

Identifying Effective Practices to Support Early Linguistic Competence



Debra Nussbaum, Clerc Center, Gallaudet University

Beth S. Benedict, Ph.D., Department of Communication Studies, Gallaudet University

Who we are....

The Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center (Clerc Center) at Gallaudet University is a federally funded program established to guide effective practices in the education of deaf and hard of hearing children in the United States.

Two Demonstration Schools (KDES and MSSD) are a component of the Clerc Center.



Call to Action....

“ Accelerating Evidence-Based Recommendations Into Practice for the Benefit of Children with Early Hearing Loss”

*National Workshop, US Department of Health and Human Services
workshop, January, 2008*

Call to Action....

- **Goal:** Development of a plan to improve early intervention systems and services.
- **Conference Outcome:** A list of priority recommendations, including recommendations specific to treatment and intervention.
- **Highlight:** The importance of national constituencies collaborating to document effective language and communication practices as one component of overall care.

Russ, S. et.al. Accelerating Evidence Into Practice for the Benefit of Children With Early Hearing Loss. Pediatrics, 2010;126S7-S-18

One of our strategic goals:

Goal 3: The Clerc Center will identify and disseminate resources to ensure that all deaf and hard of hearing children and their families have early and ongoing access to information that supports the development of **linguistic competence.**



What do we mean by “Linguistic Competence” ?

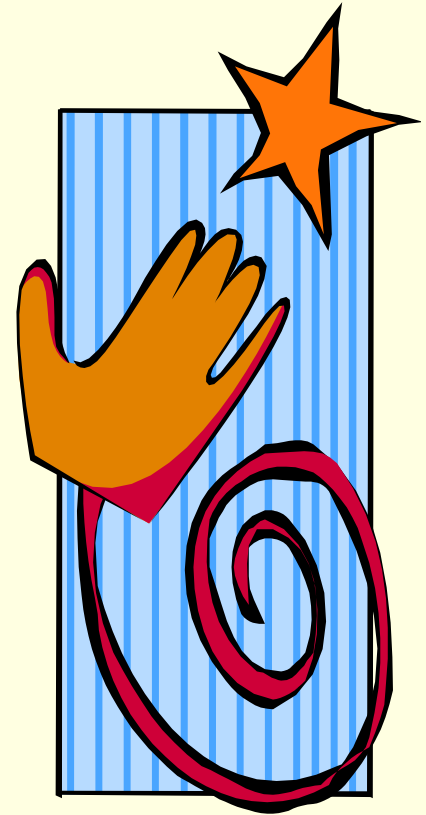
Linguistic competence is the ability to use language to facilitate communication, critical thinking, problem solving, reading, and writing.

Goal 3- objective 1:

Using research to inform practice,
the Clerc Center will

**identify and disseminate
evidence-based strategies
for early intervention service**

delivery by 2012



What we have done

- Completed a literature review and identified 6 factors critical to enhancing linguistic competence for deaf and hard of hearing children,
- Identified early intervention program components (reflective of these factors) which are critical for inclusion in early intervention programs
- Developed a checklist to identify programs nationally who are already putting into practice any or all of the identified recommended components and strategies.

What is Evidence-Based Education?

- ▶ *“the integration of professional wisdom with the best available empirical evidence in making decisions about how to deliver instruction”*

Whitehurst, G. J. (2002, October). *Evidence-based Education*. Presentation at the Student Achievement and School Accountability Conference. Retrieved October 1, 2010 from <http://ies.ed.gov/director/whitehurst.asp>

Examples of Evidence

Component of Evidence	Examples of evidence
Best research evidence or best available evidence	Research studies, evaluations, objective measurements of child progress, and systematic literature reviews
Practitioner experience or professional wisdom; families' "wisdom"	Personal observation, experience, professional or expert consensus, position papers, policy statements and professional judgment
Consumer's values and beliefs	Personal beliefs, concerns, and expectations of consumers (parents/professionals)

Factor 1: Exploring modalities, technologies, and strategies to support the development of early linguistic competence should be a collaborative, evolving process.



Factor 2: Ongoing assessment and monitoring of a child's development in both signed and spoken language is critical to guiding individualized language and communication planning.



Factor 3: Early exposure to visual communication through signs and gestures is critical to establishing language foundations to promote timely language development for children who are deaf and hard of hearing.



Factor 4: Early fitting of amplification, as well as ongoing monitoring of the range of amplification benefit, are critical to guiding the role of spoken language development and communication approaches/strategies used for each child.



Factor 5: Direct and daily access to language and communication is critical to facilitating each child's language and communication development.





Factor 6: A bilingual/bimodal ASL/English approach to language development is beneficial to providing early language and communication foundations in both auditory and visual modalities for deaf and hard of hearing children.

Where we are now....

- ▶ Compiled evidence to support the 6 factors
- ▶ Developed a checklist of program components we identified to support the 6 factors
- ▶ Identified a composite list of Early Intervention programs throughout the United States

What's next...

Send on-line checklist to Early Intervention programs throughout the United States during Spring 2011

And then what....

- Identify programs who are implementing evidence based practices.
- Collaborate with early intervention providers nationally in sharing these recommended evidence based practices.

If you would like to be included in completing our checklist or for more information about our EI initiative contact...

Action Plan Leaders:

Debra.Nussbaum@gallaudet.edu

Beth.Benedict@gallaudet.edu