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Early Intervention: The Parent Perspective

A Parents Wish List for Early Interventionists

We wish for Choices :

- Unbiased information about communication options.
- Provide us with the information we need to make well informed decisions.
- Respect the choices that families make. Let us, the parents, make the final decision.

We wish for Information:

- When we ask for your professional opinion, don't be afraid to give it..but please don't deliver your opinion in "absolutes".
- Give us books, pamphlets, phone numbers, support groups, anything that will be helpful to us in understanding our child's hearing loss and where to find help.
- If we ask a question, and you don't have the answer, help us find the resource where we can find the answer.
- As children and parents grow, their choices and need for information grows.

Parent/Professional Partnership

A Checklist for Attitudes

- Do I believe that families bring unique expertise to our relationship?
- Do I believe in the importance of family participation in decision making for early intervention?
- Do I believe that family members' perspectives and opinions are as important as professionals?

Parent/Professional Partnership

- Parents should drive the process.
- Early Intervention ultimately comes down to "relationship"
- Trust is established through a basic premise of respect toward the parents, their values, and culture.

Choices in Communication

Its about **COMMUNICATION**, not methodology...

"What good does it do to teach a child to speak, if you give him nothing to say?"

or

"Deafness is not about hearing, but about communication"

- Choosing a method is a process that is flexible, ongoing, and changeable.
- Early Identification of Deafness allows families a window of time to explore communication options.
- The communication mode you choose is less significant in itself than how well it suits a particular child