PacWest ITAC Learning Modules

Cultural Crossroads in Disabilities

PacWest
Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities

Developmental Pediatrics
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

Children's Hospital Colorado

JFK Partners
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

CLINIC for SPECIAL CHILDREN
TREATING THE WHOLE CHILD
Autism Spectrum Disorders and Deaf/Hard of Hearing

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Learning Objectives

Participants will...

1. understand culturally appropriate terminology

2. recognize features of ASD as they present in children who use a signed language

3. identify how intersection of ASD and deafness impacts communication and behavior

4. learn considerations for supporting children who are dually diagnosed and their families
Culturally Appropriate Terms

- Deaf
- deaf
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- reduced hearing levels

Medical Terminology

- Hearing Impaired
- Mute
- Hearing loss
Language

• Spoken Language (e.g., English)

• Accessed using technology
  – Auditory/verbal or auditory oral approaches
  – Hearing aids, cochlear implants, bone conduction devices

• Accessed using visual supports
  – Cued speech
  – Signed Exact English
  – Total communication approaches

• Sign Language (e.g., American Sign Language)
  – Complete language systems with own phonology, grammar, syntax, vocabulary
Comorbidity of ASD and Deafness

1. Increased prevalence of ASD among deaf children
2. ASD often diagnosed later among deaf children
3. Presence of ASD complicates identification of reduced hearing and audiological management
4. Co-occurrence significantly complicates communication and language outcomes
Differential diagnosis requires...

- Consideration of child’s language access
  - History of language access
  - Language access during evaluation

- Understanding typical developmental trajectories of deaf children
ASD impact on acquisition of sign language

• Reduced eye contact and visual attention to social environment

• Difficulty with motor planning and imitation impacts manual communication

• Difficulty with grammatical features of language using the face (non-manual markers)

• Difficulty with perspective taking impacts spatial aspects
Features of ASD that may present differently in a signed language

Echolalia
Stereotyped language
Jargon
Neologisms
Palm reversals

Pronoun avoidance
Use of facial features of ASL
Use of sign space
Perspective shifting
Behavioral considerations: Distinguishing typical development and impact of language access from ASD

Self injurious behavior/Repetitive body movements

Sensory processing differences

Difficulties with transitions/changes in routine
Intervention - Communication

1. Accessible
2. Multimodal communication
3. ASD and deafness informed
4. Collaborative Creative/Flexible Intentional
“My deaf child has autism”

vs.

“My autistic child is deaf”
Supporting Families

- Families may not understand what is attributable to reduced hearing
- Struggle to find professionals who understand both deafness and autism
- After diagnosis access to intervention and supports impacted by language access
Supporting Families

- Educational placement/programming
- Strong need to connect with other families of children with similar strengths/needs


References


Thank you for joining us!

AUCD

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https://www.aucd.org/ITAC

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Interview