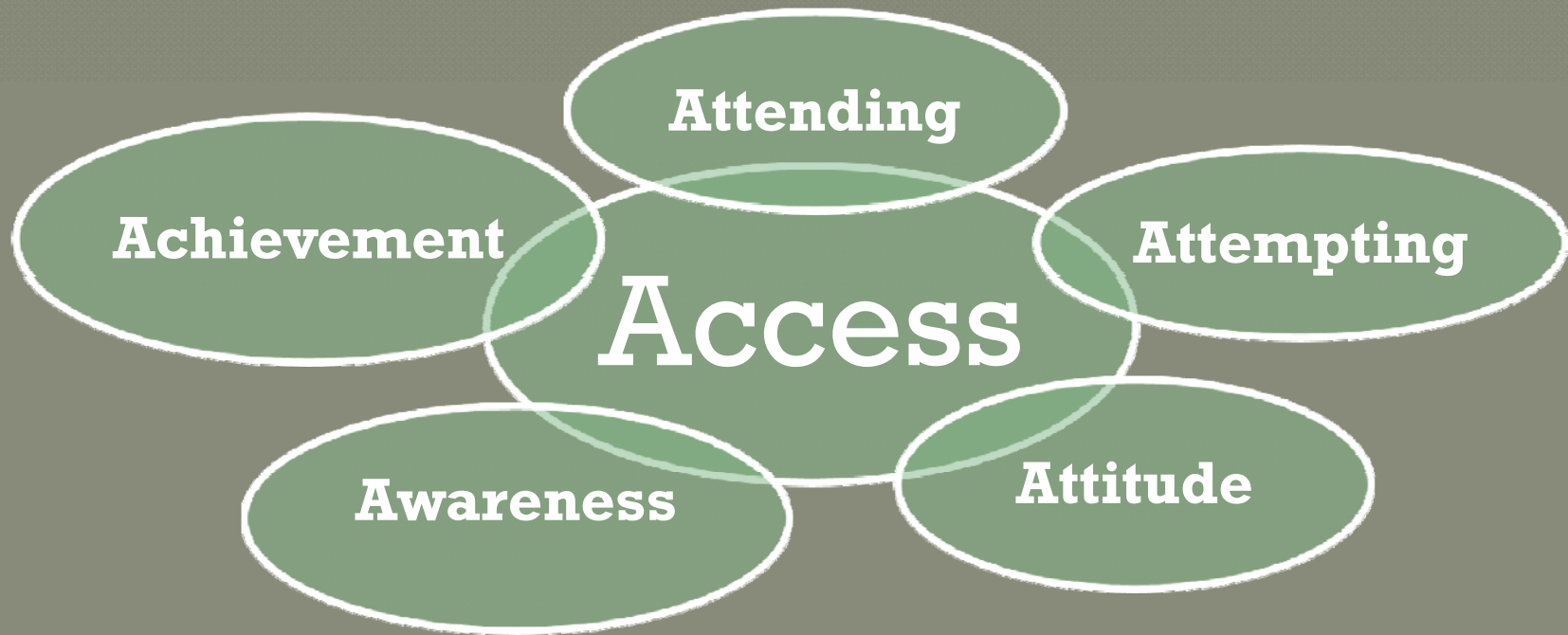


Integrating Deaf Culture into Family Life and Professional Awareness



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An "A+" Way to Communicate



Attending

Three little boys and their deaf teacher

- Rich and varied experiences supply children with opportunities to practice roles
- Experiences benefit all children – but are critical for those with early hearing loss
(Bodner-Johnson, 2003)



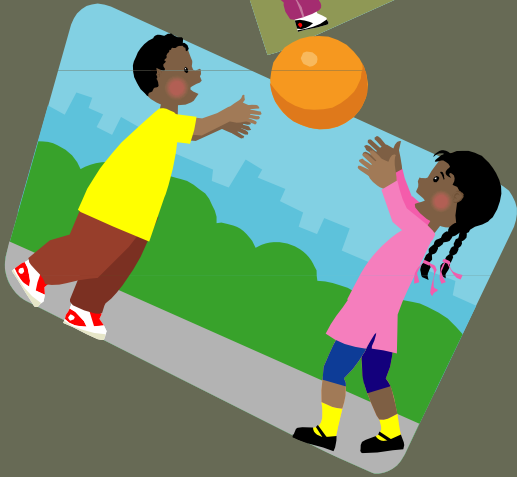
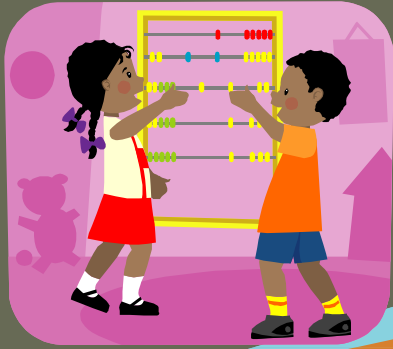
Attempting

Watching TV in the “dark ages”

- Technology and visual aids are wonderful but do not replace daily family “chats”
- All family members have potential for enriching the language environment (Meadow-Orlans, Mertens, & Sass-Lehrer (2002))



Awareness



“Deaf” takes on a new meaning for all

- Deaf children grow up to become...
Deaf adults!
- A healthy self-identify is associated with a shared social group (Erikson, 1986, 1980; Sheridan, 2008)

Achievement

Families have unique “cultures” too

- Communication of family norms and values takes many forms
- Academic and life success rely on many variables including communication flexibility (Convertino, Marschark, Sapere, Sarchet, & Zupan, 2009)



Attitude

*Family events become opportunities
for all to learn*

- Taking risks and learning new skills can be scary and exciting
- Healthy families build upon optimism, hope, and collective wisdom (Seligman, 2000)



A+ Family Experiences

Parents Lead the Way

- Parental decision-making is influenced by multiple factors
- Children absorb and acquire values over a lifetime
 - It's never too late to learn
- Family life is affected by interactions, resources, parenting factors, and support
(Jackson & Turnbull, 2004)



Cultural Strengths

Values of Community



How Deaf culture supports families:

- Vitally interested in early childhood
 - Values social experiences
- Highlights achievements of its members
- Welcomes the opportunity to explain “Deaf”
 - Encourages ASL and communication clarity
 - Embraces electronic access
 - Honors older members of community
- Views Deafness as a difference not a disability



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