

REMOTE CART  
NCHAM-Building Collaborative Relationships for Families-(Adobe 4.1)  
12:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
August 27, 2020  
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12:26 p.m. (ET)

CAPTIONER: Standing by.

»: For those of you who have just signed in, you are in the right place for today's webinar, entitled, "Building collaborative relationships or families." We will be starting in about 10 minutes from now this webinar is being brought to you by mark and the T. And one again, we will be starting in about 10 minutes. This webinar will be recorded. So, if anything, disrupts your full participation in today's webinar, you will be able to access it in the next couple of days on mark website.

JENNY STISHER: I will do a quick introduction at the beginning and then we will get started .

»: So we are being broadcast to those who signed on already. You are welcome and you are here about 10 minutes early. So settle in and we will get started in about 10 minutes. =gin8 if you would like to type in the Hands & Voices or FL3 website, you can do so. The information can be on the left.

WILLIAM EISERMAN: Did you call in again or did somebody sign in by phone?

WILLIAM EISERMAN: Pardon my repeating myself, but as people sign in, I want to make sure that everybody has an opportunity to adjust their volume to their liking. My name is Will Eiserman and I am from the National Center for Hearing Assessment & Management, also known as NCHAM at Utah State University. We are offering our platform today to Hands & Voices for this webinar. And the FL3 project. This webinar will be starting at the top of the hour, in about seven minutes.

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: This is Djenne.

WILL EISERMAN: Hi, Djenne. Did you go out and come back in?

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: Yes. I got cut off suddenly.

WILL EISERMAN: Okay. I don't know why.

(Laughter)

I am glad you have the number. Do you also see my cell phone number?

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: I do.

WILL EISERMAN: Okay. That is yet another way that we can communicate if we need to.

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: Nancy, this is Djenne. If, for any reason, one of us gets cut off, the other can keep going until we can come back.

WILL EISERMAN: I don't know if Nancy is aware that her WebCam is off. She is typing over in the presenter field. That is good. Okay.

For those of you that of just signed on, you are in the right place for today's webinar entitled, "Building Collaborative Relationships for Families." And we will be starting here in about six minutes at the top of the hour. This webinar will be recorded and posted on the Hands & Voices website, which is [Hands&Voices.org](http://Hands&Voices.org). So if anything disrupts your full attention or participation in today's webinar, you will be able to access it at another time. And if there are people who are not able to attend live who you think could benefit from today's webinar, you will be able to direct them to [Hands&Voices.org](http://Hands&Voices.org)

to view it at a later time. One again, you are in the right place for today's webinar that will be starting at the top of the hour.

So we have lost our WebCam. It does make me nervous to have our people on WebCams turning them off. Because then I don't know. And you are back. Thank you. Because I don't know if you have turned it off or it shut down. Thank you. We all need a private moment every once in a while.

You for those of you who have just signed on, you are in the right place for today's webinar that is entitled "Building Collaborative Relationships for Families." We will be starting here in just a couple of minutes. For now just get your volume adjusted to your liking using your headset or your computer speaker volume setting and you should be set to go. You do not want to use full screen mode as that may eliminate some of the screens that are going to be used during today's webinar. So do not select full screen mode.

WILL EISERMAN: And if I could ask Nancy to come on the WebCam now, that would be good. We will be getting started very shortly. Djenne, are you still there?

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: I am here.

WILL EISERMAN: Okay. I am going to initiate the recording of this meeting.

»: Audio recording for this meeting has begun.

WILL EISERMAN: Let's see if Nancy is able to turn on her WebCam for us. There we go. Well, hello, everyone. My name is Will Eiserman and I am the Associate Director of the National Center for Hearing Assessment & Management at Utah State University also known as NCHAM. And we are delighted to share our platform today for webinars. We have Hands & Voices and the FL3 project. If somebody just resized the screen, please refrain from doing that. I don't know who is doing that but please refrain from doing that. Thank you.

Today's webinar is entitled "Building Collaborative Relationships for Families." This webinar is going to be recorded and will appear in the next couple of days on the Hands & Voices website, which is over on your right there, Hands&Voices.org. So if

anything disrupts your full attention or ability to participate in today's webinar, you will be able to access this at another time through that website. Also, keep in mind that if there are individuals who are not able to attend live whom you believe could benefit from today's information, you can direct them as well to the Hands & Voices website to view this at another time. Once our presenters have wrapped up their comments today, we will be opening up a question field into which you will be able to type your questions or comments for our presenters to respond to. So without any further delay, I would like to also thank our captioner today and our interpreters for your services, which are helping make this webinar as accessible as possible. So without any other delay, let me hand this over to our presenters, Nancy Hlibok and Djenne-amal Morris.

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: Hello, everyone. I could say good morning or good afternoon depending on what time zone you are in. This is Djenne-amal Morris coming to you from Raleigh, North Carolina. And I am so excited to be here today and so excited to share my heart and experiences with you and I do hope that you are able to get a lot of information out of this today. Nancy and I will be taking questions about 15 minutes after our presentation. So please note those. I will turn it over to you Nancy.

NANCY HLIBOK AMANN: Hello. My name is Nancy Hlibok Amann and I am from San Diego, California. This topic is about "Building Collaborative Relationships for Families." And it is most importantly looking at myself coming from the western coasts and Djenne from the eastern coast. She and I have collaboratively worked on this and we are building our relationship as we speak. We are looking forward to sharing our thoughts, experiences, etc. with our families today because families are the heart of every community, it really worldwide. So I would like to hand it back over to you, Djenne.

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: Okay. So Nancy and I decided that we are not going to do a whole introduction of ourselves in terms of who we are and what we do. You can read that in our bios, but we feel what is more important is that we introduce ourselves by what our passion is. And so Nancy, I will let you go first.

NANCY HLIBOK AMANN: Thank you, Djenne. I do want to stress here if you can see this quote, we hear it often, "It takes a village to raise a child." If you take a

literal analysis of this, it really is a beautiful and powerful statement. Bear this in mind truly everywhere you go. I have a personal story with this quote. I do have a picture here. Let me share that. So this is a picture with multiple hands holding the infant up in the air supporting the infant. This quote came from George Miller the second and he wrote this in 1953, very, very personal for me because I worked at California School for the Deaf in Riverside as a school site superintendent. , meaning I am responsible for 12 counties in Southern California. 12 counties serving Deaf and Hard of Hearing infants, youth, adolescents all the way up to age 22 years of age and every child has their own story and their own impact. My commitment is to work with our school district and as a result, I had developed a really strong relationships with one particular superintendent, the superintendent of Riverside County Office of Education which was a rather large County. She and I have developed a really nice report, Dr. Julie White, and I have incredibly high regard for her. She gifted this bring to my former supervisor. My supervisor has retired, since then two years ago and passed the torch, so to speak to me. It even has a signature in the back here that you can see a few signatures. What touches me the most here is the author originally gave it to Judy and Judy gifted it to my former supervisor and then it was gifted to me. It sends a very strong message and that is how important it is to build relationships. What does it take to build these relationships and to bring us to the next level of collaboration?

Please take the opportunity today to listen and ask questions, especially at the end of this presentation when we have that time allotted for that. I want all of you to leave with good thoughts and ideas.

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: Thank you, Nancy. This topic, it takes a village, this is Djenne, it takes a village to raise a child and is something I heard all my whole life growing up in New York City and throughout my lifetime. Today on this webinar as President of the board of Hands & Voices as a parent educator, as a parent of children who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in North Carolina and at family faculty at UNC-Chapel Hill, this saying has meant so much to me throughout the span of my lifetime. For me, it means that we are not alone. The most important role or title that I have is that I am a parent. I have three children as you read, one is 25, 24, and 19. And my

children are result of having a village. My son Malik was born with CHARGE syndrome. He is Deaf-Blind plus with a lot a plus including the best model that you want to see and the best laugh that makes you laugh and you don't know what he is laughing about, but he is laughing because he is in his own little world and it is his way. But I think the bill that surrounded us as we raised our children in the school for the blind to moving to North Carolina and going to the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf to working at Beginnings and becoming part of the Hands & Voices family, my own physical family, the family that has adopted us worldwide and nationwide, the teachers, nurses, doctors and so on and so on and so forth and....

Those are the people that made me who I am today and who I cherish and call as my village. And so as Nancy and I do this presentation, we want you to think about your village. If you are a teacher, a therapist, a service provider, if you are a parent, it is so important that we have a village and that is what this topic is so important to Nancy and I. Go ahead, Nancy.

NANCY HLIBOK AMANN: Beautifully said, Djenne. Your village. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your village. I apologize. I did forget to mention who I am. Clearly you can see I am a Deaf individual. And I have a lot of experience, a wealth of experience, as a Deaf individual certainly; however, also I have a Deaf son. I have a total of three children. My oldest is Deaf and he is 25 years old. I have two daughters, 122 and the third, my youngest is 18.

Interesting fun fact here. All three of them in 2020 unfortunately as you can imagine no graduation ceremonies for any of them but celebrating them in different ways is definitely occurring.

And we celebrated them by just the community, my family is from New York and I have Deaf parents. But we do have a plethora of hearing family members. And our belief is just the family type, that connection and I'm sure you heard it several times that Deaf of Deaf individuals are kind of on their own. They are set aside. And that is not accurate. We are part of the larger community, the community at large based on who you interact with, where you reside, where you went to school, church, temple, organizations that you might be members of. And our family members are everywhere.

My parents specifically our social activists and that is how I was raised. That is what I witnessed and observed and it is so important, that work of advocacy, and I have seen that my entire life.

My three children; I don't view them as -- how do I put it -- Deaf or hearing. They have names. Their names are Nathan, or Nathaniel, Brianna, and Kelsey and they have their own identities, which are so important and have to be respected and they are. And it is important that they pursued their own personal dreams and passions and we can certainly make it happen if they know that the opportunities are out there

We cannot be gatekeepers. We have to be advocates. We have to push from behind that they can be autonomous thinkers in our current society. That said, speaking of collaboration, cultural competence, and networking, this will be the three topics that will be covered today and it is a perfect time to discuss these, bring these to the table, and I will tell you why.

Currently what this world is experiencing globally of course with climate change, political shift, Black Lives Matter, Black Lives Matter movement there, these are not old issues by any means. Or rather they are not new I should say. But they are more visible now and there is more awareness. And this is happening really due to this COVID-19 pandemic where we are witnessing history here and this is creating this time where we are really affecting our roles and where we stand and how we can best work with others. Some are quarantining themselves, some are out there.

And because of this experience, I think that cultural aspect comes into play. What does that mean? How do we move forward? How do we work with diverse people? How do we do things? How do we interact with each other differently during this time of a pandemic? And we are realizing what is our place? And I do believe we all have a place, especially with Hands & Voices with the leaders that are working with our families facing these new challenges such as what resources are out there? What resources can we share? And we will share our thoughts.

I am really excited because we are going to focus on that collaboration aspect and Djenne will speak to that a little bit more. Djenne?

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: Okay. So how do we -- as Nancy said, thank you so much, Nancy. It is important to look at all of what we do in the lens of present day. And I have been doing this a long time. And I was actually challenged to look at what does collaboration mean today in our time, with our families, and I just want to stop and acknowledge all of the teachers and parents and families and children that are trying to figure out what to do in terms of education and schooling. We see you. We are with you. And we are all in this together.

And part of that is to collaborate, to look at what does the parent desire? As parents we want our children to have independence. We want them to have the social well-being, the emotional, educational, fill in the blank. We want what is best for our child and their education so they can live the best lives that they want to live. But professional, of course professionals want the best interest, the best practices. There are goals, IEP goals or other goals and also have to meet the educational requirements. And I want to say when I say professional, I mean someone who is a service provider. Because in fact, we are all professionals.

The purpose of collaboration is for both parents and professionals to look at what is important to both. What is important to the family? What is important to the professionals in order for us to meet the needs of the child? So there are some underlying principles that I want to go through.

Again, you will have these on the Hands & Voices website. And so I'm going to do this more as a conversation. What are some of the underlying principles that are important? I think the most important thing is trust and a sense of shared responsibility, that everyone comes to the table with the same responsibility to meet the needs of the child.

All team members, it is so important that they want to work together toward a common goal. Now, as you know, with our children, there are so many goals. Like I said, before we have social goals, goals at home and goals at school and now we have goals virtually. And so what is it that it is going to require to meet their particular goal? And I think another thing that is important is how do we prioritize that goal? That is something that a family really needs. They might need help even at this time, but that is

where the professionals come into work. There are so many things going on. How do we prioritize that goal? It is based on the idea that everyone is valued and every participant has equity. And every participant's opinion, goals, advice, even if they are different, they are valued and it is so important we embrace the uniqueness of the perspective of all the team members. We all bring a different language, a different space of experience that is important. It is important that we look at that uniquely and that we have the same purpose.

There is a lot on this slide. What is collaboration? Again, what is best for your child is what is best. Let's keep that in mind. But collaboration is an approach where as people we look beyond our interests to try to create something new and try to create solutions for what our children need. It is also asserting our own interest in whatever way we need to do that while respecting the interest of others. And it is one for all and all for one, that the child needs, we have to keep that at the forefront. But we have to look at what is the family needing because the child comes from a family. When his collaboration best used?

It is when you want to find a solution that meets all the needs and it is not compromising anyone's belief or compromising the outcome. It is important to use a team approach where we are trying to equalize power. The parents have the expertise, the professionals have the expertise, how can we pull them together to merge both? It is so important that you have time to work toward true collaboration. And the rush of getting everything together we forget and take that time. I believe the best gift we can give each other is the gift of time to work toward a solution and it is important that we have the authority to implement that solution. Or that we give one another the authority and permission to implement the solution.

There is a cost to collaboration. Nothing is free in this world. So what does collaboration cost? Again, time, energy, hard work. It is not easy. Sometimes though there are challenges that need to be solved quickly or if there is an emergency, that might not be the time for some collaborative approach. So that is where we need to get creative. Remember, when I talk about priority? The best way to collaborate is to say what is the priority? I have a son with multiple medical and educational and

communication needs. I have had to figure out even if I am sitting in the IEP meeting, is his help, his education, his safety, what is the most important thing right now? Because sometimes it can be all at once, but what do I need to focus on? What can we as a team focus on right now? Again, we must have a strong sense of power and respect and sharing that power. And it is important as a group to check-in with each other to make sure true collaboration is happening, that we check in. Is this what you understand? One of my favorite sayings is, "Help me to understand." And then be quiet. So I can ask the person if there is something why I don't understand, I can help myself as well as someone else understand what is important.

All right. So as we know there are always barriers and challenges to communication. I will ask Nancy to come back on so we can comment on this together. Communication, I think is one of the biggest challenges. How we are communicating, who are we communicating with? Do we have barriers in our mode of communication? We need to make sure we have seamless communication.

Another one is unconscious bias. We will talk about that will we talk about cultural reciprocity. Nancy, I would let you take the other ones.

NANCY HLIBOK AMANN: I appreciate it. Thank you. Bear with us one moment. So this is a difficult topic. One aspect that I want to stress and some of you may already be very familiar with this concept, but the concept of intersectionality and what does that really entail? As individuals, we have our own story. This is not a cookie-cutter experience in life. It is not a one-size-fits-all by any means and so one approach will not work for everyone regardless of your hearing abilities. And this applies to hearing individuals as well, not just the Deaf community, but one area I did want to focus on and this is a personal conviction that I have. It is growing up as we learn of things that are instilled in us, those that are exposed to particular schooling, particular organizations, local community opportunities, this becomes kind of who you are. And let me further address that.

That resistance to change. Let me give you an example here just so you can get a better idea. My first identity or what I first identified with is I am a woman. And that is clear as day. You see me as a woman first. Second to that is my deafness. I identify

as a Deaf individual. Third to that I am a New Yorker. I don't live there any longer. I moved out of the city over 25 years ago; however, I still have strong ties in terms of my identity as a New Yorker. For, and there are other aspects that I identify with, but when you look at me, I am a woman. Now with Black Lives Matter, this is impactful for me professionally and personally speaking. What is interesting about this experience is when this became much more controversial or you saw much more conversations occurring via social media, it is what I'm speaking to right now, I am looked at as a school leader.

End the first question is what are your plans Nancy? What are you doing in a pretty aggressive fashion? The approach was fairly aggressive. And I was intimidated. I was fearful. Because I am not Black. I am not Black and now I am told to make decisions and I have to be honest. I am a little lost at first or I was. I reached out to Tony Thurman, which is California's Superintendent intendant. He is a Black leader in the state of California. I reached out to him and we had a very candid conversation. And he said, "Nancy, do not walk away. Do not run away from the situation. Instead be engaged, be a part of this change. Be a part of this process and learn that as a leader, you can lead from behind.

So the community comes with a variety of advantage points. But we can come up with mutual understanding and agreement based on the collaborative efforts, based on what Djenne always already walked us through bearing that in mind, knowing that the view will not always be 100% the same. But the end goal is that we are doing this in the best interest of the school goes. So for me, I have to look at the big picture. What does that mean if we go down this path or this path, right? The trajectory is everything and I have to think that through and we have to not resist this change because for example, my supervisor who has made it very clear that my role often we have to be reminded of our roles. And we have to keep it separate from our personal biases. And that is a hard one. And we have to be very cautious. It is a fine line that you walk.

I strongly recommend as individuals that want to be on the sidelines and write the standards and think that it doesn't apply to me, the world is becoming a smaller place. So anything that happens outside of you, know that it does apply to you. And we need

to be doing this from within. We need to start with ourselves. Who am I? What am I contributing to the society? How am I cultivating a more collaborative world? How am I part of this change? Regardless if this is right or wrong, that is not the goal. It is about building this large mass village where we can all share this common goal and common goals. How we reach that, the path will look different certainly. As long as it is in the best interest of the community where we can grow in a healthy way where we have to have these hard conversations every day and those who don't have those hard conversations will find themselves in endless conflict and they will have a difficult time getting out of it.

When you look at yourself in the mirror of course, you want to learn more about yourself naturally that is intriguing, right? We want to do more for ourselves. And often people will say that is a yoga thing. You are talking about meditation. This is applicable to all individuals. It is important that we take that time, that it becomes a part of your daily routine where we have that self-reflection, that systematic oppression and often we wonder what we are talking about? What does that mean? I will give you an example.

The structure is set up and away way that causes organic depression. For instance CLF4172, free and appropriate public education. LRE, least restrictive environment; otherwise, known as LRE.

Least restrictive environment, in terms of the law when you look at the language, it creates oppression, depending on how you interpret it.

In some ways it is viewed as not creating that oppression, but if you look at that law, it is biased naturally. Whomever drafted that law at the time it may have made sense, but over time we are observing that we might want to go back. And you might be thrown off as to why I am even bringing this up, but our individual education plan, IEP, it speaks to the individual education, speaking about their education. This plan surrounding one individual child. But systematically, this is created for all individuals. And IEPs do not work unless parents know their rights, unless the school is receptive and openly engaged with diverse students. And they have their own stories.

Currently speaking more and more individuals are thinking that we are entitled to something, right? Well, what does that mean for you as an individual? I have to admit at my age, I used to think that I have to work really hard to get where I am at. I had to begin entry-level first as a teacher in the classroom and move up the ranks. Now the younger generation -- I don't mean to label -- so there is some awesome things that are younger generation is doing, but one thing that I see is the sense of entitlement. And then I said to myself no Nancy, that is wrong. Entitlement is based on current society perspectives. And it can create ambition through social media, through just being more visible, visibility, exposure, progressive in their own ways. And as I witnessed this, I realize this was my own opinion and what I am sharing and what I am saying, I've even caught myself. I say Nancy, wait a minute. We need to have conversation. Let's talk about entitlement. What does that mean? And it really is based all on context. It is contextual and content biases. Of course, everybody has their own biases and it is impactful depending on your overall experience such as often I have faced numerous people that will begin speaking to me. As you can imagine they don't realize I am Deaf. And this is when I was younger. I used to point to my ear indicating that I could not hear and then shake my head. And that individual would automatically, their facial expression would go into this pure sympathy, like oh, I am so sorry! And I said oh, my goodness no. No, no, no. And then they would begin speaking. And then I said let's write back-and-forth. I don't have to point out that I am Deaf. I have to point out how to communicate. And I've seen there is more of a shift when I asked them to communicate with me in the way that I need them too. That is all I need. Give me access. Once I have access, we are on equal footing out there and I think that is such a salient point.

How do we empower Deaf individuals that have their own self-doubt? How do we help guide them in the right direction? And as parents, the first Deaf individual that you often meet as a hearing parent are there very own infants, right?

So of course, you are not the expert and you are still learning and that is where the community is so important. Back to that notion of a village. It is so important that you are supported by the community, that village, to break down those barriers and

challenges that you face as parents of Deaf children. Communication; oh, my goodness! It can be very tricky I will say.

Using interpreters and I will say I have taught ASL classes to hearing students at community colleges and universities. And students would watch and I would always say, you know, interpreters don't live with me. And they were caught off guard. I have my own life and I don't live with an interpreter. And guess what I also drive. And it doesn't agitate me. I am not bothered by these questions that students would ask. It is either taught or it is learned through just their own experiences. Now I hope those questions don't come up anymore. I hope that perception does not still reside out there, but communication can occur through written communication. It can be through sign language if they hearing individual signs it. That is awesome, giving full access. I mean you cannot beat the beauty of conversation. Truly you cannot. It means a lot to human beings. It is a need. A natural need. And communication barriers can just simply create frustration, agitation, and communication can happen through a relay service interpreter and TTYs are incredibly outdated and our dinosaurs and our community. But access and what that looks like now is very different. But I would like to turn it over to Djenne for reciprocity.

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: Thank you, Nancy. I know you all did not realize that we have two New Yorkers here that are very passionate about the subject and our families and our children. And I just want to thank you, Nancy. The thing that is important is empowerment. It is empowering, letting families know that they are empowered, letting the children, as well as those that work with our children. It empowerment might look different for each family, child, or professional, but the fact that we can help give tools for that empowerment is important. And so the next couple of slides are our call to action of how we can educate ourselves, help empower one another. And so these are some suggestions. Again, really as you are listening to today, it really take some notes. Think about what it is that you can do. A lot of times even between the pandemic and the cultural changes and political changes and our own responses to our children and education, I have heard so many people say I don't know what to do. And that is real. But think that there is something we can do. And so

think of what we can do rather than okay, I don't know what to do. And that can be paralyzing. One call to action is looking at Hands & Voices. I've been part of the Hands & Voices family for 13 years now. And joining Hands & Voices and going to our website will be put up on the screen and looking at the many ways that you can get involved on your chapter level, on a national level, even on an international level.

So I would encourage people to do that. Another way to look is reciprocity. What do I mean by reciprocity? It means respecting and learning about someone else's culture while sharing information. We all have a culture and we all bring ourselves as a person and we all bring kind of our luggage. What makes us our own unique selves into an IEP meeting, the classroom, into the relationship, into wherever we are, we bring that.

There is a process. And this is a process that has been researched so many times. The first thing is reflecting on our own personal biases that drive our own recommendations.

As Nancy said we all have unconscious or implicit bias. What does that mean? Implicit bias, unconscious bias, it is attributes that our brain quickly assigns to people based on a social category. As Nancy said someone might not see her as a Deaf woman at first and then they have to have some adjustments. I am a mom. I am a Black woman and I carry many things with me. I am from New York and live in the South and there are a lot of things where walk into a room. The second one is inviting questions. Like what Nancy is saying, communication is key. Listen to the parents' perspective it. When I do my work in North Carolina at the beginning, we do a lot of home visits.

And one of the things we are committed to is we are going in a house. Or we are all on video. Who are we walking into? This is a person's home and a person's life and these are the children and what is their perspective about what is going on? Going on with their child? And what are their needs and goals? It is important as service providers number 3, that we explained our own perspective. This is our goal. This is our agenda. And then step forward. How can we identify a common ground? How can we develop strategic or collaborative goals to meet the needs of our children?

So this is a cultural competence model that I've used in several other presentations. I am not going to read it all, but Nancy and I are actually going to share our own stories of how this is important. And just so you know, again, I am a New Yorker, a northerner, a Yankee who has moved down to North Carolina so that Malik could get healthy.

And so I have been very blessed to have a wide cultural lens and growing up in New York but also a lot of the trainees that I have had. And so when I walk in or deal with the family, I am looking at them from the lens of who they are, what do they know? What are they sensitive to?

To give you an example here is the intersectionality. I am a Black woman and I have a Black Sun who is Deaf plus. We moved from the north to the south. We became part of the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf word, the Deaf culture. So we exist and so many different worlds. And then he is part of the DeafBlind culture and part of the Deaf plus. And we have to change hats so many times.

I am also a parent, as well as a professional. And so these are the lenses that I come with when I am working with families.

A very quick personal story. We were in front of the house one day and something had happened to our mailbox. The police were here and Malik is trying. He loves police cars and he is trying to get into the police car and we were standing in front of the house talking to a wonderful guy in my town and he made a suggestion to me.

Said your son has a disability. So if you gets out or he is running or if the neighbors don't know him, that could be a cause for something tragic. So what I would suggest is that you take him down, and he arranged for us to go to the police station and Malik loves to wash cars. And so for one summer he washed cars at the police station and went to the fire station so that the community people would get to know him as a person. But also, as a young man that has a disability and so if anything was to happen or if he was to get out and a neighbor calls, they would know that that is Malik.

And so it is so important that we have our own personal stories. But if we listen to the personal stories of our family, I am going to advance the slide, Nancy. We will

move on. And in the other piece that is important as when we are working with families and we are professional is that we have diversity and inclusion. Diversity means that there is a people and a perspective and experience that are very different, that is unique. But it is different than inclusion. Inclusion is you have people from different backgrounds and different perspectives, but you are including them in there is a sense that we are creating a climate of belonging with uniqueness. We bring uniqueness, but are we creating a climate of belonging, that you bring your authentic self, who you are to the table and that you belong here. What you have to communicate is important. It is important that we create psychological basics. Can I bring my whole self-to the table? We talk about family engagement and as a family sometimes there are places, we don't want to go. We are not sure we are going to be excepted. What if Malik goes into someone's refrigerator and something else happens? So we have looked to networking in a community of people where we feel that we are safe bringing our full selves as a family and that we can fully engage.

NANCY HLIBOK AMANN: Thank you. Tying that now into networking. First and I would say the most important step for families to take, and this is for any family that have a Deaf infant or Deaf, and Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing. My mother, when she gave birth to the four of us when we were younger, she decided to have afternoon tea parties where she invited all of the neighbors. All of the neighbors were in attendance and the neighbors found it incredibly odd. But they came and the goal was to break the ice. And what mom would do if she would gesture with them and write back and forth. There was no interpreter available. And with that action, the community became the number 1 ally for families. And there was just a plethora of resources birth as a result. The resources are out there. Bear that in mind. So as you can see, here networking. There are some bullets here. We have the child. If you can, try to live through that child's perspective through their eyes. And try to refrain from decision-making without the child. Engage them in that process. Of course, when it is age appropriate. Elementary, middle, and high school. Where the child does have their own thoughts and opinions and even a perspective of life. So offer that opportunity to the child or adolescent. These are available resources and you can take a look at the website and the information will be available there. And we are just not limited to this list by any

means. This is basically resources that I am very familiar with. But there are so many more out there. I did not include religious organizations. And I know that there are a litany of those available as well. Again, I have to stress this. Resources are out there at an international level, national level, state, local, town level and the list goes on and on and on. Feel free to do more homework on any of these resources or organizations that speak to you. See what they have to offer. I promise you they have so much to offer. But you have to narrow down the need that you have as a family. With Hands & Voices again, national and local level. Local level, honing in on what you want to provide support in, depending on your area. Some of them are more rural. Some of them are more urban-based depending on where you reside and one thing I did want to mention is interpreters, sign language interpreters are available throughout the United States.

And of course, there are regional signs it. I have met Deaf individuals, for example, from a Louisiana and they sign differently. You can get by and you can have a conversation no doubt about it. But there are some regional sign, very similar to what you would experience in the here and as it accent. So thank you to everyone for being here this morning or the afternoon. We would like to open it up to any questions. Does anyone have any questions for myself and/or Djenne?

WILL EISERMAN: Thank you.

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: William, hold on for second. I wanted to thank Nancy, but in terms of call to action, Hands & Voices on September 19 is having Hands & Voices something extraordinary. We are having a virtual event. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic we cannot have our leadership conference in person, which we are all heartbroken. But God willing we will do that next year. Look at Hands&Voices.org on our homepage. It is going to be an amazing day to celebrate us as a community to be inspired and to grow. So this is September 19. Something extraordinary, a virtual event. If there are questions, we would love to take them.

WILL EISERMAN: So thank you both of you. This is Will Eiserman from NCHAM again. I've opened up the questions box on the left side of your screen into which you are invited to type a question or comment for our presenters to respond to.

Let's see here. We have our first comment and let me read this for you. I actually need to enlarge it because I cannot see it very well.

(Laughter)

Okay. Regarding implicit bias. I have been thinking about what I sometimes assume about professionals from a parent perspective in the EHDI system that I have to get through sometimes. In other words, it might be that professional doesn't know what it is really like or that professional will not think about the holistic experience of deafness, but only their view of expertise. May be might assume about parents, but they don't know the complexity of systems or something like that. Any tips for parents and professionals on how to get through our implicit biases about one another and that context?

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: This is Djenne. I will tackle it first and then Nancy, you can go. Excellent question and thank you very much. Well, that is another webinar for us to come back to. But I think the first thing is realizing we both again, like I said, come with our own ideas and our own fears. And I think speaking as a family member a lot of times we do walk into a situation with fear. Is this going to meet my child's needs? Is it something they need? One thing I've done it over and over again. I have done this at a young age with my family is to communicate. To ask for some time or on the agenda or the IEP to talk about who Malik is and who we are as a family and what the needs are and then invite the professional to do the same. Because the more we communicate, the more we understand what it is that we need to do. The reciprocity process, I saw this in the piece of paper that said that. And said okay, I would love to go through this. And let's look at this. This is my perspective as a parent. I would love to know your perspective as a provider and then what are your common goals. That is when way to do that. Nancy did you want to comment? And then we did have another question.

NANCY HLIBOK AMANN: Yes. I did. It is interesting. There is automatically kind of a resistance that happens here when a parent sees the professional and they come across is maybe not truly understanding the request or question at hand. And all of a sudden, this organic wall is built. The best way to break that down is through

sincerity. Just be sincere. Ask the parent, asked the question what can you offer? What do you know whether it is your knowledge, your life, and that will put it into perspective, I think. Bear with us one moment. The screen is frozen. That way it helps narrow down for them and it does allow for that holistic approach. And I do think that also allows for that professional to realize that they might have to do more research. And as Djenne said yes, it is so important but certainly a separate webinar. There are a litany of resources out there available and it is not a one-stop shop certainly. It depends on where you reside, as you can imagine. It is very difficult to find individuals that are qualified to work with Deaf students or Deaf children. We are lacking in that area in terms of professionals. There are some individuals that have basic understanding. But it is kind of learned on the job I truly appreciate that you are bringing this up. I think we can do more certainly to provide that level of resources and support.

WILL EISERMAN: This is William. The next question is about asking for just to see the resource list again and whether they can get a copy of this. Note that this webinar is being recorded. If that or anything else is something you would like to access again you can obtain that by going to [Hands&Voices.org](http://Hands&Voices.org) and reviewing the information again. Is this the slide do you think that has the resources that they are referring to? And if not, -- is that it?

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: This is Djenne. We do have a few resources on the last slide. But Nancy and I have our e-mails and we would be happy to add more resources. So feel free to e-mail a-determiner.

WILL EISERMAN: Great. And I will put your e-mail slide back up here so everybody can see that. We are crowding out our space here a little bit. The next question is for new parent leaders out there, rebuilding relationships with others with whom they have had conflict maybe while advocating for their own child can be challenging.

What is your advice to new parent leaders who are striving to rebuild trust and communication?

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: Go ahead Nancy.

NANCY HLIBOK AMANN: I will take that one. I would suggest having that meeting in-person and this is just my personal belief. E-mail can be very dangerous and we can become over analytical in terms of how we are having this conversation. I think when they are disagreements it is best to do that face to. Of course, we have our own personal beliefs. But that doesn't change the way I want to support all of you and what you are doing. And we are here to do that, to provide that level of support such as I might have a particular case in a home, right? And I am a realtor. I sell all types of homes in the area. Do I critique all of those homes even though the homebuyer might want something very different from my own personal taste? Of course, not. So again, it is keeping that professional and personal opinion separate and doing that with respect. Having those conversations and not via e-mail, certainly not via e-mail. These are face-to-face conversations, it even a live phone call. But my opinion is always the face-to-face for that level of interaction. It is so important.

DJENNE-AMAL MORRIS: And this is Djenne. I know we have two seconds left, but I think naming the conflict like Nancy said, being in-person if you can. And naming that conflict and saying okay, we are in a conflict here. This is my perspective and this is your perspective. Again, what is best for the child? And is it necessary to bring in a facilitator? If you really reach a stalemate, bring someone in that is neutral that can help explain both sides.

WILL EISERMAN: We have just a few minutes left. This is William again. We have one final question and it comes back to a comment from you, Nancy and also lots of thank yous from many different people that I did not individually read. Nancy, you said something about how the LRE component of the law is biased. But isn't seeing LRE as biased actually a bias itself?

NANCY HLIBOK AMANN: That is a great question. So LRE stands for least restrictive environment. That said, that means that the interpretation and there are different interpretations. But we say LRE, meaning a child is placed at a public school. That happens first with LRE. If they failed the multiple sector and then fails multiple times they are placed at a school for the Deaf as a last results and that is inherently and the law. And LRE and other perspectives is you provide that child will full

access, the language, full access to instruction. It could be at a school for the Deaf and a hearing public school depending on the child. But the way the law is written, it does imply that your homeschool, that public school is the first choice of placement and that is just inherently in the law the way it was drafted at the time. Now sometimes conversations may have where okay, so that is the law, but the law itself, and again, I am looking at it literally. And this is a conversation for maybe another day. I would love to have this conversation via e-mail. We could correspond that way, but to give you a different perspective right or wrong, that is the perspective that I have.

WILL EISERMAN: Thank you everybody. This is Will Eiserman. One again, we would like to wrap up today's webinar with a thank you to all of our supports today in terms of our captioner and interpreters. Thank you to our presenters as well. Into all of you who participated and offered your attention and good questions and comments. Before you run off, if you would not mind clicking in the middle of the screen here where it says click here and give us feedback and to get a certificate of attendance for today, that would be much appreciated. And again, this webinar has been recorded. So know that you can access this, again, in the next couple of days at Hands&Voices.org. Good day everyone.

»: Thank you so much.

»: Audio recording for this meeting has ended.

2:03 PM (ET)