we can't add to their plate. I am a mom. I know that adding anything to my plate right now would push it way over the edge. So, we need to figure out how to embed that in the routines they are already doing so that the families can naturally do it and help that child pick up on that language. And just even educating families. I feel like we have all started to really have conversations with families about hey, here's what we are noticing. We are noticing a lot of our children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing aren't doing this, this and this. So, we are going to work on that. Let's work on that together. I feel like our families have really been kind of motivated by that. Like oh! Ok, yeah. Let's work on that. So, just given the knowledge that their children might struggle with that, gives them that motivation to work on it.

So we hope that you will reflect a little bit on things that impacted you today and things that maybe you could implement in practice and -- I am really looking forward to more of the data funneling down so that we can drive our practice and improve what we do. So we are here. Like I said, no one comes after us, so -- thank you so much. So, yeah, we will take questions although I think -- the interpreters probably need to stop. So maybe if you want to come up, we both can sign. And -- I can help facilitate language, too. So -- thank you so much.

>> Yes, thank you so much. Wish we could share more.