Deaf–Hearing Partnerships: We’re in This Together!

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About Us and Why We Think This is Important

- Barbara’s experience
  - Parent
  - Hearing
  - Lawyer
  - Advocate

- Beth’s experience
  - Parent
  - Member of the Deaf Community/University Professor/Researcher
  - Advocate
Barbara’s Experiences

- Adaptation to child who is different than expected
- Sense of diversity of people with hearing loss - Seeing child as an individual
- Knowing life experiences of deaf individuals – How that helps parents
- Learning to communicate
- Deaf/HH individuals are part of the “village”
- Enrichment of own lives
Beth’s Experiences

- Researcher, Teacher, Role Model
- Collaborator with hearing parents with deaf children
- Participant in conferences, committees, etc.
- Direct Experiences with
  - Misconceptions about deaf people
  - Deaf people as human beings
  - Struggle for Rights, Survival, and Successes
Why the heck do I need hearing people?

- Literacy purposes
- Social purposes
- Resources
- Networking
- Access to community
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Deaf/Hearing Partnerships: A History Lesson

- Mason Cogswell, Laurent Clerc, T.H. Gallaudet
  - Cogswell’s contribution
  - Clerc’s contribution
  - Gallaudet’s contribution
- Founding of NAD
- Founding of ASDC
- Partnership
  - Trust and respect
- Today - ASDC, NAD
Two Views of Being Deaf

- Intervention
- Failed screening
- Diagnosed
- Hearing loss
- Professional-Centered
- Deafness
- Disability (cannot)
- Fix the ear
- Imperfect child
- Hearing impaired
- Vocationally and educationally limited
- Choices

- Involvement
- Referred
- Identified
- Hearing level
- Family Centered
- Baby who is deaf
- Cultural (adapt)
- Modify or adapt
- Uniqueness
- Hard of hearing or deaf
- Unlimited potentials
- Comprehensive opportunities
Families who have regular contact with deaf adults obtain significant benefits including:

- Social Support
- Improved Communication
- Acceptance and Understanding

More Research

English language performance better with experiences with Deaf Mentors
Watkins, Pittman, Walden, 1998;

Social-emotional development supported by opportunities for interactions with Deaf adults/children
See Calderon & Greenberg, 2003

Children/families in “Shared Reading Program” more frequent book sharing
Delk & Weidekamp, 2001
Some Fears

- “They won’t like me.”
- “They won’t understand me.”
- “They will judge me.”
- “I don’t sign well.”
- “I’m not outgoing.”
- “The deaf community will take my kid.”
- “It’s too hard.”
Some Solutions

- School activities
- Involvement with committees and organizations
- Let people know you are interested
- Be accessible
- Keep trying
  - Personally
  - Technologically
Experiences and Lessons Learned

- Advocacy
  - Education
  - Telecommunications
  - Civil Rights

- Conference planning and plenary presenters
  - EHDI
  - ASDC
  - Advertising/marketing

- Everyday life
  - Resources/networking/etc.
It’s a 2 Way Street
Tell Us Your Stories