



# Parents Partnering with Providers to Identify Sign Vocabulary that Packs a Punch



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# Child Language Acquisition

- Built on early communication opportunities
- Acquired through interactive social experiences
- Parent(s) are first and most influential teachers



# Adult ASL acquisition

- Parent/Caregiver vs. “ASL student”
- Communicative competence, not just vocabulary

# Challenges

- Availability: native users, immersion opportunities
- Sign in the home/community
- Child inclusive opportunities



# Words to...

- Label
- Request (object, action, routine, permission)
- Protest
- Ask for more
- Comment
- Get attention
- Greet
- Show affection

Do you need words to  
*communicate...*

- **Protesting**
- **Expressing interest**
- **Requesting**
- **Getting attention**
- **Showing affection**







# Communication vs. Language

- Our goal today is *language*
- Back to the question: Where do I start?
- How do I work with my provider to prioritize what to learn?





# Core vs. Fringe Vocabulary

- Core vocabulary
  - High-frequency
  - Multiple settings
  - Combine to make phrases and sentences
  - Number of words is small in comparison
- Fringe vocabulary
  - Lower-frequency
  - Specific to a person or activity
  - Provide content for sentences
  - Number of words is large
  - Early words from routines

# Some examples

- Core Vocabulary
  - Pronouns (I, you, mine)
  - SEE
  - HAVE
  - WANT
  - WHERE
  - NOT
  - CAN
- Fringe Vocabulary
  - HORSE
  - TRAIN
  - PEACH
  - SOAP
  - GIRAFFE
  - CASTLE
  - MILK

# Child Development

- Early vocabularies are mostly nouns in a child's routine or environment
- The transition from single words to word combinations and sentences depends on core vocabulary

# Mental State Words

- THINK, KNOW, FEEL, UNDERSTAND
- Support a child's ability to take another person's perspective (theory of mind)
- Important milestone
- Impacts later language and literacy
- Hearing parents of D/HH children use fewer mental state words
- Mental state words are core vocabulary

# The temptation of learning mostly fringe vocabulary

- Fringe words are immediately apparent
- Fringe words are routine based (which is an important component of early intervention)
- Fringe words label
- But, they can limit

# Core Vocabulary Approach for parents of D/HH children

- Actively learn both core and fringe sign vocabulary
- Fringe- routines, familiar, motivating
- Core- the most frequently used words as children grow and provide opportunity for expansion
- Guided practice

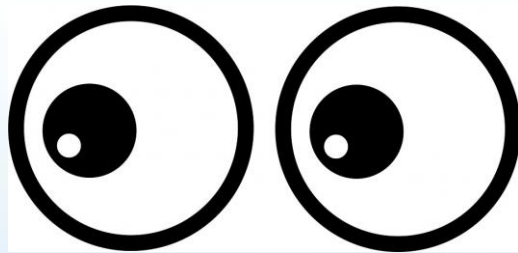
# Benefits of core vocabulary

- Multiple opportunities to use a sign reinforces recall
- Modeling of phrases/sentences that are next in the child's development
- “Statistical learning”- Learning without trying
  - Requires variety and consistency in the model
- Social-emotional learning- mental state words
- Book sharing



# ASL features to support core: Pronouns

- I, me, we
- You, you (all)
- He, she, it, they, them
- Number incorporation
- My, our
- Your, your (all)
- His, her, its, their



# Patterns and variety

- I see the hippo
- I see the tiger
- I see the lion
- I see the kangaroo
- I see the monkey
- The lion sees the kangaroo
- I think the monkey wants to see the hippo
- Do you see the giraffe?
- I can't see the tiger



# Consistency within variation

- The elephant wants the apple.
- I like my elephant
- The elephant sees the plate. He thinks the bear is finished. He says I want the plate. The bear says, “no, elephant.” That is my plate
- I can't see the elephant
- Your bear is happy. I think he likes the elephant



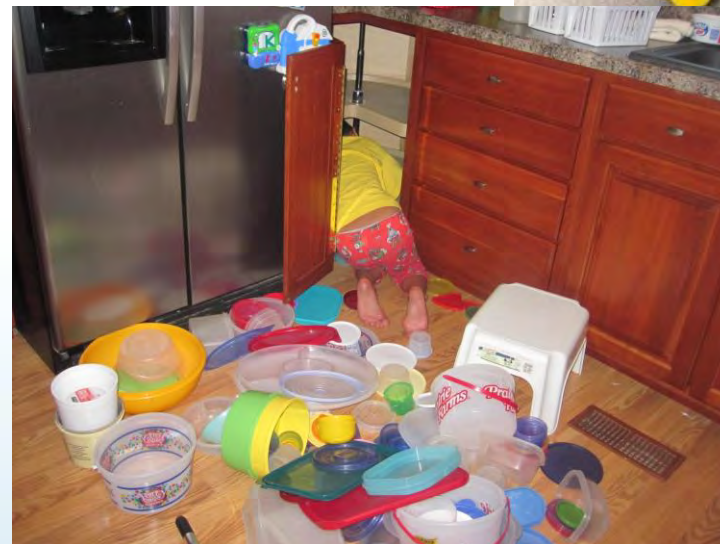
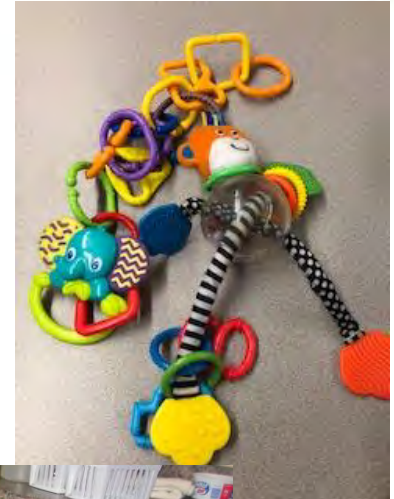


# What might you say/sign?

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzRb8Vxa\\_Ck](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JzRb8Vxa_Ck)
- Which is core vocabulary?

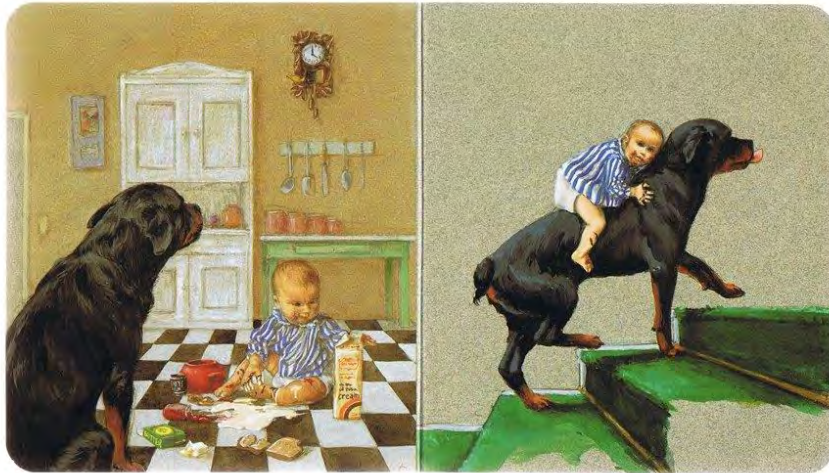


# What core signs?





Break free with reading!



# Beyond basics: Using ASL to extend your core

- Sentence types- Rh?'s: WHY, #DO-DO
- Leveraging classifiers
- Expanding through connecting words
  - FINISH (“and then”)
  - BUT
  - ASL connecting words (e.g. UNDERSTAND)

# Some resources

- 100; 200; 300 signs
  - <https://www.handspeak.com/word/most-used/>
- Google: ASL storytelling videos
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-8yvNOVsFY>
  - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoW\\_F4WU2sM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoW_F4WU2sM)
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wtzawp0bd5k>
- Most commonly used words in (hearing) preschoolers
  - <https://minspeak.com/documents/2-MarvinList.pdf>



# “Baby Sign” Resources

- Developed primarily for hearing children
- Focus on fringe vocabulary
- The core is provided through spoken language with sign support for fringe
- D/HH children need access to the full vocabulary

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