

# Success with Spoken Language: what can we predict or control?

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2025 EHDI Conference

# My background

## PAST EMPLOYMENT:

- × 2 different public school systems
- × State School for the Deaf
- × Stints in preschool & high school

## CURRENTLY:

- × Early Intervention Teacher of the Deaf
- × Local Infants & Toddlers Program
- × Supporting American Sign Language, Cued American English, spoken language(s)

## Also:

Founding Member, Maryland/DC Hands & Voices  
CODA



# This session...

## IS NOT:

- × New research
- × A magic bullet
- × An unknown secret

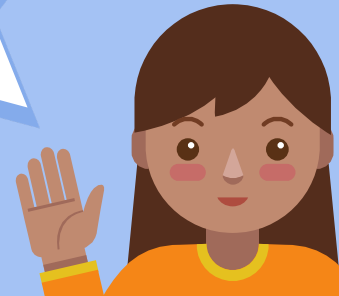
## IS:

- × A framework
- × A shift in perspective
- × Open to different interpretations



# Session objectives

- × State 2 **factors affecting outcomes** with spoken language that are **known to families in the first 6 - 12 months of life** , and 2 that are **not known** at that time.
- × State 2 **factors affecting outcomes** with spoken language that **families cannot influence** , and 2 factors that **families can influence** .
- × Explain 2 **strategies that families can implement to mitigate** those factors that are not immediately evident and/or not within their ability to influence.



# Success

What does it mean... to YOU?

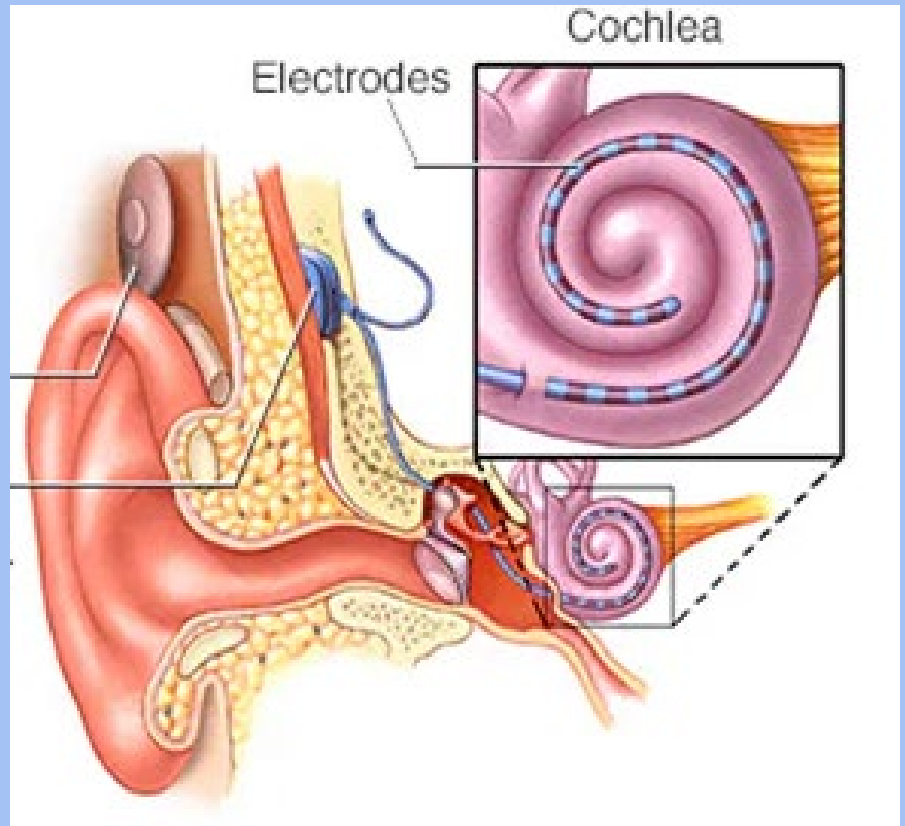




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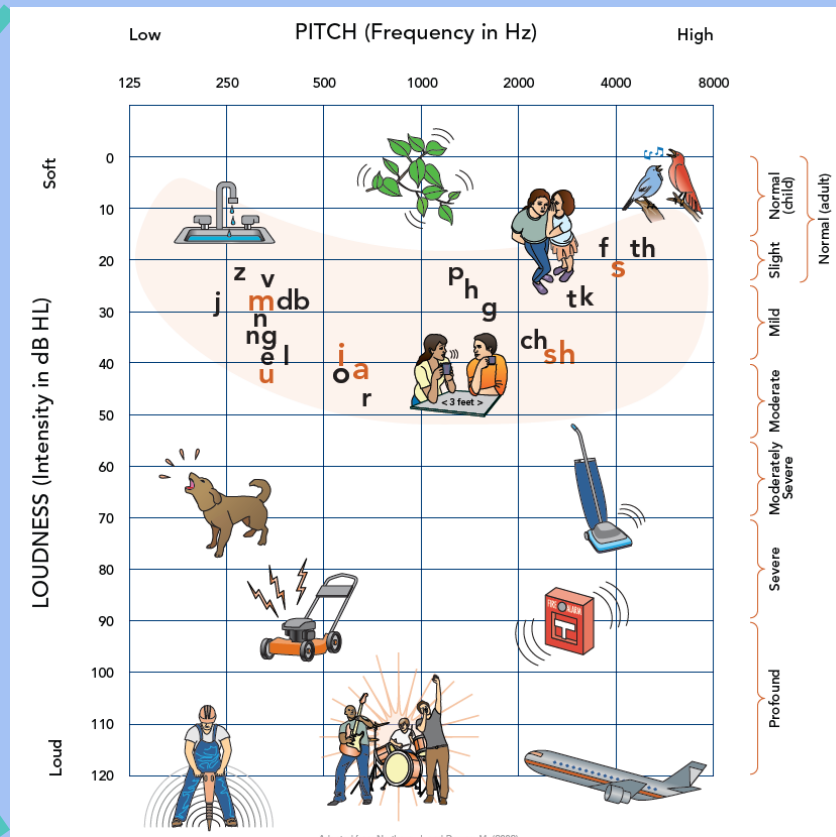


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Medical Professionals: surgical outcomes



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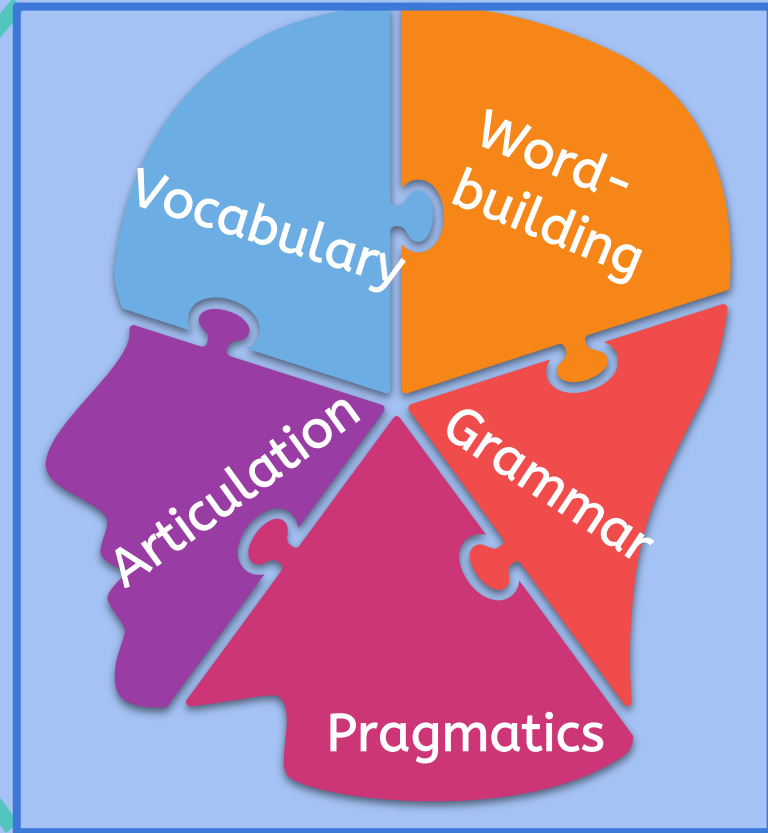
Source: Central Institute of the Deaf

# Audiologists: auditory access





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Therapists: auditory & language skills



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Creative arts  
Critical thinking  
Information literacy  
Literacy  
Metacognition  
Motor skills  
Numeracy  
Problem solving  
Science  
Social- emotional skills  
Social sciences

Educators: learning



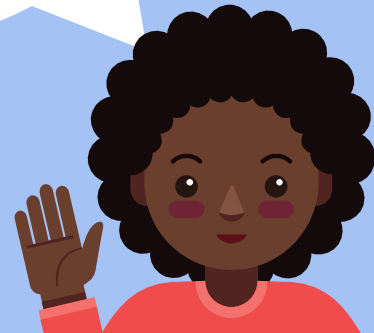
Identity  
Inclusion  
Independence  
Recreation  
Self- advocacy  
Social connections  
Work

Families: **COMMUNITY**  
AND... D/HH Adults

# Success



What does it mean to RESEARCHERS?

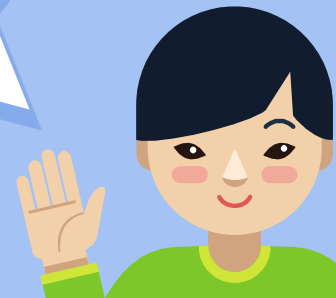


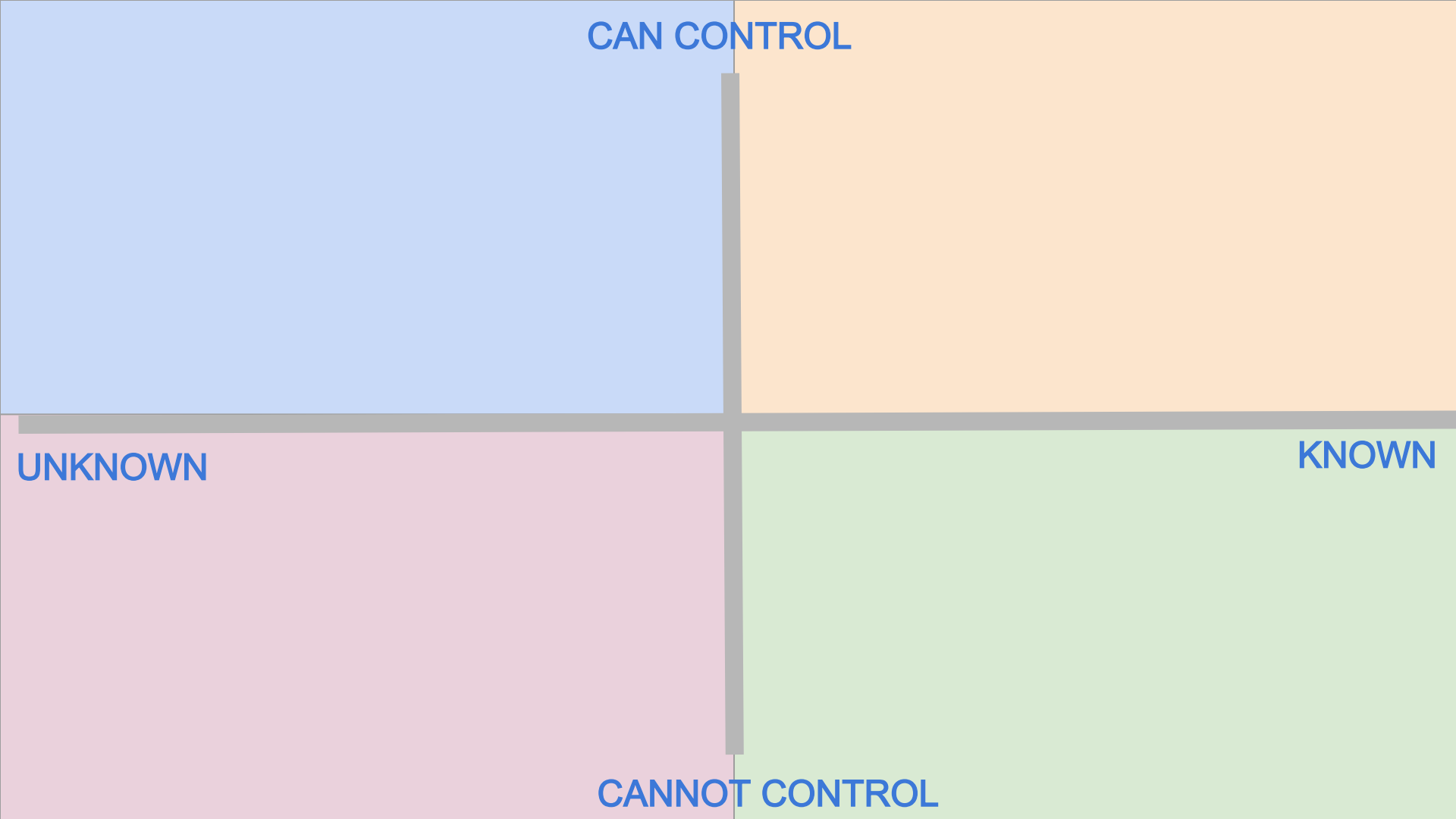
## Factors for 'success'

What are  
they?

Where do  
they fall  
on the  
chart?

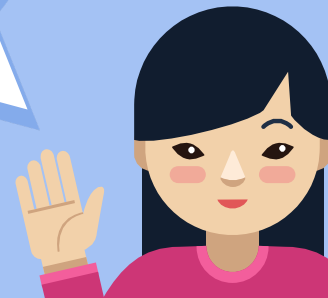
What do  
we do  
about it?!





# Factors influencing 'success' with spoken language

- × Access to language
- × Access to medical care
- × Access to info/education
- × Additional disabilities
- × Age at amplification (duration of deafness)
- × Anatomy
- × Etiology
- × Family education
- × Family environment
- × Finances/insurance coverage
- × Learning style



CAN CONTROL

# etiology

(cause of deafness)

KNOWN

etiology

CANNOT CONTROL

UNKNOWN



CAN CONTROL

anatomy

UNKNOWN

KNOWN

CANNOT CONTROL

anatomy

CAN CONTROL

age

age

(duration of deafness)

KNOWN

CANNOT CONTROL

UNKNOWN

CAN CONTROL

access.

access  
to medical  
care

to medical care

KNOWN

CANNOT CONTROL

UNKNOWN

CAN CONTROL

finances/insurance

finances

& insurance coverage

KNOWN

CANNOT CONTROL

UNKNOWN

CAN CONTROL

level of

family  
education ●

KNOWN

UNKNOWN  
family education

CANNOT CONTROL

CAN CONTROL

●  
family  
environment

family environment

UNKNOWN

KNOWN

CANNOT CONTROL

CAN CONTROL

• access to  
info/education

access to

information  
(caregiver education)

KNOWN

CANNOT CONTROL

UNKNOWN

CAN CONTROL

additional

disabilities

KNOWN

CANNOT CONTROL

UNKNOWN

- additional disabilities



CAN CONTROL

# learning style

KNOWN

UNKNOWN

CANNOT CONTROL

- learning style

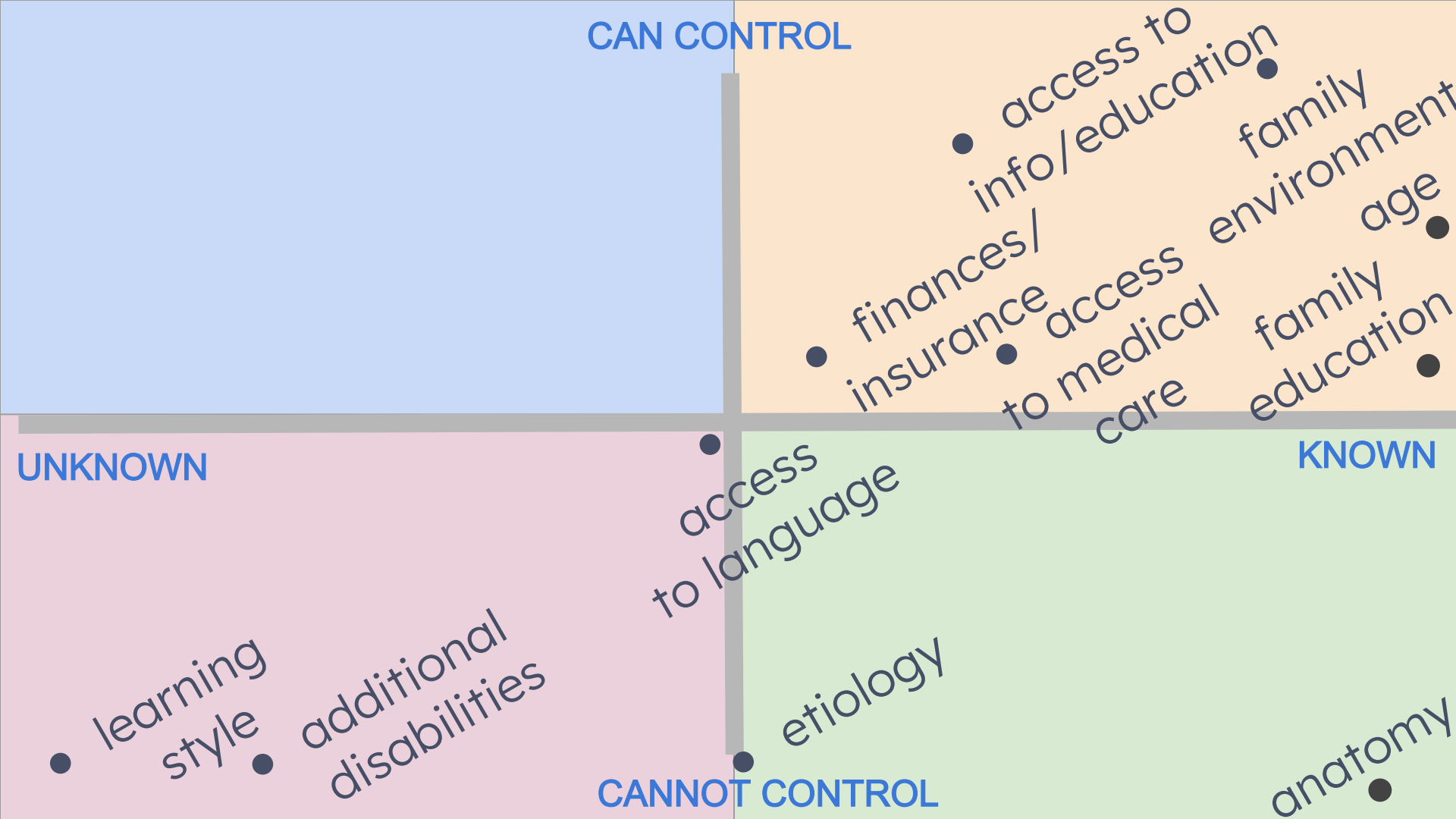
CAN CONTROL

access to  
language

KNOWN

CANNOT CONTROL

UNKNOWN



# Strategies for families (1 of 3)

- × Focus on what you CAN control:
  - × Caregiver responsiveness
  - × Education
    - × child & family
    - × community!
  - × Ongoing medical & device management
  - × Access to language
- × Signs
- × Cues



# Strategies for families, 2 of 3

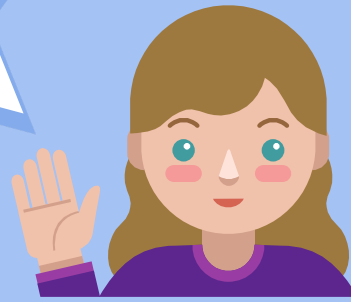
- × Be a gardener

# Strategies for families, 3 of 3

- × Create your own definition of  
**SUCCESS**

*"What works for your child is what makes the choice right."™*

*[handsandvoices.org](http://handsandvoices.org)*



# Thank you!

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- ✕ Committee on Practice & Ambulatory Medicine, Section on Otolaryngology; Hearing Assessment in Infants, Children, and Adolescents: Recommendations Beyond Neonatal Screening. Pediatrics September 2023; 152 (3). <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2023-063288>
- ✕ Factors Affecting Communication Outcomes in Pediatric Cochlear Implantation <https://blog.medel.pro/rehabilitation/communication-outcomes-in-pediatric-cochlear-implantation/>
- ✕ Humphries, T., Mathur, G., Napoli, D.J. et al. An approach designed to fail deaf children and their parents and how to change it. Harm Reduction Journal 21, 132 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12954-024-01039-1>
- ✕ Longitudinal Outcomes of Children with Hearing Impairment (LOCHI) study. [www.outcomes.nal.gov.au](http://www.outcomes.nal.gov.au)
- ✕ Silva, J. M., Yamada, M. O., Guedes, E. G., & Moret, A. L. M. (2020). Factors influencing the quality of life of children with cochlear implants. Brazilian journal of otorhinolaryngology, 86(4), 411 –418. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bjorl.2019.01.004>



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