

PacWest ITAC Learning Modules

Cultural Crossroads in Disabilities



Developmental Pediatrics
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
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CLINIC for SPECIAL
CHILDREN
TREATING THE WHOLE CHILD

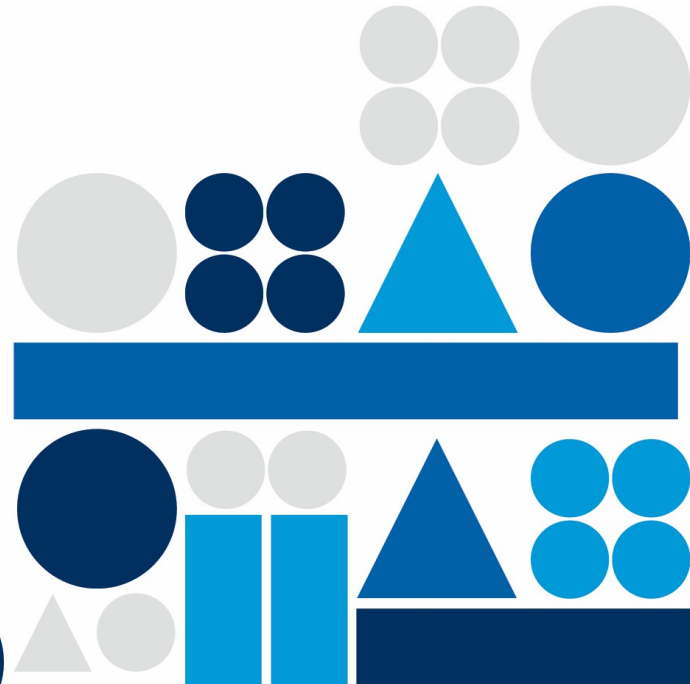
Autism Spectrum Disorders and Deaf/Hard of Hearing

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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

Pronoun avoidance

Stereotyped language

Use of facial features of ASL

Jargon

Use of sign space

Neologisms

Perspective shifting

Palm reversals

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

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Thank you for joining us!



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Interview