

# Teachable Moments: Supporting Self-Advocacy in Early Intervention

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Disclosures:

AGBell Florida Board, AGBell  
Financial Aid Committee, AGBELL  
LEAP, ACIA Scientific Committee

What I hope you walk away with today  
(objectives):

- Participants will discuss the **importance of self-advocacy** as it relates to hearing loss in early intervention.
- Participants will **understand the role self-determination theory** plays in building self-advocacy.
- Participants will understand strategies for identifying the **"teachable moments" to support self-advocacy** in early intervention.



**What is  
Self-Advocacy?**

It [self-advocacy] **teaches us how to make decisions and choices** that affect our lives so we can be more independent. Nellis, 1991

Self-advocacy includes the realization of strengths and weaknesses, the ability to formulate personal goals, being assertive, **and making decisions** Martin et al., 1993

Self-advocacy is referred to as the ability to articulate one's needs and **make informed decisions** about the supports necessary to meet those needs Izzo & Lamb, 2002

Self-advocacy is the ability to **understand and effectively communicate** one's needs to others.

# Why is it important?

An increase in self-advocacy skills results in:

- Increased quality of life.
- Sense of agency ("sense of self").
- A person's overall well being.
- Places language responsibility on the child.
- Builds their confidence.

*People who self-advocate are more likely to thrive in school, work, and life and build resiliency.*



Schoffstall, S. & Cawthon, S. (2013)

# Why is this important for deaf and hard of hearing children?

86% of children with hearing loss are

**86%**

of the nation's deaf and hard of hearing students are educated in general education settings.

## Foundationally

We are supporting children in learning how to navigate their environment through their hearing loss.

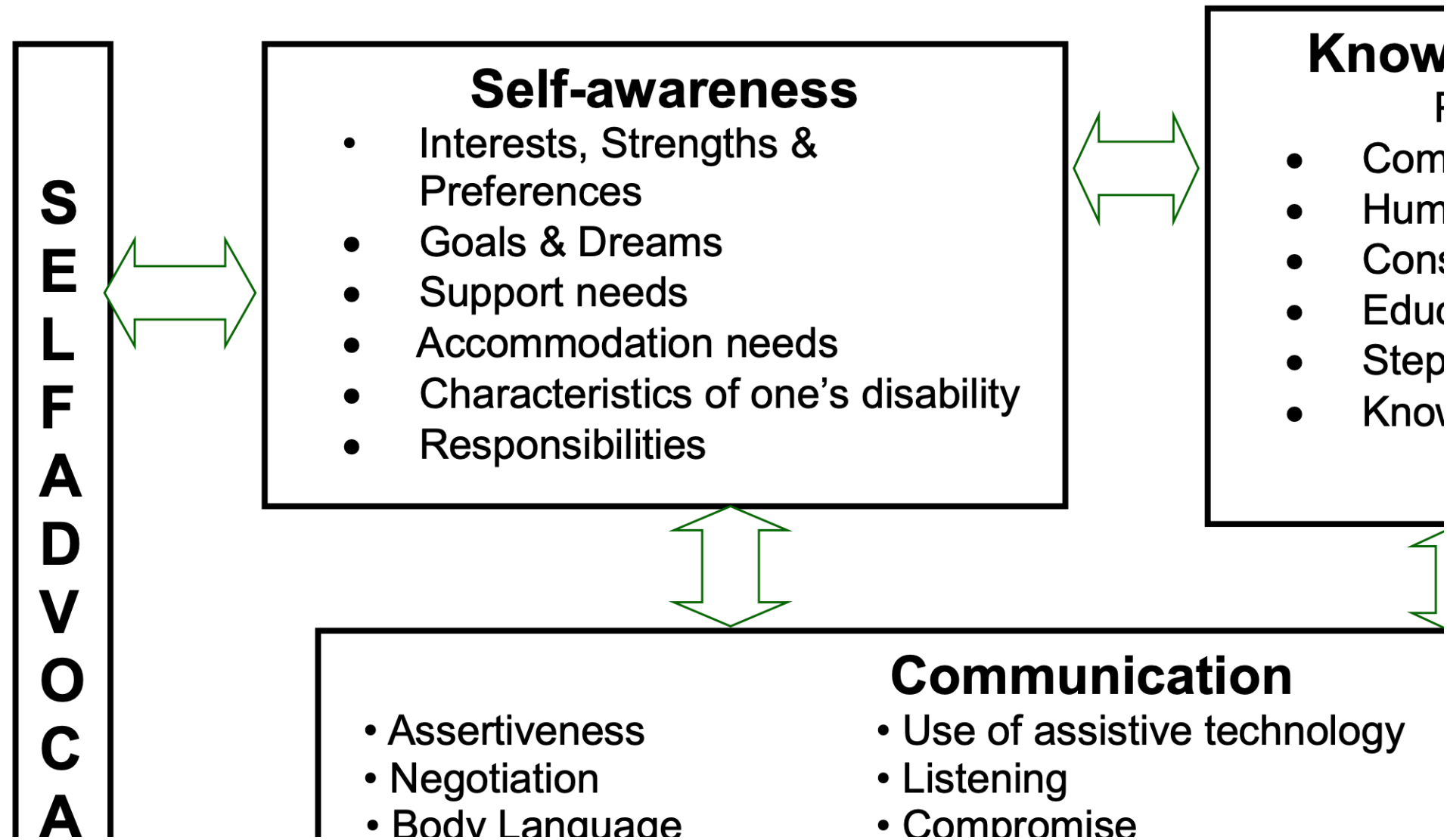
**Self-advocacy is learned!**

little to no experience with hearing loss.

*Educating Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing: A Guide for Professionals in General Education Settings*  
Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center and the Texas Education Service Center

# The Model....

## Self-Advocacy Characteristics



New Community Opportunities Center at ILRU - Independent Living Research Utilization

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# In early intervention...

- Understanding yourself and what you need.
- Understanding your personal experience of being deaf or hard of hearing.
  - **What's your hearing loss?**
- Knowing your own strengths and weaknesses.
  - **What works for you?**
- Knowing how you communicate best.
  - **How do you want to tell me something?**
- Having basic knowledge of any technologies that you use.
  - **What device do you use?**

## Guide to Self-Advocacy Skill Development

### Suggestions for Sequence of Skill Attainment

This sequence provides suggestions for ages of acquisition. Early skill development relies on consistent use of hearing devices, including FM and personal responsibility expected. Children in early childhood programs who are given the responsibility of charging the FM and handing it to the adult are more likely to become reliant self-advocates as compared to students not held responsible until grade 2 or later.

Suggested age/grade	The student will....
Preschool	Be responsible to put own hearing devices on and report when problems occur

Appropriately ask for repetition of messages missed (i.e., slower, clearer, louder).

	classroom door, moving away from noise or requesting reduction in noise
Grade 1	Use pre-determined signal with teacher to indicate challenges listening/understanding

Recognize effect of interfering noise that occurs in learning environment; demonstrate by closing classroom door, moving away from noise or requesting reduction in noise.

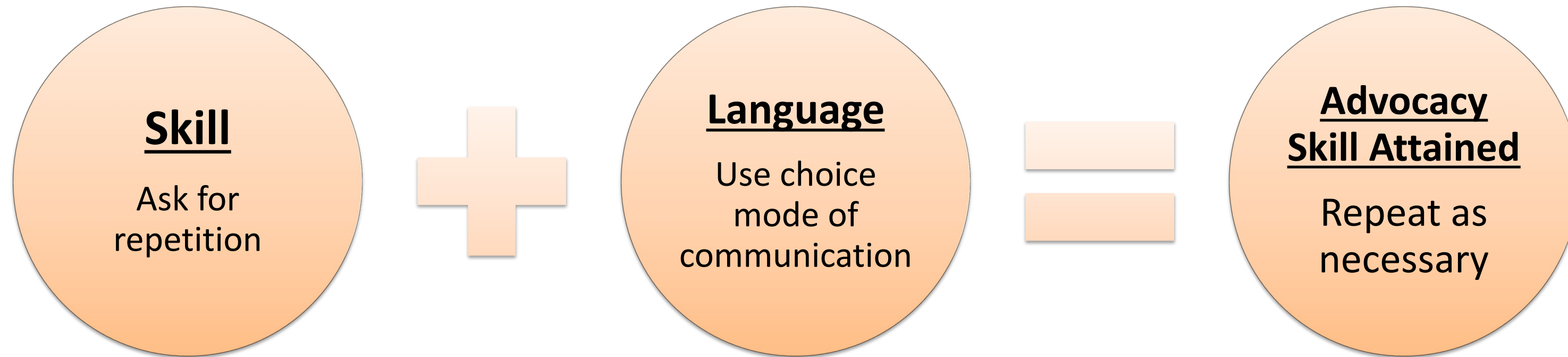
	and turn it into a clarification question; <i>SCRIPT</i> )
Grade 2	Improve in listening-in-noise skills ( <i>LASH</i> ; various auditory skill development materials)
Grade 2	Demonstrate ability to perform basic troubleshooting when hearing device malfunctions

Appropriately use simple addition communication repair strategies (take the part that you heard and turn it into a clarification question; *SCRIPT*).

	system and request preferred accommodations, with assistance
Grade 4	Identify challenging listening situations and improvements in self-advocacy strategies used ( <i>via Student LIFE-R</i> )
Grade 4	Appropriately use advanced addition communication repair strategies (add background or clarification) when requesting clarification in school or social situations ( <i>SCRIPT</i> )
Grade 4	Match appropriate self-advocacy strategies to identified listening challenges in school and social settings; meet expectations for use when priority listening challenges occur



# How do we get there?



**MOTIVATION**

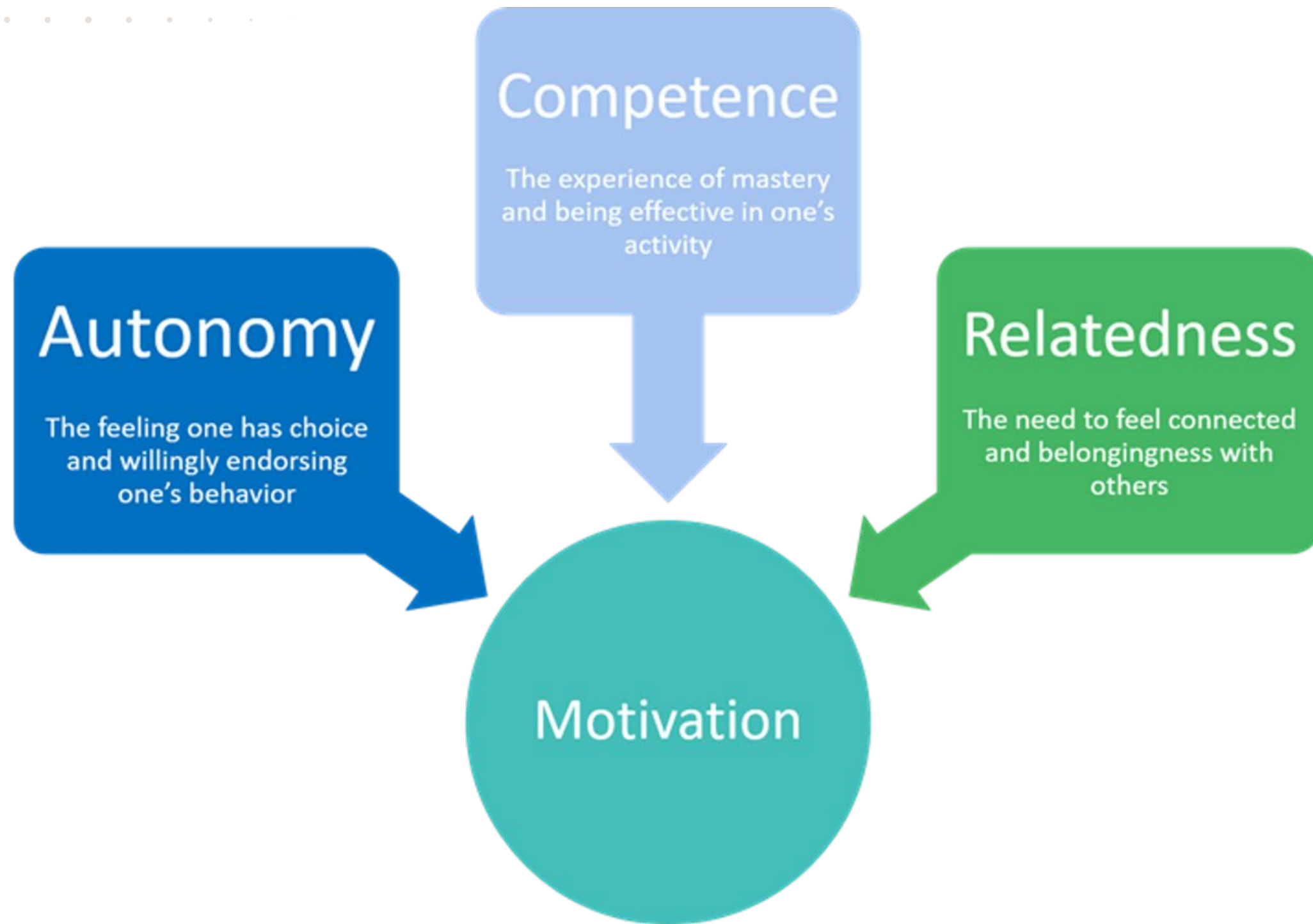
# Let's talk motivation and self-advocacy...

Remember the goal:

Learning to navigate their  
environment through  
their hearing loss.



# Self Determination Theory



Self-determination theory suggests that all humans have three basic psychological needs—

- autonomy,
- competence
- relatedness

-that underlie growth and development.

# Motivation to Self-Advocate

## Relatedness

The need to feel connectedness and belongingness with others.

Is this issue important to me as it relates to this situation?

## Competency

The experience of mastery in one's activity.

Do I understand the challenge enough to address it?

## Autonomy

The feeling one has choice and willingly endorsing one's behavior.

What are my choices?



Choice



vs. Control

### Critical Error

When a child has a disability, we often feel that we need to extrinsically control their motivation. The more disabled we perceive a child to be the more we tend to try to control their narrative.

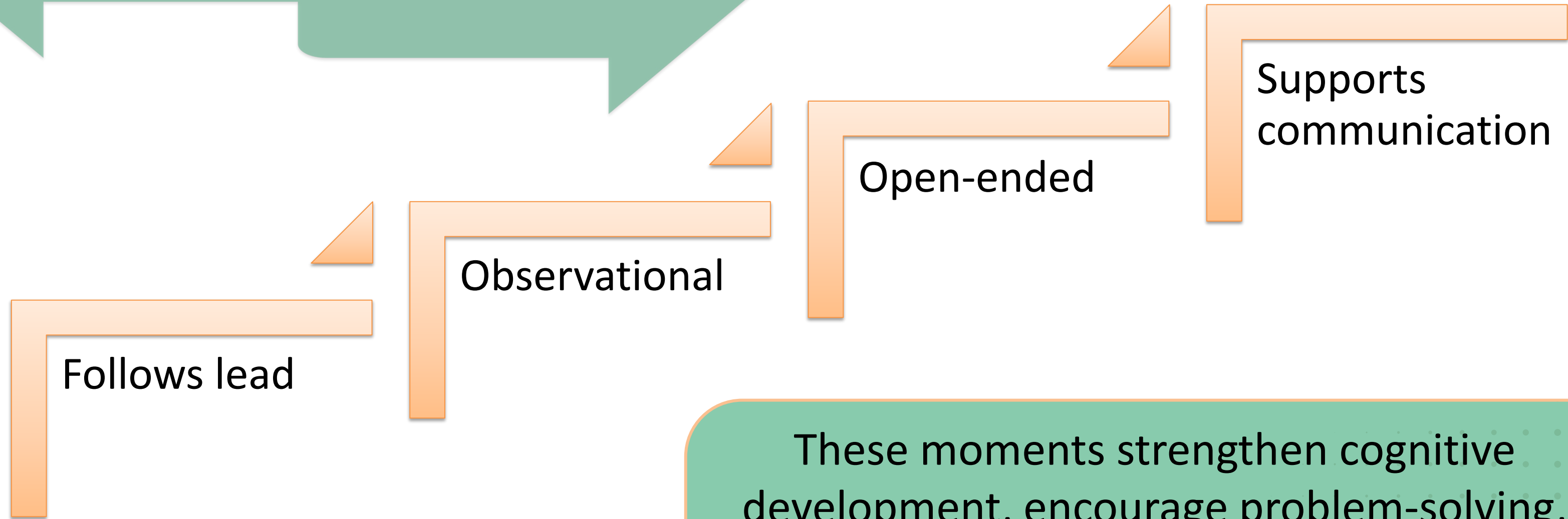
**Does controlling the narrative truly set young children up for success?**



# So why do we need teachable moments?

“A teachable moment is an **event or experience that allows children to expand their understanding or develop a new skill**. It’s a point in their development when they’re ready to learn a concept or take on a challenge. As early years educators, we should recognize these moments and use them to **support and extend children’s learning in a natural, relaxed, and fun way.**”





These moments strengthen cognitive development, encourage problem-solving, promote social-emotional skills (like empathy or self-advocacy), and foster curiosity

# The power of "How can I help?"

## Strategies for Self-Advocacy

### Early Childhood Style: Interventionist

#### Support decision-making

- Allow for choice.
- What would you like to do?

#### Leverage what they are good at

- Use choice task to build advocacy.
- What was good about that?

#### Encourage problem-solving

- Allow for success and mistakes.
- What do you think would help?

#### Target advocacy language

- Identify advocacy language.
- What words could you use?

#### Model advocacy

- State what you understood.
- What I understood you saying is...is that right?

#### Encourage Independence

- Discuss responsibilities.
- What could you do to help?

#### Honor communication choices

- Give a them a chance to use their "voice".
- How would you like to tell me?

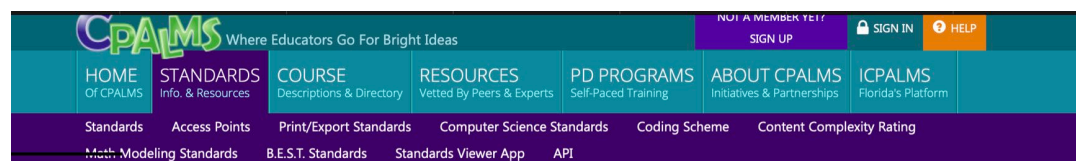
# Early Childhood Style: Coaching Parents to be Coaches

- Asking specific questions centered around self-advocacy.
  - Manage communication breakdowns.
  - Communicating needs.
  - Understanding technology.
- Provide Time,
  - Don't rush in.
  - Give room for mistakes.
- Provide Choices.
  - Consider needs and personality.
- Provide Opportunities.
  - Real opportunities can equal motivation.



# There are resources out there!

## Expanded Core Skills

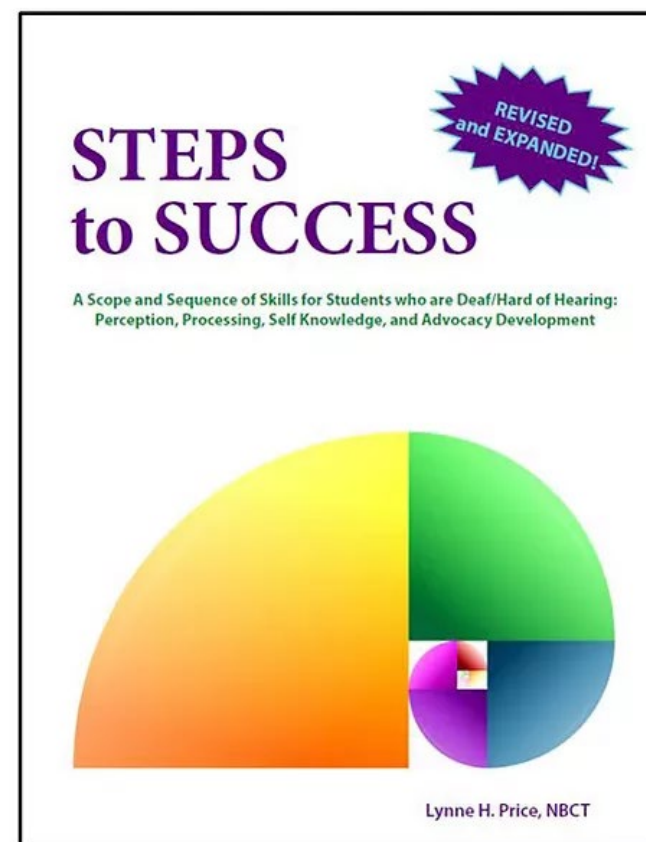


Standard 6: Self-Determination and Self-Advocacy

Benchmark	Description	Content Complexity Rating	Date Adopted or Revised
SPPK12.DH.6.5	Explain support services available in the school, home, and community, such as Florida Relay Service, interpre...	N/A	02/14
SPPK12.DH.6.6	Request written reinforcement of instruction, including transcripts or closed captions for film/videos, when n...	N/A	02/14
SPPK12.DH.6.7	Develop an emergency contingency plan to gather information regarding man-made or natural disasters or persona...	N/A	02/14
SPPK12.DH.6.8	Identify agencies that provide postsecondary transition services, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, and Posts...	N/A	02/14

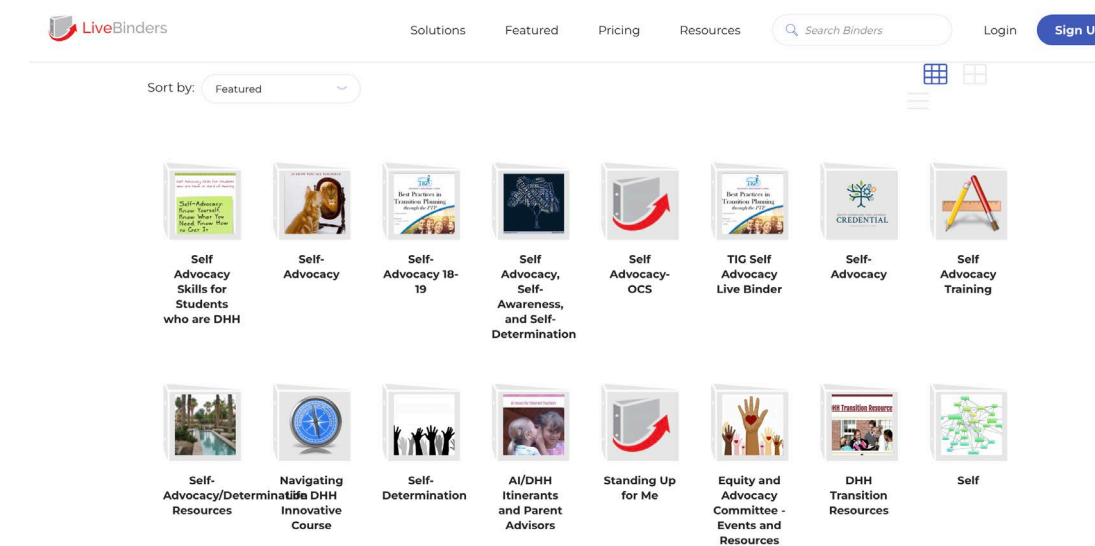
[cpalms.org](http://cpalms.org)

## Lynn Price Scope and Sequence Skills for Students Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing



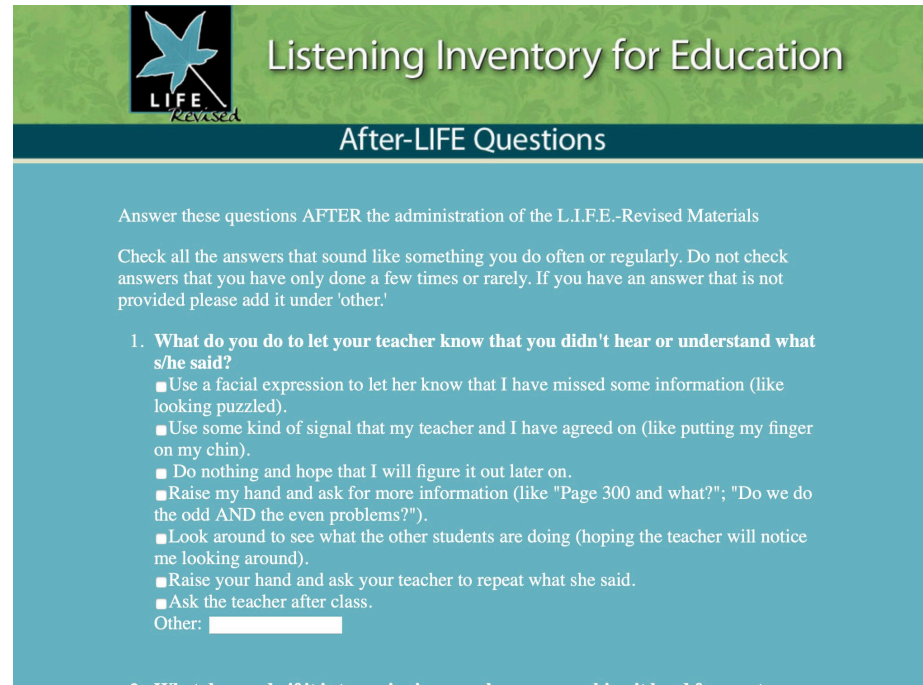
[successforkidswithhearingloss.com](http://successforkidswithhearingloss.com)

[livebinders.org](http://livebinders.org)



# There are resources out there!

## Listening Inventory for Education L.I.F.E.-R



Offers a way to assess self-advocacy skills of the student. Can be done online or on paper.

<https://lifer.successforkidswithhearingloss.com>

## SEAM

## Student Expectation for Advocacy & Monitoring Hearing Technology

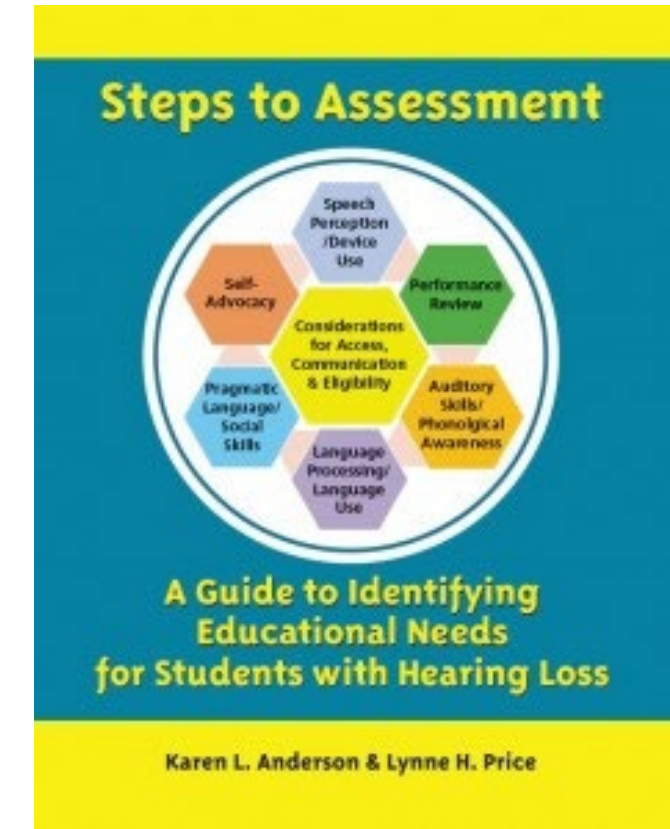
### SEAM - Student Expectations for Advocacy & Monitoring Hearing Technology

The following expectations assume early identification of hearing loss, consistent amplification wear from infancy and supportive parent involvement in facilitating optimal listening and effective communication strategies. Age expectations should be adjusted as necessary.

Expected participation and/or skill to be consistently performed	1 <sup>st</sup> day of school, PS/Kdgn	By end of Kdgn	By end of gr 1	By end of gr 2	By end of gr 3	By end of gr 4	By end of gr 5	MS and HS
Inserts (or attempts) earmolds and puts on hearing aid(s) or cochlear implant processor(s) independently.	(X)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Does self-test, listening to each device after it has been turned on (put aid on ear, turn on aid, test baa baa mmm mmm, repeat with next aid)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wears hearing device(s) full time (remove only for monitoring).	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Demonstrates that he needs to ask adult before device(s) are removed (e.g., discomfort or malfunction).	X	X	X	X				
Knows that he is expected to report all issues with device(s) (i.e., changes in how he is hearing, due to malfunction of hearing device or hearing changes).	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wears hearing device(s) to school every day.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Knows where extra batteries are kept at school. Supplies from home as needed.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Participates in daily functional monitoring of device(s) with adult: battery check, visual inspection, listening check of Ling sounds, listening check at 3 & 10 feet.	X	X	X					
Student responsible for recording results on Daily Monitoring Worksheet (with supervision)		(X)	(X)	X	X	X	X	X
Student performs visual inspection of device(s) independently (looking for dirt, cracks, moisture bubbles, changes in appearance, etc.).		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student actively uses communication repair strategies in the classroom/socially (appropriate use of repetition strategies).		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Student responsible for daily charging, (troubleshooting), proper use and careful handling of FM equipment.		X	X	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)

The SEAM lists expected student skills from Preschool through High School for hearing technology use, involvement in monitoring, and self-advocacy skills. Useful for functional assessment and goal writing.

## Steps to Assessment



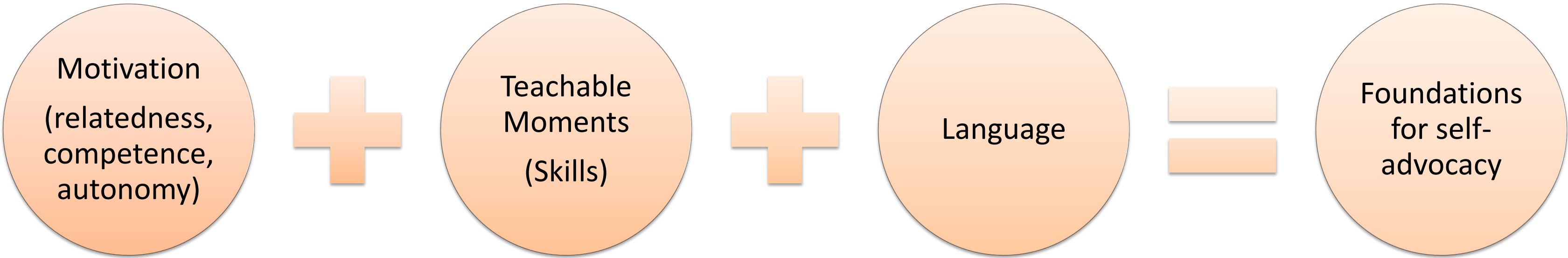
A section and resources for self-advocacy assessment.

# There are resources out there!

- National Association for the Deaf  
[www.nationaldeafcenter.org/resource/self-advocacy-basics](http://www.nationaldeafcenter.org/resource/self-advocacy-basics)
- Hands and Voices  
[www.handsandvoices.org/articles/education/advocacy/V8-4\\_selfAdv.htm](http://www.handsandvoices.org/articles/education/advocacy/V8-4_selfAdv.htm)
- My World- Ida Institute  
[https://idainstitute.com/tools/my\\_world/?tx\\_idatoolbox\\_toolboxpagelist%5Bcontroller%5D=Toolbox&cHash=b812495e344993154e36f63fe1ca5d1a](https://idainstitute.com/tools/my_world/?tx_idatoolbox_toolboxpagelist%5Bcontroller%5D=Toolbox&cHash=b812495e344993154e36f63fe1ca5d1a)

A hand-drawn word cloud with two main phrases: 'SELF-ADVOCACY' in green and 'SELF-AWARENESS' in pink. Surrounding these phrases are various related terms in smaller green text, including: PROGRESS, DISLIKES, WEAKNESSES, ASK, LIKES, KNOWLEDGE, NEEDS, ADVOCATE, AWARE, RESPONSIBLE, STRENGTHS, FUTURE, DRIVER, ACCOMMODATIONS, HELP, RESPONSIBILITY, PASSENGER, GROWTH, and WANTS.

# The Take-Away!



AT HOME

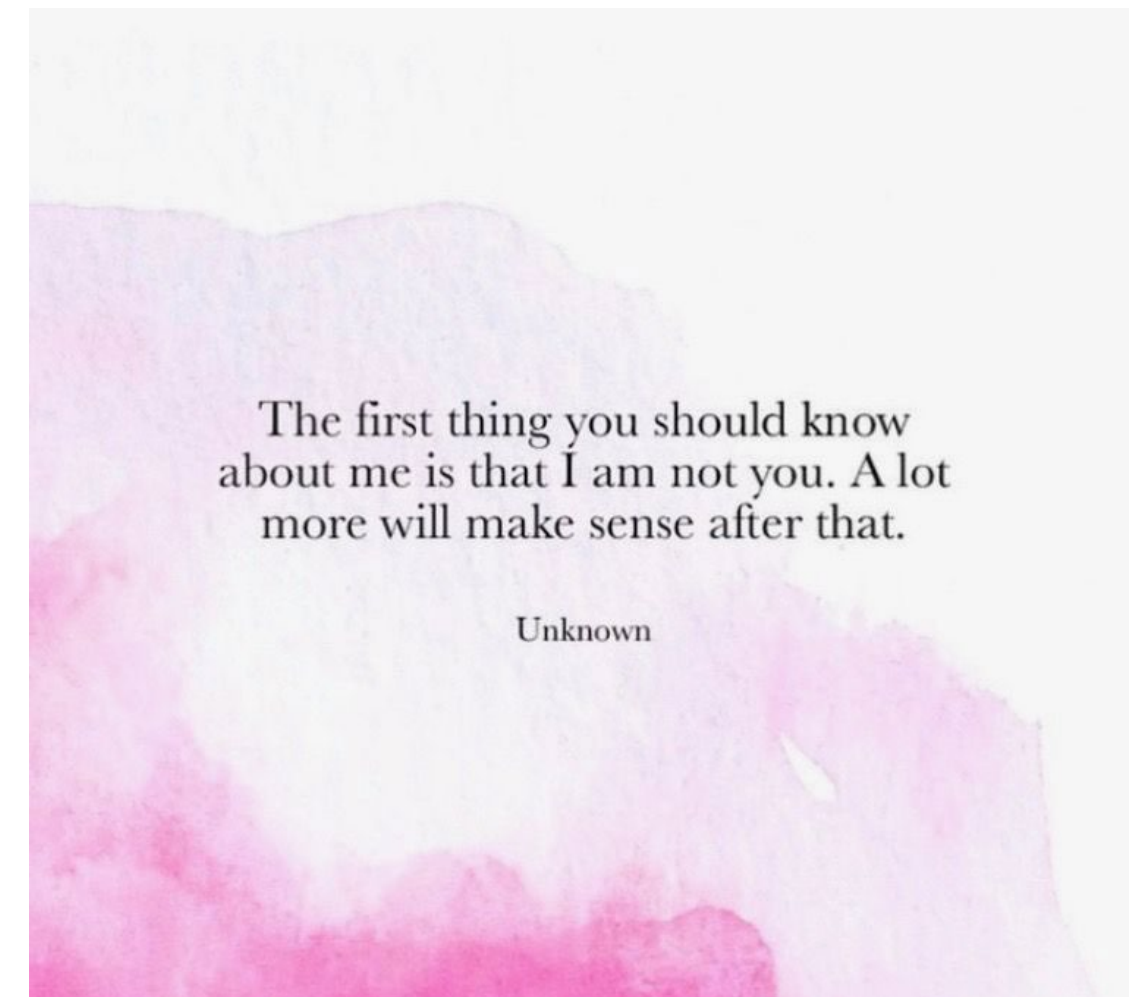
AT SCHOOL

AT CLINIC



# *Selfadvocacy is a lifelong endeavor that can never be learned too*

- Coach and guide, don't direct or dictate.
- Engage in dialogue not just conversation.
- Ask more, suggest some, tell less.
- Embrace creativity, don't cut from the cookie.
- Follow their lead, don't drive.



# QUESTIONS



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# Thank U



Learn about CHP!

