

**Titel: The value of collective wisdoms: The complementary roles of science and individual stories in understanding deaf children's development.**

Abstract: All genders, disabilities, races, social classes, and religions are represented among deaf children. Deafness does not discriminate, but people do. We talk a lot about valuing diversity in the deaf world, but how do we put this value into practice? What does it look like on the ground? Scientific research gives us valuable information about general processes in language acquisition and development. At the same time, listening to deaf people's stories and experiences is a critical part of understanding the contexts in which children are developing, but is not often captured in the scientific literature.

In this talk, I will discuss the ways we should incorporate both scientific and personal perspectives in our work with deaf children. I will discuss my own and others' scientific work on language acquisition in deaf children, and show how incorporating the lived experiences of deaf children and adults allows us to better qualify and contextualize those findings. As families and professionals working with a diverse community of deaf children we have a responsibility to consider the ways that these diverse backgrounds work together with children's deafness to steer their language, social, and cognitive development.