Finding Your Village

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Parents:

- **Melissa Rosa- Indianapolis, Indiana**
- **Alison Larson- Lewiston, Idaho**
- **Tiffany Zwart- Deep River, Connecticut**
- **Sasha Entwistle- Courtice, Ontario (Canada)**
- **Karen Aung- Irvine, California**
- **Valeri Tran- Everett, Washington**

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WHO WE ARE...

Tiff Zwart

WHAT WE DO…

- Weekly Virtual Parent Discussion Group:
  - Started during the pandemic
  - Once a week, via zoom
  - Anyone can join
    - Inclusive Group
    - Parents with children of all ages
    - Parents with children who have different types of hearing loss
    - All communication modalities

WHAT WE DO…

- What does our meeting look like?
  - Semi-facilitated
  - Parents typically lead the topics or discussion
- What do we talk about?
  - Successes (small and large)
  - Challenges (small and large)
  - Tips and Tricks
  - Give and Receive Advice
  - Ideas/Brainstorming
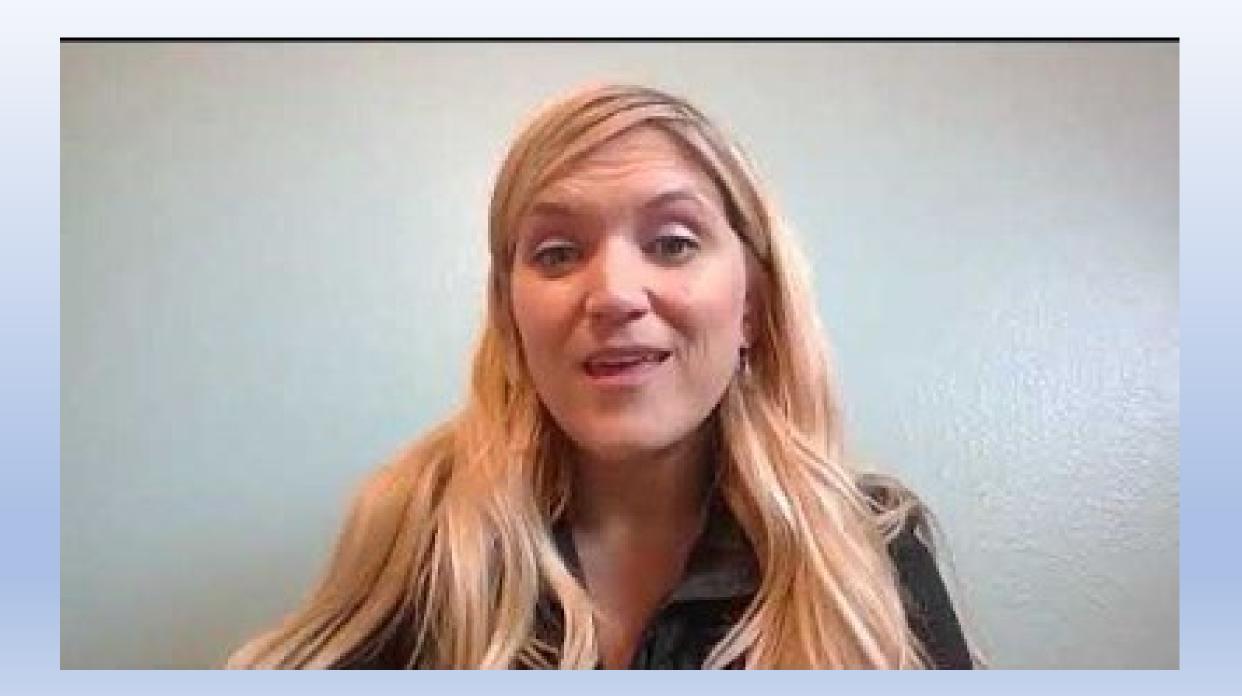 - Sometimes it's not talking at all.. It's listening

HOW WE HELP…

- Benefits:
  - Connection
  - Education
  - Encouragement
  - Resources
  - Support (continuous, non-conditional)
  - Parent Experience vs. Professional Advice
  - Empathy
  - Problem Solving

- Understanding the "journey"
- Finding a common ground
- Safe Space
- People who "get it"
- Preparation
- Comfortability
- Transitions/Stages
- Advocacy
- New perspectives
- Similar Emotions

Melissa Rosa

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- Understand that professionals can not offer the same type of support

- Parents often need the support, but don't know where to look
  - Start recommending outside groups
  - Connect parents within your practice/school/organization

- What would it take to start your own group?

- Collaborate or partner with groups that have already been started

- Listen and empathize

Let's Keep the Conversation Going…

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Facebook Group: "Virtual Discussion Group for Parents of Children with Hearing Loss"

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Thank You!