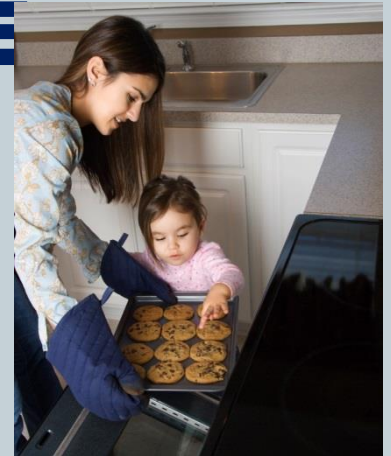


How to talk to parents about speech and language



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How to talk to parents about speech and language



AGENDA

Definition of Terms

What do you need to know

What to Share

How to Share

Cautions

Parents' frequently asked questions: Best answers



- **What do you need to know about speech and Language?**
- **Definitions:**
 - Language
 - Speech
 - Voice
 - Fluency
 - Social Use of Language

Parent-Child Interaction is Key



- Turn off the TV and play or read to your child
- The more a parent interacts with his/her child, the richer the language opportunities.
- “BUT *he learns so much from watching children’s videos and TV programs*”.

Tidbits on Child Language Disorders



Prevalence of Specific Language Impairment in preschool/early school years

- Approximately 2-8% of preschool and early school aged children will have a language disorder
- More boys than girls have communication difficulties

Both developmental and acquired factors

- Many conditions are associated with language disorders

Tidbits on Child Language Disorders



Language Problems often continue

- **E.g., Oral language problems in preschool may manifest as reading/writing problems at school age**
- **Long-term outcomes**
 - ✦ There is a high incidence of language disorders among juvenile offenders

What the Research Tells Us

- About 50% of children with language impairment at age 4-5 have persistent language impairment
- Children with language impairment at age 4-5 continue to perform less well on language tasks than similar children with normal language to age 19
- Children with preschool – K language impairment have higher rates of reading disability than controls

Early Detection of Risk for Language Disorders

- Delayed comprehension and production
- Family history of language-related disorders
- Low or no use of object-related communicative gestures
- 3 or more serious episodes of middle ear infections
- **Parental concern**

Genetic basis



- Language impairment clusters in families
 - Higher rate of language disorders among fathers and brothers of boys with a specific language impairment, and to a lesser degree, in mothers and sisters of girls with a specific language impairment

Parents may have a history



- Longstanding speech and language issues
- Memories of speech and language therapy and/or learning difficulties
- ***WE NEED TO TREAD CAREFULLY TO BUILD TRUST***

WHAT DO PARENTS NEED TO KNOW



- Developmental Milestones
- What to be concerned about
- When to be concerned and when to “wait and see”
- When, where and how to seek help

DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE MILESTONES:



- Use the material on the tykeTALK website to support the information you are presenting.
- [Speech and Language Milestones](#)

How do we monitor a child and what do we look for?



- Consistent growth in vocabulary
- Consistent growth in comprehension
- Consistent growth in sentence length
- Consistent improvement in intelligibility

Frequently asked Questions



- What about speech sounds:
 - **Speech sound development is variable, however there are expectations**
 1. **By age 3, children should be intelligible to all listeners, not just family**
 2. **By age 3, many children may have difficulty with later developing sounds, eg. /s/, /r/, /th/, /sh/, /l/**
 3. **If a parent says the child is having difficulty with /s/, probe to see if it is a substitution or cluster reduction. Eg. 'poon' for 'spoon'. This needs attention in a 3 year old, but not an 18 month old**

What to tell parents about helping their children with speech



- Don't use the word "say". Eg. Say 'please'. Children will learn words faster, if we repeat words many times throughout a routine. Eg. "Here's your **sock**. Put your **sock** on" "Here's another **sock**"
- NEVER have the child attempt to repeat the sound after the parent. If the child could produce the sound, he would
- Encourage the parent to give 'corrective feedback'. That is, to repeat the word back to the child with an emphasis on the correct sound production. Eg. 'it is a spoon'.

Speech and Language Myths



- “Let’s talk turkey...the story of a young boy”
- Children who are late to talk are lazy
- Second or third children don’t talk because their siblings talk for them
- Boys born in December are likely to have speech delays, so don’t worry. They will talk when they’re ready.
- “My brother didn’t talk until he was three and then spoke in complete sentences”



What we do know



- There is a higher incidence of speech and language delay in twins. That doesn't mean we wait and see. **It means we intervene.**
- Boys have a higher incidence of speech and language delay than girls. **Early intervention is the key**
- Waiting until a child is 7 to work on later developing sounds, just means the child has longer to habituate the incorrect production. **All sounds should be produced correctly by 6, or at least be stimulable. Otherwise, therapy is indicated.**

What to know about preschool stuttering



- Many children between 2 1/2 and 4 go through a period of 'normal dysfluency'.
- **Normal dysfluency:**
- repetitions of initial sounds in words or whole words, eg. 'I, I, I want some milk', or 'I want, want, want some milk'
- There should be no struggle or avoidance of talking

What to say about stuttering in preschool children: To Do and Not To Do



- This is a normal stage of early child communication development.
- **DO NOT** tell the child to ‘slow down and think about what he is going to say’
- **DO NOT** pressure the child to talk
- **DO** reduce the number of questions and the demand speech
- Explain to parents the concept of capacity and demands
- If the dysfluency continues for more than three months and/or is accompanied by struggle or avoidance, **DO** refer for assessment

And what about pacifiers?



- **When is a pacifier ok?**
- **Can a pacifier interfere with speech development?**
- **What to tell parents?**

And what about tongue tie?



- How does tongue tie affect the child?
 - About 25% of newborns with significant tongue tie with have some trouble latching on to a nipple for sucking. The majority have no early feeding problems.
- **Does tongue tie cause speech problems?**
 - Rarely: Unless the movement of the tongue is significantly limited. Because both tongue tie and articulation problems occur in children, the two are often linked. However the cause of the speech problems is not typically the tongue tie.

And what about Baby Sign?



- If a parent is motivated to use it, we don't encourage or discourage.
- It can serve as a bridge to early communication
- It should always be paired with speech and should be faded when speech becomes the dominant mode of communication.
- ***“We want to develop good oral communicators, not good signers.”***

Can Children Learn More than one Language



- Which language should parents speak at home...their first language or English?

Questions Parents Ask: Answers We Can Give



- His brother was slower to talk....won't he just catch up like his brother did?
- ***We can't predict who will develop without intervention and who won't. A referral does no harm and will provide us with the information we need...either all is well or let's provide therapy***

Questions Parents Ask: Answers We Can Give



- My doctor has no concerns and says all children develop at their own pace.
- ***All children develop at their own pace, within a given range. If your child is outside of that range, it is important to have an assessment.***
- ***Our doctors are well meaning, but aren't experts in speech and language***

Questions Parents Ask: Answers We Can Give



- He's so smart. He knows his numbers and colours, but just isn't talking.
- ***“Speech and language development is very important, ‘especially for the smart ones’, who have so much to tell us.***
- ***When he has the words, he will be equipped to tell you everything that he's interested in and his learning capacity will be even better.***
- ***Speech therapy will help him develop the words and show you how to help him.”***

General Suggestions



- Suggest that parents put a piece of paper on their fridge and write down each new word their child says.
- This will help them plot their child's progress.
- Emphasize the positive nature of the tykeTALK experience: “children cry when they have to leave tykeTALK, not when they come”

What to suggest while parents are waiting for an assessment



- Refer parents to tykeTALK website: www.tyketalk.com
- TheHanan Centre website: www.hanen.org
- Encourage parents to model words for their children, but to wait to give children the opportunity to repeat their models.
- Stress the importance of reading, singing, playing with words and sounds and just interacting in a positive way with their child.

If in doubt...refer



- Online referral on the tykeTALK website's home page
- [tykeTALK](#)