



What am I saying?

What my words and
actions communicate
to parents with DHH
children.



EHDI Conference, 3/7/23 1:45-2:15pm

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Quick Review: Self-Assessment



- 1) What do I believe it means to be deaf/hard of hearing?
- 2) What are my thoughts about it? Why? What are my experiences?
- 3) What kind of language do I use when I talk about it with coworkers? With families? With my close friends? Is it different? Why?
- 4) How do educational/ political/ medical policies impact my beliefs?
- 5) Do I do what I do because of my beliefs or because it's best for the child/family? How do I know?

Session

Goals



- Participants will identify specific words they use that may be harmful.
- Participants will examine their beliefs about people who are DHH.
- Participants will outline specific ways they will modify their words and actions

Who am I?



Parent



Researcher



Early Intervention
Provider



How Hearing Parents Construct Deafness Through Their Early Intervention Experience



- Online survey of hearing parents with DHH children (born after 2002)
- Asked their beliefs about deafness before and after their child was identified
- Volunteers for interviews
- Interviewees DHH child(ren) were under 4 (showing maximum impact of EI on construction)
- 3 Fathers and 2 Mothers
- Told about their EI experience
- Shared things people said to them that were upsetting

Families Share



Jason

"...robbing her of her deaf or hard of hearing identity."

Phil

"I'm so sorry to hear about your son. It's so terrible."

Danielle

"Signing is the lazy way out."

Jasmine

"Go straight ASL and that's all you do...or you're cochlear implant oral."

Matthew

"[Signing Deaf adults'] English skills are never good."



Someday they will be

Grown

A decorative illustration of a green fern frond and a white flower cluster, positioned behind the word "Grown".



Self-reflection

How do you really feel about deafness? Is being deaf a tragedy or celebration or somewhere in between? Why?

Do you think a DHH adult could do your job?



Where Can We Grow?



Step 1

- Analyze the words you use with families – take notes for a week.
- Could you choose more inclusive/affirming words?
- Challenge yourself to change something each week.

Step 2

- Analyze the words your agency/program uses with parents.
- Could you choose more inclusive/affirming words?
- Update your materials (pamphlets, website, etc.) to match.

Step 3

- Involve d/Deaf adults in your program – starting with getting feedback on your words/materials.
- Find ways for families to meet a variety of d/Deaf adults.
- Use both ASL/English.



Thank you



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QR code to my dissertation:

