



# A Deaf Child's Voice: Things I Wish EHDI Told My Parents

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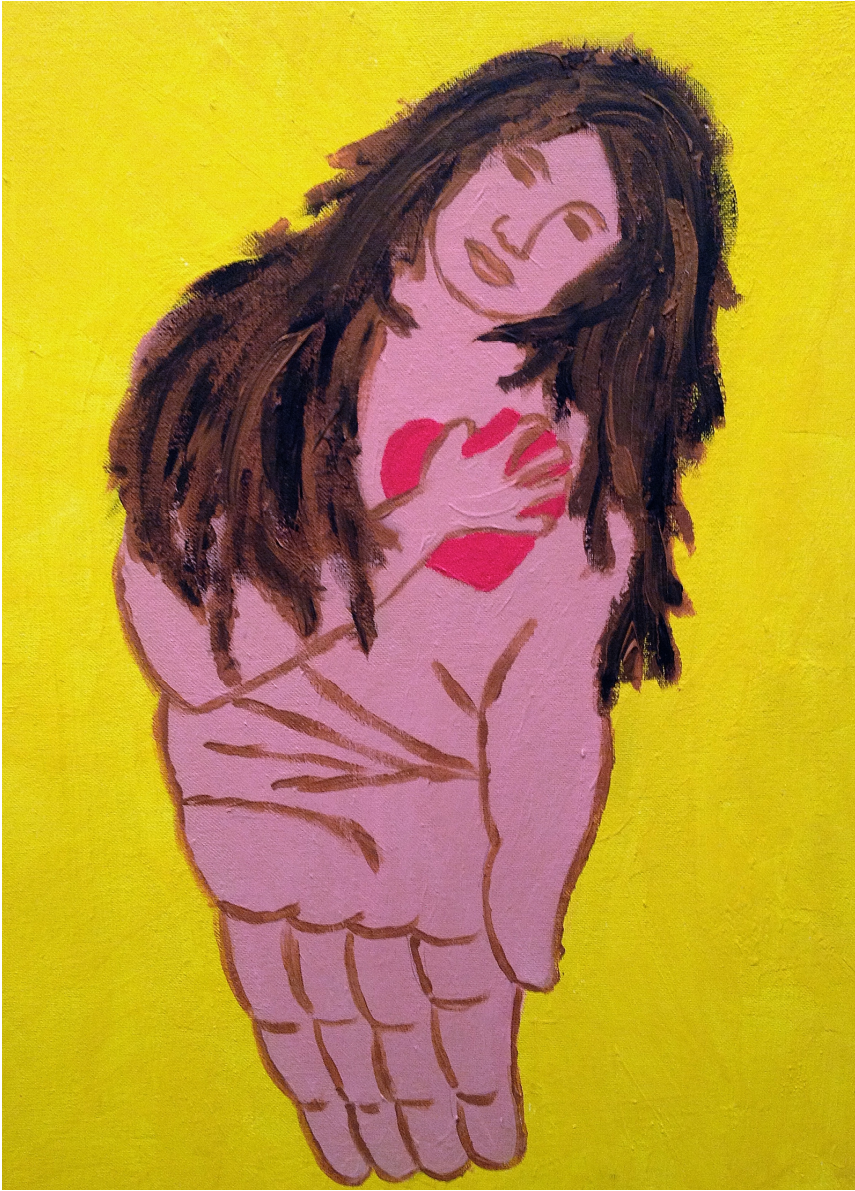








































































# Language and Identity Deprived

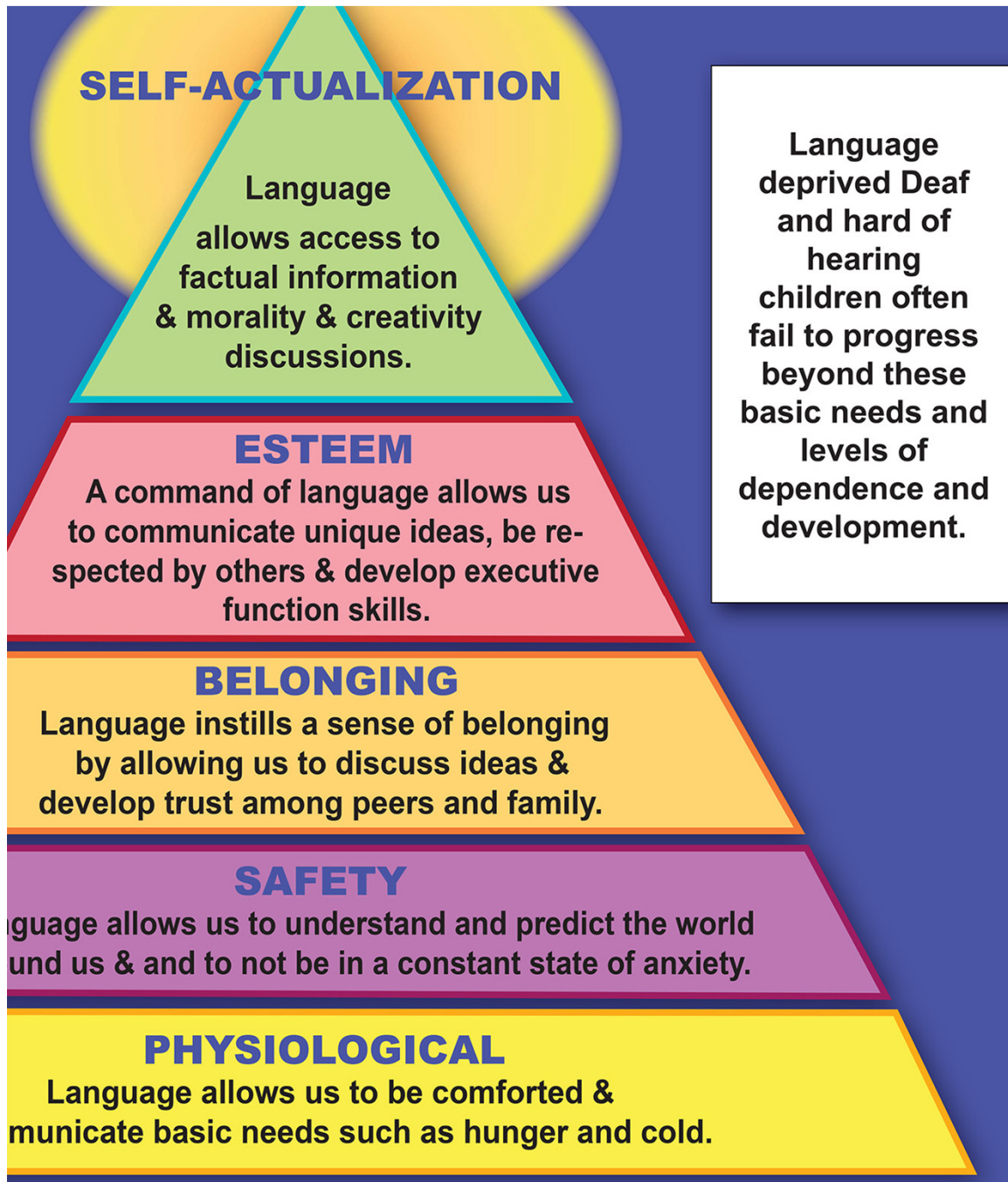
- Second guesses oneself
- Feels alone and lacks self-esteem
- Has gaps in interpersonal and social skills
- Misses social cues and opportunities to connect with others
- Feels anxious in communicating using speech and listening skills with groups
- Tries hard to fit but may feel unwanted or a burden
- Experiences academic and social delays
- Feels frustrated in communicating basic needs

# Language and Identity

- Language is integral to culture and identity.
- Interacting with Deaf individuals like themselves can provide a sense of grounding and belonging necessary to achieve self actualization.
- Using sign language and identifying with the Deaf community significantly contributes to positive self-esteem in Deaf children.

(Jambor & Elliott, 2005)





Deaf Children who use only Spoken English and experience being socially ostracized often have limited abilities and opportunities to move up this pyramid.

***The human brain does not discriminate between the hands and tongue. People discriminate, but not our biological human brain.” Dr. Laura Ann Petito***

**Relying solely on spoken English, of which only few master, puts many Deaf children at a linguistic and social disadvantage.**

(Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Bandura, & Zimbardo, 2000; Malecki & Elliott, 2002)

**American Sign Language is not antithetical to spoken English but actually facilitates speech skills.**

(Malaia & Wilbur 2010: Priesler, Tvingstedt and Ahlstrom, 2002)



The dominant culture causes many Deaf individuals to feel marginalized. This has social, psychological and linguistic repercussions. (Ridgeway, 1998)





*What Deaf adults know instinctively and historically is that relying solely on unreliable, unlimited or distorted auditory language input translates into a greater risk of lifetime language delays for Deaf children. We are also alarmed witnessing a national epidemic language and identity-deprived Deaf children. It is a national crisis.*

# Four Legs of EHDI

- Parents
- Medical professionals
- Educators
- Deaf Community

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse, and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.”

— [Desmond Tutu](#)