INTRODUCTION TO
DEAF EDUCATION

Overview

- Early Detection and Early Intervention Programs

- IDEA and Education Access Laws

- Approaches to Language and Communication

- Placement and Education Options

- Lunch & Video: *What the Eyes Reveal About the Brain: Advances in Human Language Acquisition*

Hearing loss does not directly affect psychological development. Rather, how hearing people respond to a deaf person's hearing loss profoundly affects psychological development.

Early Detection and Intervention

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Programs

- Focus is on screening for and diagnosing hearing loss as early as possible.
- Often leads to a referral for medical/technological interventions.
- Often leads to a referral to an early intervention program.

Early Intervention Programs

- Focus is on early education interventions for hearing loss, including modes and methods of communication.
- Bridges the gap between diagnosis and the start of kindergarten to minimize developmental and academic delays.

EHDI and Age of Identification

- Historically identified between 2.5 and 3.5 years old.
  - No language access for about half of the critical period for language development (birth to age ~6-7).
- Current goal is to screen by 1 month, diagnose by 3 months, and begin early intervention by 6 months (1-3-6).
- Under EDHI, most are now identified before 1 year old.
  - Early identification does not guarantee appropriate follow-up or language access.
  - Emerging research suggests that EHDI is having a positive impact that but children who met the 1-3-6 guidelines still experience significant language delays.

Early Intervention Programs

- **First Steps** (dese.mo.gov/special-education/first-steps)
  - Serves birth to age 3.
  - For children with developmental delays, including communication delays, and their families.
  - Providers usually trained in special education but not deaf education.
- **Families First**

(msd.dese.mo.gov/outreach-resources-center/families-first-early-interventions)
  - Serves birth to age 8.
  - For children with suspected or confirmed hearing loss and their families.
  - Providers are deaf services professionals trained in communication options for deaf and hard of hearing children.

IDEA and Education Access Laws

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
    - Requires a free and appropriate public education.
    - Covers only <u>educational disabilities</u> – those that adversely affect educational performance.
    - Students receive special education and related services.
- Vocational Rehabilitation Act, Section 504
    - Requires reasonable accommodations and modifications in places that receive Federal funds, including public schools.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
    - Title II requires reasonable modifications and equally effective communication in government, including public schools.

IDEA General Requirements

- A free and appropriate public education (FAPE) must be available to all children ages 3 through 21, including children with disabilities.

- Parents or school may request a comprehensive evaluation to determine whether a child is eligible for special education and related services.

- If a child is found eligible, the school must work with parents to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

IDEA IEP Requirements

- Describe present levels of academic achievement and functional performance.

- State measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals.

- Describe how and when progress will be measured and reported.

- Identify special education and related services and supplementary aids and services to be provided.

- Explain any extent to which the child will not participate with nondisabled children in regular classes and activities.

IDEA Special Requirements for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Children

- Assessments and other evaluation materials must be provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication.

- IEP team must consider special factors, including:
  - The child's language and communication needs;
  - Opportunities for <u>direct communications</u> with peers and professional personnel in the child's language and communication mode, including opportunities for direct instruction; and
  - Whether the child needs assistive technology devices and services.

Approaches to Language and Communication

Modes of Communication

- The media used to express and receive communication.
- E.g.:
  - Oral-aural
  - Manual-visual
  - Written-visual

Methods of Communication

- The language or encoding system used to communicate.
- E.g:
  - English (language)
  - Spanish (language)
  - ASL (language)
  - MCE (encoding system)
  - Cued Speech (encoding system)
  - Morse Code (encoding system)

Approaches to Language and Communication

The Modes of Communication Debate

- Oral-Aural (Spoken) Methods.
  - ▶ Language through speech and audition (listening).
  - ▶ Goal is to maximize <u>speech</u> to improve functioning in a hearing world.
  - ▶ Achievement varies widely, but full access to others' speech is never attained.
  - ▶ Extensive focus on speech therapy greatly reduces time spent on regular education curriculum.

Approaches to Language and Communication

- Oral method examples:
  - ▶ Lipreading – reliance on mouth, tongue, and face movements to decode spoken English.
    - Generally ineffective because only 25-30% of speech sounds can be distinguished visually.
  - ▶ Speechreading – combined use of lipreading, residual hearing, and other natural cues to improve comprehension of spoken English.
    - Effectiveness varies greatly depending on individual skill, residual hearing, and environment.

Approaches to Language and Communication

The Modes of Communication Debate

Manual (Signed) Methods

▶ Language through signs and vision.

▶ Goal is to maximize <u>language</u> development.

▶ Provides complete access to language.

▶ Allows language to be acquired naturally.

▶ When sign language is learned from birth, deaf children achieve language milestones identical to hearing children who learn English from birth.

Approaches to Language and Communication

- Manual method examples:
  - American Sign Language (ASL) – linguistically complete, natural language with vocabulary, syntax, and grammar distinct from English.
  - Manually Coded English (MCE) – invented communication systems that visually represent linguistically incomplete English.
    - Seeing Essential English (SEE1) - obsolete
    - Signing Exact English (SEE2) – most common
    - Linguistics of Visual English (LOVE)
    - Etc.

Approaches to Language and Communication

The Modes of Communication Debate

- Hybrid Methods (oral+manual-aural+visual)
  - ▶ Attempt to achieve the "best of both worlds."
  - ▶ The goal is to maximize <u>English</u> development.
  - ▶ Studies show it is practically impossible to provide linguistically complete communication in two modes at the same time.
  - ▶ Typically results in accurate but inaccessible spoken language accompanied by accessible but broken/incomplete signing.

Approaches to Language and Communication

- Hybrid method examples:
  - Simultaneous Communication (SimCom) – use of speech and any form of MCE at the same time.
  - Sign-Supported Speech (SSS) – use of speech with key words signed in ASL.

Approaches to Language and Communication

Communication Philosophies

- *Oralism* – only oral methods should be used.
- *Total Communication (TC)* – teachers should use whatever method/combination of methods work best for an individual.
  - ‣ In practice, usually means a hybrid: SimCom or SSS.
- *Bilingual/Bicultural (Bi-Bi)* – embraces ASL as an accessible, natural first language and English as a second language.
  - ‣ ASL used to teach English literacy and possibly speech.
  - ‣ Deaf history/culture taught alongside American history/culture.

Approaches to Language and Communication

- Historically, hearing people have viewed signed languages as inferior to spoken languages.

- Linguistics research shows that signed languages like ASL have the same complexity and communication potential of spoken languages.

- Education and neuroscience research clearly demonstrates that learning sign language does not harm speech development.

- Children with CIs who learn ASL may develop better speech and English fluency than children with CIs who learn only spoken English.

Placement and Education Options

- Local Public School.
  - ▶ Mainstreamed – regular classroom.
    - ▪ Usually with ASL interpreter if student signs.
    - ▪ No interpreter if student is oral.
  - ▶ Deaf Education Classes/Program.
    - ▪ Teacher usually uses Sim-Com if student signs. Some use ASL.
    - ▪ Teacher uses spoken English if student is oral.
- State Residential School.
  - ▶ Most use ASL or SimCom.

Placement and Education Options

- Mainstreamed – regular classroom.
    - Often the least experienced interpreters.
    - The best interpreters only achieve 85-90% comprehensibility.
    - Research suggests deaf students learn 15-20% more through direct instruction than through an interpreter.
- Deaf Education Classes/Program.
    - With Sim-Com, students miss most spoken English, and teacher's signs are broken/incomplete.
- State Residential School.
    - Most teachers are hearing and not fully fluent in ASL.

Placement and Education Options

- Mainstreamed – regular classroom.
  - ▸ Deaf student often isolated with limited or no opportunity for direct communication with peers.
- Deaf Education Classes/Program.
  - ▸ Often isolated or with just 1-2 deaf peers.
- State Residential School.
  - ▸ Full access to direct communication with peers but limited or no socialization with hearing students.
  - ▸ Most students live in dormitories during the week and only see family on weekends.

Educational Outcomes

Language Fluency/Dysfluency

- Deaf people may not be fully fluent in a first language due to language deprivation/delayed language exposure as a child.

- Deaf people with mental illness are more likely to have dysfluency.

- Deaf people may have a low reading level or be functionally illiterate due to delayed language exposure/language deprivation and inadequate education.

- The average deaf high school graduate reads just below a 4th-grade level, which is considered <u>functionally illiterate</u>.

Language Deprivation and Dysfluency

The New Frontier of Deaf Mental Health Care

Continuum of Fluency

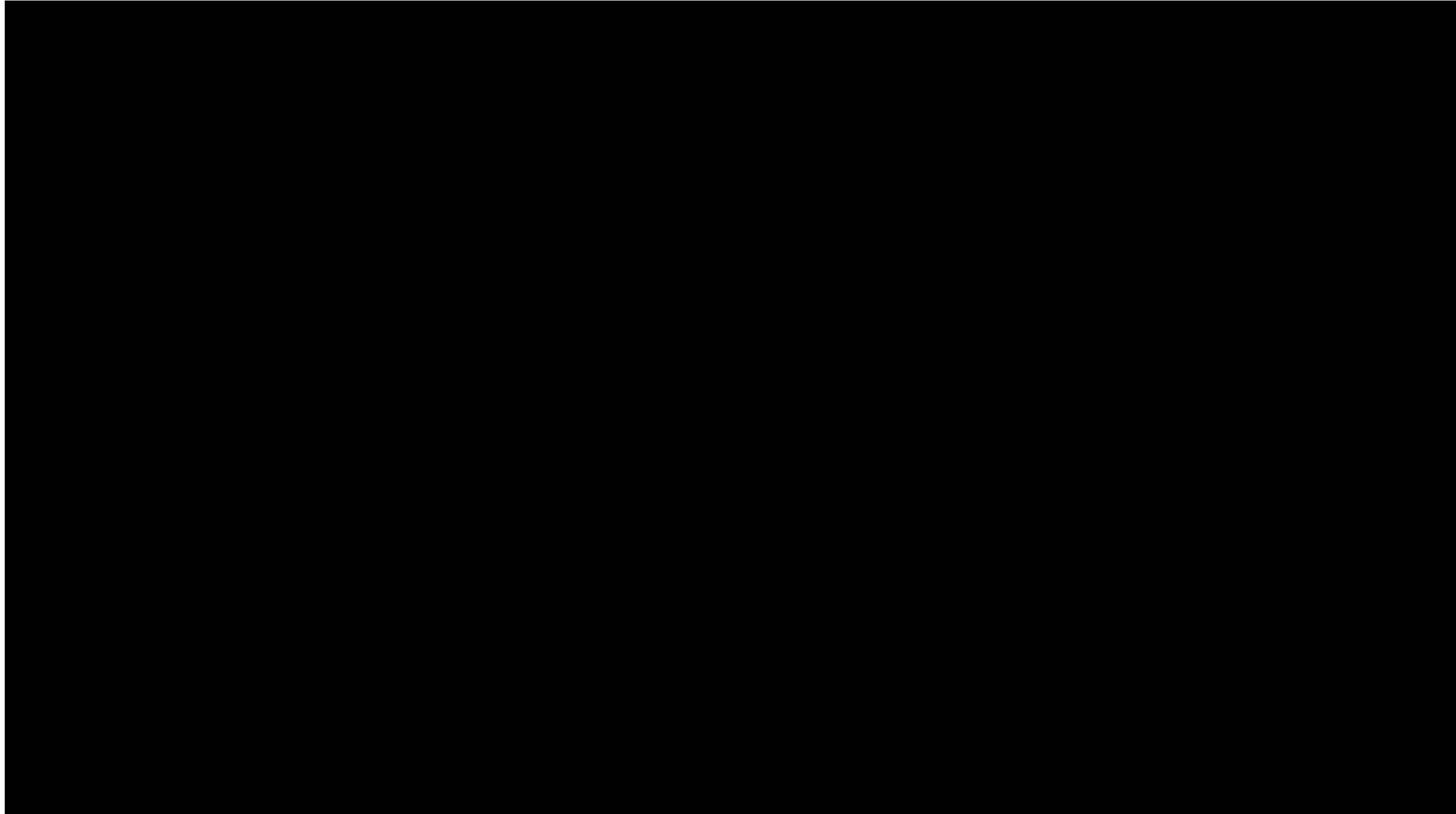# Questions?

Resources in the DSA Manual

dmh.mo.gov/deafservices/dsamanual

Lunch Break

What the Eyes Reveal About the Brain: Advances in Human Language Acquisition

youtube.com/embed/snE4pD882v4