

Professional Preparation in Deaf Education to Observe, Understand, & Respond to Child Abuse and Neglect

Dr. Harold A. Johnson/Professor
Michigan State University
ISPCAN Conference
Honolulu, Hawai'i
9/27/2010

What did I study and learn within
my investigation?

Investigation

- The investigation examined the extent to which parents and professionals who work with children who are deaf/hard of hearing (d/hh) are informed and prepared to recognize and respond to possible incidences of child abuse and/or neglect CA/N.

Demographic Data

- 322 respondents to a 2008 survey:
 - **Most** (60%) were between the **ages of 35-54**.
 - **Most** (80%) had **greater than** a B.A./B.S. degree.
 - **Most** (90%) were **female**
 - **Most** (88%) were **professionals**
 - **Most** (82%) were **hearing**
 - **Most** (70%) had **11+ years of experience** in interacting with individuals who were d/hh
 - **Most** (82%) had **daily interactions** with individuals who were d/hh
 - A **majority** (51%) **used speech & sign** in those interactions, with the rest using speech (25%), or sign (18%)

Findings

- Training re. CA/N:
 - **Majority** (64%) had formal training re. CA/N, but only in a **minority** (29%) of cases, was the training specific to children who were d/hh

- Training resulted in mixed results, i.e.,
 - In response to the question “How well prepared do you now consider yourself to be in relation to recognizing and reporting possible cases of child abuse and neglect?”
 - A **slight majority** (53%) indicated that they were well, or sufficiently prepared to recognize and report possible cases of CA/N of children who were hearing.
 - A **slight majority** (55%) also indicated that well, or sufficiently confident, they could **find accurate information** concerning CA/N

- In contrast, a **majority** (61%) indicated that they were only somewhat, or **not confident** in their ability to **recognize** if a child who is **deaf/hard of hearing (d/hh)** was experiencing CA/N
- A slight **majority** (53%) indicated that they were very confident, or sufficiently confident, in their knowledge regarding of **how to report** possible incidences of CA/N as experienced by a child who is d/hh.

- A **majority** (58%) indicated they were only somewhat, or **not confident** in their knowledge regarding **how to respond to a child who is d/hh and possible the victim of CA/N**
- **Finally, a majority** (88%) of the respondents expressed a **desire to learn more** about the prevention and recognition of CA/N as experienced by children who were d/hh.

What are the implications of the results of this investigation?

- While children with disabilities are three times more likely to experience CA/N than their hearing peers, Deaf Education professionals and parents are not well prepared to observe, understand, or respond to possible instances of CA/N and they would like to learn more re. this topic.
- This lack of preparation hinders our ability to prevent and respond to possible instances of CA/N.

What are the primary barriers to the effective preparation of professionals to observe, understand, respond and prevent child abuse and neglect?

1. **Belief that CA/N is not a common**, or sufficiently important problem to warrant our attention, e.g.,

- 2010 International Congress on Education of the Deaf (ICED), 355 presentations at this conference, only four (1.1%) re. CA/N
 - 2010 Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (EHDI) National Convention, 127 formal presentations, only one (0.8%) concerning child abuse & neglect (CA/N)
- **In reality**, CA/N is experienced by 09% of children without disabilities **vs.** 31% of children with disabilities (Sullivan & Knutson, 2000).

2. **Insufficient knowledge** re. the signs and symptoms of CA/N and uncertainties re. CA/N reporting procedures
3. **Perceived negative consequences of reporting CA/N**, i.e., make things worse for the child; and Fear of disapproval from parents, parental denial, lack of administrative support and legal ramifications for false allegations.
4. **Lessons learned from past reporting**, e.g., nothing happened.
5. **Negative attitude towards Child Protective Services.**

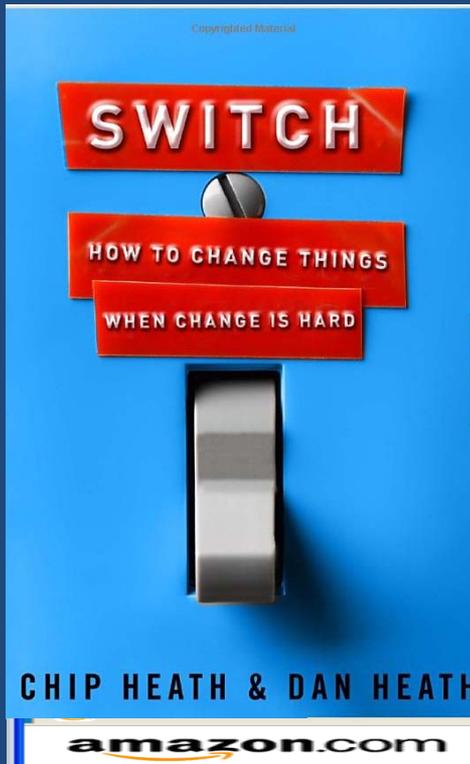
6. **The lack of training**, and ongoing support, concerning recognizing, reporting and responding to possible incidences of CA/N.

7. The **belief that someone else is dealing with this problem**.

Alvarex, Kenny, Donohue, & Carpin, 2004; Bonner, & Hensley, 1997; Kenny, 2001, 2004

I would also propose that the sheer difficulty of finding, sharing, and using the existing knowledge base regarding CA/N and children with disabilities represents a substantial barrier to both prevent and respond to instances of CA/N.

What can we do to prevent, or at least reduce the incidence, duration, and impact of child abuse and neglect experienced by children who are deaf/hard of hearing?



Elephant: emotional response

Ryder: conceptual understanding

Path: clear action steps



The presence of a disability significantly increases the risk of CA/N.

1. Share what we know = wiki based **Author's Corner**

2. Identify, link, and support existing experts = **Bright Spots**

3. Establish an online "Community of Learners" concerning CA/N & Children w/ Disabilities = **DCANN**

www.dcmp.org/FlashLanding/SecureFlash.aspx?G=31653

Disability & Child Abuse Action Network Meeting
Tuesday, 9/28/2010
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
Room 317B

O.U.R Children Coalition (Observe, Understand, & Respond) Child Abuse & Neglect Community of Learners for Children with Disabilities



Hands & Voices has been a partner in this effort since 2007

<http://deafed-childabuse-neglect-col.wiki.educ.msu.edu/>

Thank You & Contact Information

- Harold A. Johnson/Professor
- Deaf Education Teacher Preparation
- 343A Erickson Hall
- Michigan State University
- East Lansing, MI 48824

- 517 432-3926 [office]
- 517 353-6393 [fax]
- 35.8.171.220 [video ph]
- Harold.a.johnson3 [Skype]
- MSUE_H_Johnson [iVisit]
- www.deafed.net [Web]

Resource:

Definitions of Child Abuse & Neglect

- 11th Commandment video (captioned & described by Described & Captioned Media)
Critical Resources
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7icgPX88Q6Q>
- What is Child Abuse and Neglect?
 - <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/whatiscan.cfm>
- Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect.
 - <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/preventingcan.cfm>

- Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect: Signs and Symptoms.
 - <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/signs.cfm>
- Long-Term Consequences of Child Abuse and Neglect
 - http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long_term_consequences.cfm

Reference List

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