

Disability Theory and Childhood Studies

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Learning from our Youth Advisors

- Disabled children and their families are required to engage with professionals, services, and institutions
- Disabled young people want access to supports
- More conversations are needed about disability and difference

Communication through a relational lens

- Competing viewpoints:
 - Early intervention program - medical model of disability
 - Caregivers - social model of disability, with aspects of deaf studies / sign language studies
 - Child - new sociology of childhood, with aspects of deaf studies / sign language studies
- Social relational model is helpful in exploring all competing viewpoints, in order to find the best way to support children and families

Tensions in identity-first and person-first language

- Black parents continue to question deficit understandings of the label “disability” that are exacerbated by racist and ableist assumptions
- A social relational approach can highlight the intersectionalities present in these tensions
- Consider the attitudinal, colonial and institutional barriers in conceptualizing Black disabled identity in a positive light

How do we create safe and equitable access to early education, healthcare and therapies, while grappling with the tensions presented by developmentalism in these systems?