Using Assessments and Documentation to Guide Natural Language Opportunities for Children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

EHDI

March 5, 2019

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**Learning Objectives**

1. Participants will be able to describe what natural language learning opportunities are and why they are important for the deaf or hard of hearing child.
2. Participants will be able to name and implement two different examples of strategies to use during a home visit that support natural language learning opportunities for the family.
3. Participants will be able to name one new tool and one form of documentation they can implement in their own programs when they return to their states.

Naural Language Opportunities occur within daily routines.

* Playing outside at a park
* Discovering a new toy
* Being fed solid food for the first time

Natural Language Opportunites occur…

* Across many environments (e.g., snack time at home and at school)
* During sensory experiences (e.g., making playdough, playing with tinfoil, noticing a shadow, using a sensory table with different materials)
* Using rhymes and rhythms (e.g., Who’s Here song, body movements, transition songs, handshape songs, etc)
* Are replications of real life experiences and ongoing (e.g., learning how pizza is made, playing with pizza materials, making pictures of pizza, going to a pizza restaurant, and making their own pizza)
* Not only in the classroom! (e.g., trips to the fire station, pumpkin patch, food store, making smoothies at home)

Visual Communication and Sign Langugage (VCSL) assessment is used to document a child’s progression in American Sign Language, identify gaps or delays in language development, and incorporate strategies for skill-development during language opportunities.

* Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) shows language skills a child is currently working to develop
* Language and Communication Profile developed for each child, includes recommendations of language skills to support the child in developing

Documentation examples:

* Family Language Plan
* Learning Stories
* Daily Snapshots
* Home Visit notes
* PIP Instagram