

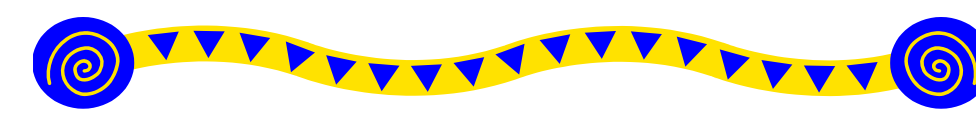
Since 2000, the Cochlear Implant Education Center (CIEC) has examined practices inclusive of both spoken and signed language for the heterogeneous children obtaining cochlear implants. The CIEC has:

- Developed and implemented educational programming for approximately 20-30 students annually enrolled at the Clerc Center’s demonstration schools (Kendall Demonstration Elementary School and Model Secondary School for the Deaf )
- Interacted with over 9,000 professionals and families throughout the United States to network and share information about the common challenges and successes experienced in effectively meeting the needs of children with cochlear implants

*“If you’ve met one child with a cochlear implant, then you’ve met one child with a cochlear implant.”*

~ Debra Nussbaum, Coordinator, CIEC, Clerc Center

## What We are Learning



*What is **NOT** evident in the research: Signing impedes the development of spoken language on average across children.*

*What **IS** supported in the research: Spoken language development is directly impacted by the intensity and quality of the spoken language to which a child is exposed.*

~ Patricia Spencer, Educational Research Consultant, Texas; “Research to Practice,” Conference: Cochlear Implants and Sign Language: Building Foundations for Effective Educational Practices, April 2009

*“It is important to look beyond a single approach in achieving optimal outcomes in linguistic, cognitive, academic, and social competence for children who are deaf and hard of hearing, including those with cochlear implants.”*

~ Ed Bosso, Vice President, Clerc Center, Opening Remarks, Cochlear Implants and Sign Language: Building Foundations for Effective Educational Practices, April 2009

## Rationale for Considering Sign Language

- Sign language can provide accessible language to a child prior to implantation and through the early stages of auditory skill development.
- Sign language can provide supports for children as they “learn to listen” and transition to using their “listening to learn.”
- Sign language can provide a bridge to the development of spoken language.
- Sign language is beneficial for children with cochlear implants with additional challenges who may not demonstrate the characteristics to become “auditory learners” or “talkers.”
- Children with cochlear implants can benefit from becoming bilingual/bimodal (ASL and spoken English).



## Importance of Looking at the Whole Child

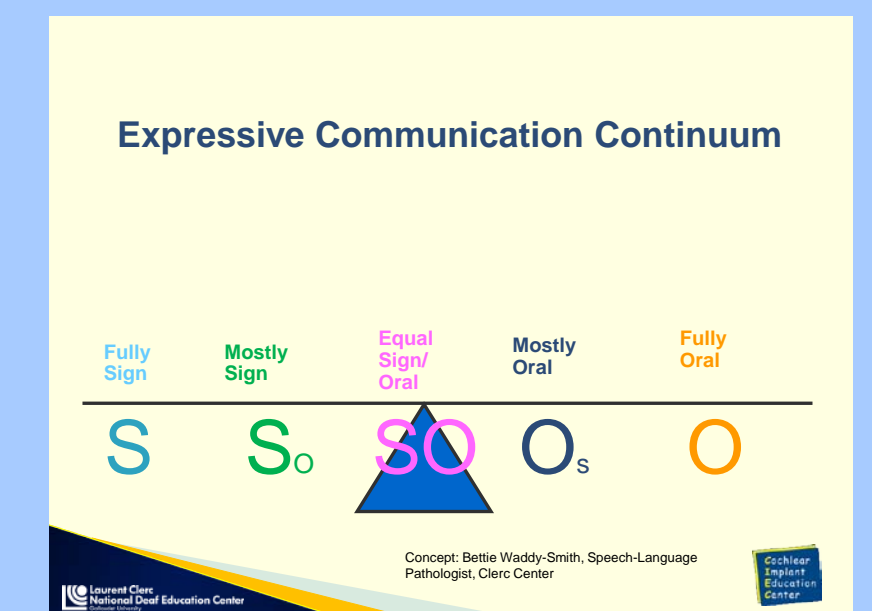
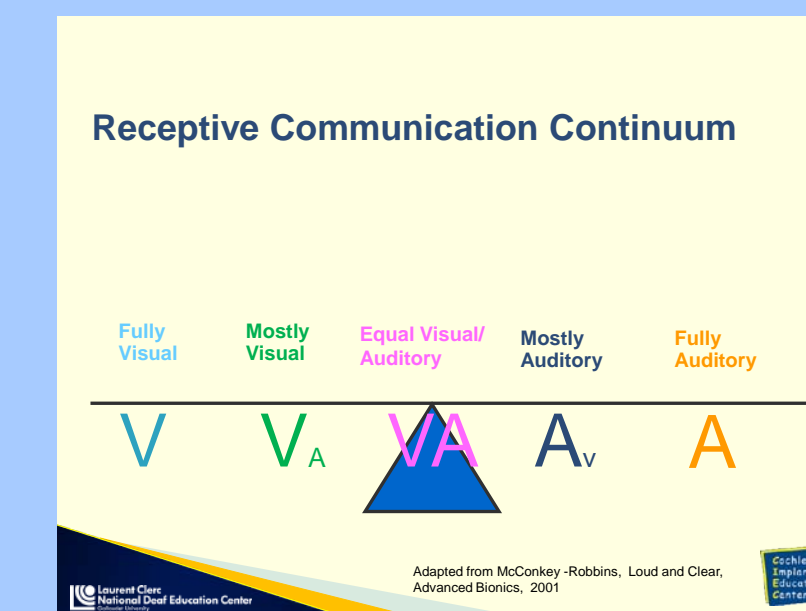
Importance of:

- Acknowledging that the cochlear implant is only one of many life factors that impact a child’s development.
- Considering how personality, not only the quality of spoken language, significantly impacts each child’s social development.
- Looking at the benefit of children with cochlear implants having the opportunity of connecting with the Deaf community as well as the community at large so they may have experience in both environments.
- Helping children with cochlear implants feel accepted and validated as they are, not as people with something wrong that needs to be fixed

~ Irene Leigh and John Christiansen, Professors, Gallaudet University, “Psychosocial Aspects of Cochlear Implantation”; Cochlear Implants and Sign Language: Building Foundations for Effective Educational Practices, April 2009

## Importance of Assessment-Driven Planning

- Importance of developing an individualized language and communication plan that reflects a child’s functioning across both a receptive and expressive continuum



- Importance of implementing and monitoring the varied components of a child’s individualized language, communication, and educational program (as depicted on the “communication dashboard”)

~Mary Koch-Kline, Auditory Education Consultant, Boystown National Research Hospital, Conference presentation, “Experiences In the Field,” Cochlear Implants and Sign Language: Building Foundations for Effective Educational Practices, April 2009

