

# Early Intervention and Beyond: Examining the Unique Contributions of Educators in Supporting Listening and Spoken Language Outcomes from Birth through 21

**Uma Soman, PhD, LSLS Cert AVEd**  
Carle Auditory Oral School, Urbana, IL

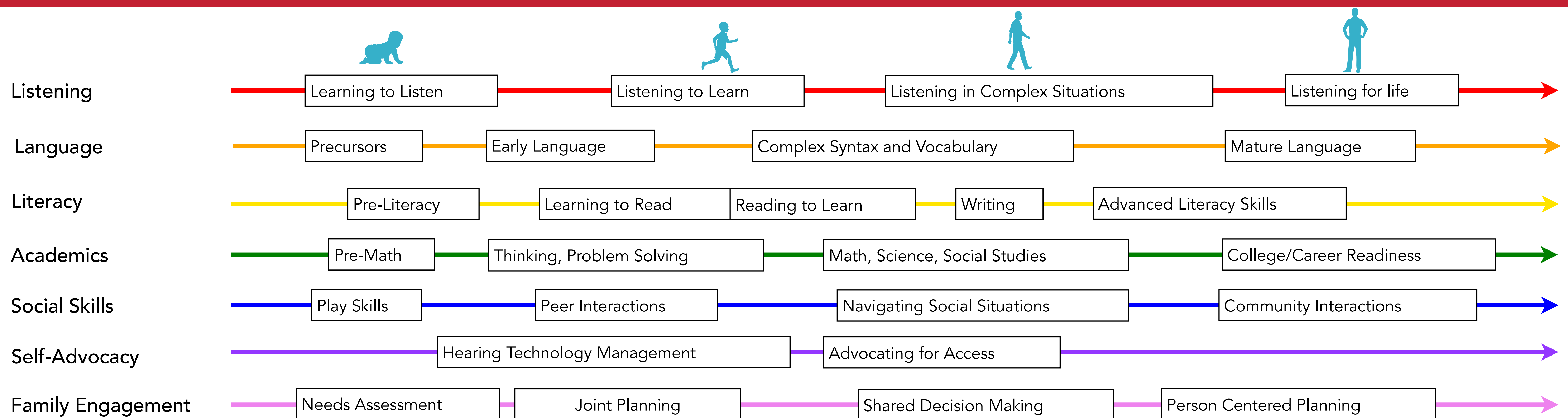
**Jenna Voss, PhD, CED, LSLS Cert AVEd**  
Fontbonne University, St. Louis, MO

**THE GOAL OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND SUPPORTS IS TO PREPARE CHILDREN TO LEAD ENVIABLE LIVES - PRODUCTIVE LIVES AND INCLUSIVITY OVER THE LIFESPAN (TURNBULL, 2013).**

## CURRENT SCENARIOS AND TRENDS

- A growing number of families of children who are deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) choose listening and spoken language (LSL) outcomes for their children. Currently, a small percentage of SLPs and educators have specialized training in development of LSL. Currently, 558 AVTs and 322 AVEd are certified Listening and Spoken Language Specialists globally, with 644 in the US (AGBell Academy, June 2019).
- A team of audiologists, otologists, speech language pathologists, educators of students who are DHH, and deaf mentors engaging in interprofessional practice can support families achieve their desired outcomes for their children. Unlike SLPs, few educators are members of CI teams, and departments of speech and hearing within medical settings.
- Many children who receive high-quality family-centered early intervention and LSL focused early childhood education are entering preschools and elementary schools with at or near age-appropriate skills in listening and language. To keep up with the ever expanding linguistic, academic, and social demands, children who are DHH might need intervention and/or monitoring for continued development in these areas.
- 74,000 children ages 3-21 receive special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) due to hearing impairment with educational significance (US Department of Education, OSERS, OSEP, 2016).
- Educators of students who are DHH serve in many roles within Part C (birth - 3) and Part B (3 - 21) settings - early interventionist, early childhood educator, self-contained classroom teacher, itinerant teacher, consultant. They provide individualized intervention in a variety of areas to students with diverse needs.

## FOCUS OF INTERVENTION PROVIDED BY EDUCATOR OF DHH STUDENTS



## HOW DOES YOUR WORK PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF "ENVIABLE LIVES"?

Reflect on your team's practices. Which areas of intervention are your strengths? What are your opportunities of growth?

What can be done to promote interprofessional practice?

How do systems seek and validate perspectives of DHH adults?

How do systems seek and validate perspectives of children and families across the lifespan?

Given limitations of billing and reimbursement, what are some opportunities to engage educators within clinic based intervention teams?

What is the impact of a mismatch between the diversity of the professional workforce and the children and families served?

What skill sets do professionals need to develop to best support a changing profile of DHH students?

How can educators support the outcomes of DHH students from linguistically diverse backgrounds?

What changes are needed in personnel preparation to best prepare the work force?

How can educators support the outcomes of DHH students with disability?