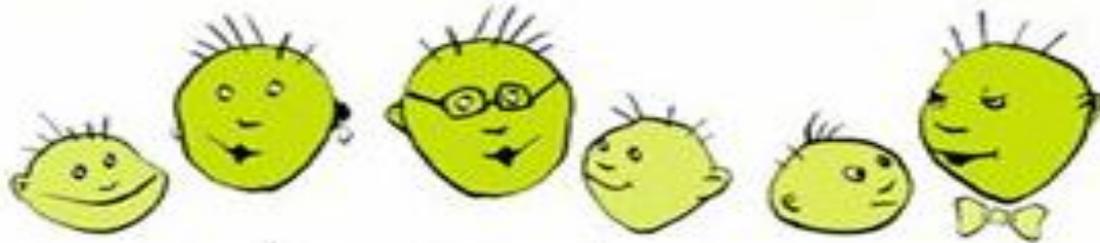


# Let's Talk...



*it makes a difference!*

**An Innovative Approach to Supporting Children's Literacy Development**

**Created by the Agenda for Children  
Cambridge, MA**

# Training Goals

1. Learn the “Let’s Talk” approach to early literacy development
  1. Research
  2. Brain development
  3. Talk Techniques
  4. Reading Techniques
2. Practice talk messages and marrying with reading messages
3. Identify opportunities and work on plans for implementation





# Quiz

How old are children when their brain weight is 50% of an adult's?

6 months

By what age are some children already falling behind?

9 months

What is a strong predictor of future academic and reading comprehension success?

The size of a child's vocabulary

How many more words have some children heard than others by the time they are 3 years old?

30 million

At what age is 85% of a person's intellect, personality, and social skills developed?

Age 5

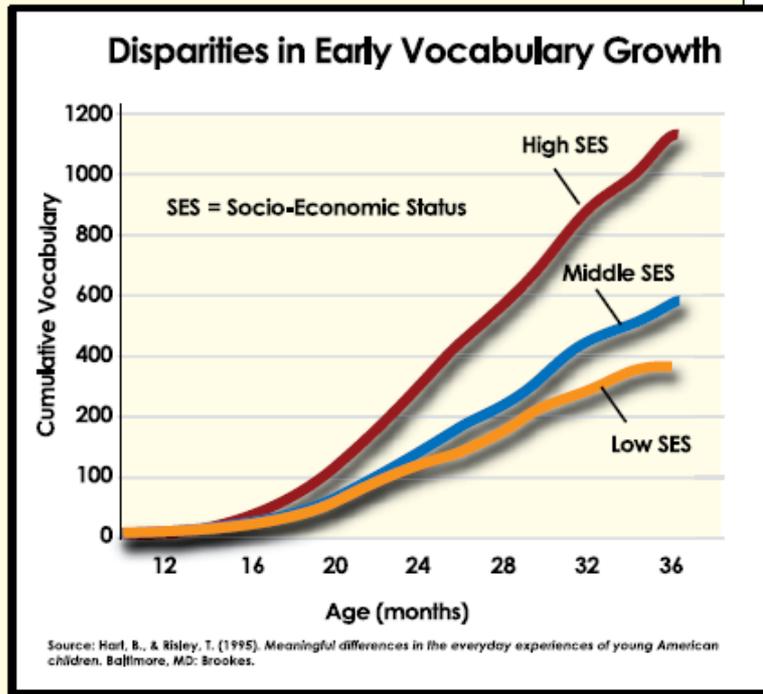
# The Achievement Gap

“Taken together, we estimate that at least half of the black-white gap that exists at the 12<sup>th</sup> grade can be attributed to the gap that already existed at the beginning of first grade.”

~M.Phillips (2000);NCES



# The 30-Million Word Gap



The size of each child's vocabulary correlates most closely to one simple factor:

the number of words the parents spoke to the child.

*A Science Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy from the Center for the Developing Child*

# Brain Development

- Begins to form early in the prenatal period.
- During the first three years of life, there is rapid-fire development of trillions of synapses.
- A child's early experiences and stimulation influences which connections are maintained.

**From conception to kindergarten, the rate of brain development is the fastest than any other period in a person's life.**

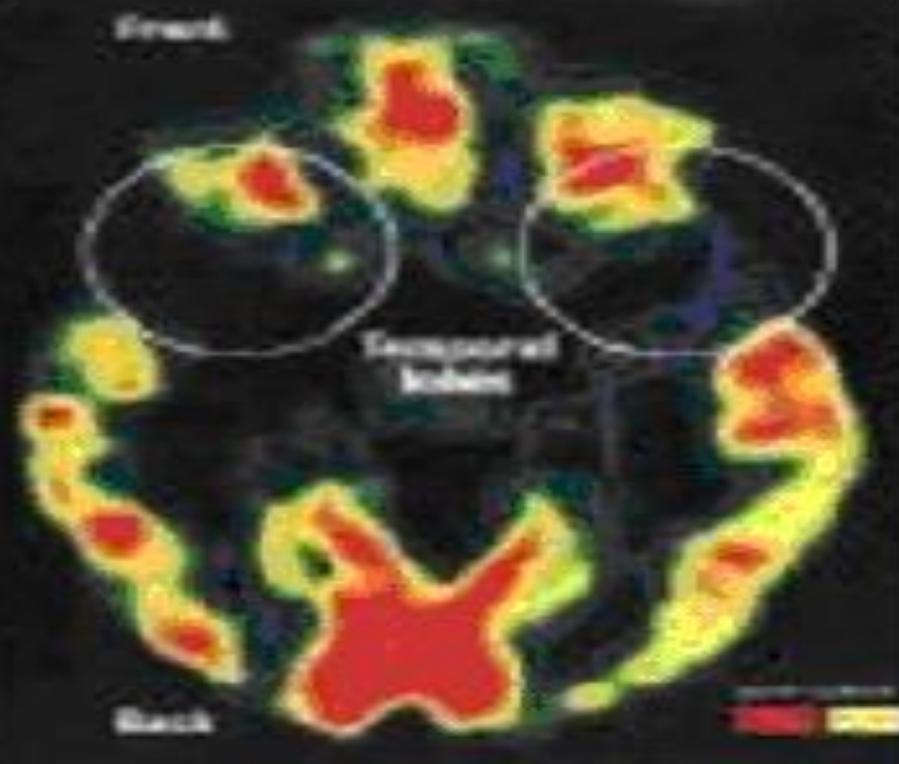
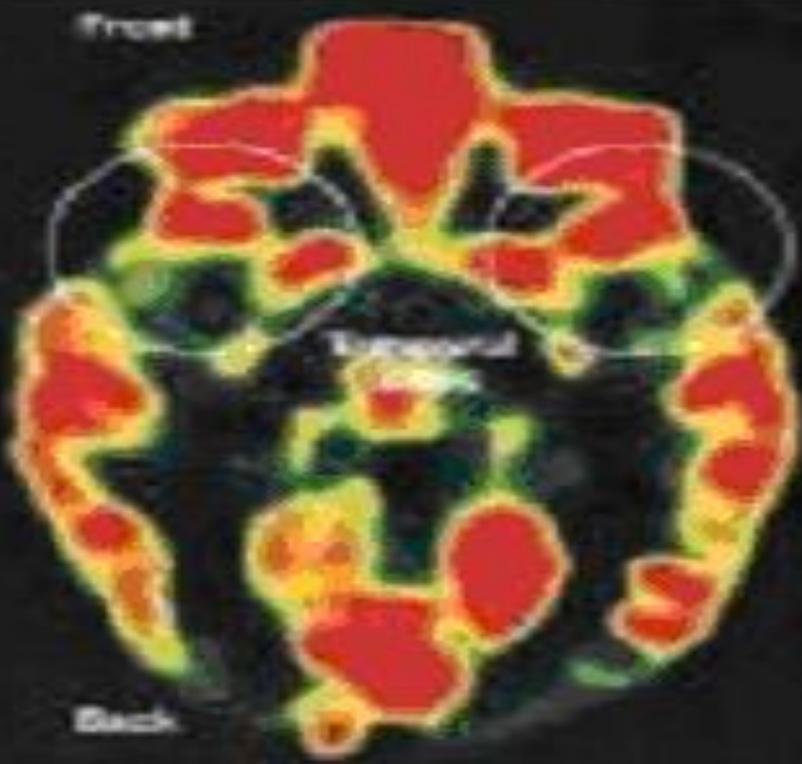
*(From Neurons to Neighborhoods, 2000)*

**60% of adult brain weight by 6 months old.**

**90% of adult brain weight by age 5.**

# Serve and Return Video

Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University



*The red color shows us where a child's brain is being stimulated.*

*What can we conclude from this picture?*

# **Fun Brain Development Activity**



# Key Messages for Talk Workshop

1. Learning begins at birth (and before!).
2. Talk with children all the time and in the language you speak best.
3. Engage in rich conversations with children.
4. Talk as much (and more!) as you read.

\* Everything is a tool for talking.

# Oral Language Development Techniques For Creating Rich and Intentional Conversations



# Play Talk vs. Business Talk

## Play Talk

Responsive to child  
Imaginative & silly  
Open-ended  
Encouraging  
Offers choices  
Asks and explores questions  
Complex sentences  
Adjectives and rhymes  
Richer vocabulary  
Engages both partners  
Past, future, what-if

vs.

## Business Talk

Adult-initiated  
Serious  
Goal-oriented  
Fewer affirmations  
Directive  
Statements and commands  
Short & to the point  
Prose (matter of fact, dull)  
simpler words  
one-sided conversation  
Here and now

# Techniques to Promote Literacy

## OWL – Observe, Wait, Listen

Child	Parent	Parent Using OWL
Child says, “Mommy car.”	Parent says, “I don’t have a car. I don’t know what you mean.”	Seeing that the child is looking outside, parent says, “Do you see a car outside?” Child says, “Baby in mommy car.” After walking to the window, parent sees someone putting a car seat into a car. Parent says, “Yes, that’s a mommy’s car, with a seat for the baby, “ etc.
<p>Did you know that after they ask a child a question, most adults wait only 1/2 of a second before asking the question again? Try to wait for 10 whole seconds – kids need time to think!</p>		
Child is looking at a fish in a fishbowl, in a doctor’s office waiting room. Child says, “It’s a fish!”	Parent says, “Yes, it’s a fish. But I told you already, we can’t have one.”	Parent asks, “What do you think the fish is doing?” Child says, “He wants a friend.” Parent says, “Oh, do you think he’s lonely in there?” etc.

# Techniques to Promote Literacy

Imitation - repeat babies' cooing and other noises.

Child	Parent	Parent Using Imitation
While her diaper is being changed, the baby waves her arms and legs and makes cooing noises	Parent says, "Shh, stay still."	Parent repeats baby's noises and says, "I know, you're happy to have a new diaper!"
When he sees his older sister, the baby sticks out his tongue and says "blebleble"	Parents says, "Tongues say in our mouths, please"	Parent laughs and says, "Bleblebleble to you too. You see Betsy, don't you? B for Betsy. She's your big sister."

**Did you know that when a child under 2 years old is talking, she is trying to imitate what adults are saying around her 66% of the time?**

# Techniques to Promote Literacy

Expansion – when using the expansion technique, provide the mature version of what a child says.

**Did you know that after toddlers learn about 50 words, they experience a word explosion, in which they suddenly know and say lots of words!**

Child	Parent	Parent Using Expansion
Child says, “Juice”	Parent says, “Here” and gives the child the cup of juice.	Parent says, “Do you want your juice? Do you like orange juice? Sip your juice slowly please.”
Child says, “Yummy apple.”	Parent nods and says, “Uh huh.”	Parent says, “Yes, the apple tastes delicious. What color is the apple? How many apples are on the table? What other fruits do you know?”

# Techniques to Promote Literacy

Extension – provide the mature version of what a child says plus adds new information.

Child	Parent	Parent using Extension
Child says, “Doggie eat.”	Parent says, “You mean the dog is eating.”	Parent says, “Yes, that’s right. The dog is eating because he’s hungry. What do you think his favorite food is? What’s your favorite food?”
Child says, “Butterflies are caterpillars.”	Parent says, “Yes, they used to be. Who told you that?”	Parent says, “Caterpillars do change their shape and become butterflies. Another animal that changes over its lifetime is a frog – they’re tadpoles first! Do you remember the frog we saw last week? Did someone read you a story about butterflies?”

# Talk Cards - Example

Birth to One Year



Your 5 month old baby coos at you while you're changing her diaper

# Facilitator Talk Card

## Birth to one year

**Your 5 month old baby coos at you while you are changing he diaper.**

- ✓ Make noises back and forth with your baby.
  - ❖ Imitation is the most important way that babies learn how to talk.
  - ❖ Your baby is learning that when she speaks to you, you are listening and will answer her. This is the beginning of a conversation.

Did you know that when children under 2 years old talk, they are imitating what adults say 66% of the time?

# Practice Activity with Talking Cards

Role play one person as the facilitator and one person as the parent

# Let's Talk about TV

## Key Messages

**TV for children under 2 years of age does not have any benefits for the child – and can actually be harmful.**

According to a 2005 report by the Kaiser Family Foundation, no program targeting children younger than 2 has demonstrated any educational benefit.

### **No TV in bedrooms**

One in three children between the age of 6 months and 6 years have a TV set in their bedrooms. And children who have TVs in their bedrooms spend an average 30 minutes more per day watching TV than those who don't." - [Washington Post](#)

**Set Limits with your Children** – start early with limits and stick to them.

# Group Presentations

## Instructions:

1. Read the section that your group is going to present.
2. Work together to present the section as a group. Each person needs to have a role in the presentation.
3. Each group will have 7 minutes to give their presentation.

# Presentation Sections

## Go to the end of section 14 of binder “Talk Workshop Fall 2011”

**Table 1:** Talk with Parents about Brain Development (#2)  
As parents, how do we make sure the brain is  
growing the best way it can? (#3)

**Table 2:** Talk about why talking is important (#5)

**Table 3:** Talk about TV (#6)

**Table 4:** What kind of talk are we talking about? (#7)

**Table 5:** Using Talk at Home (#9)

# Reading Workshops

*Help* parents learn the importance of reading and the skills of interactive reading by:

1. Emphasizing the need to talk as much as you read.
2. Talking about reading in any language or with wordless books.
3. Modeling
4. Providing books and activities for take-home use.

# Key Messages

- ✓ Read with your children every day so that they can develop the skills they need to read well.
- ✓ Books are tools for talking, so spend as much time talking about the book as reading it. Conversations about pictures in the book, the story, and how the story relates to the child's life are as important as the reading of the book itself.

# Marrying Talking and Reading

## Begin with a recap of Talk Messages

1. Learning begins at birth (brain development)
2. Talk with children all the time and in the language you speak best (techniques)
3. Engage in conversations with children (play talk vs. business talk)
4. Talk as much as you read.

\* Everything is a tool for talking.



# Dialogic Reading

## PEER Reading Techniques

1. Prompt (5 types of prompts: CROWD)
2. Evaluate and Expand
3. Repeat

Read the title and Prompt children (and adults) to talk about what's happening. Let each person share.

Evaluate and Expand. Ask them what gave them clues or ideas.

Ask children to Repeat what you said.

Preview new vocabulary before reading to develop comprehension.

# Questions to Ask When Reading with Children (CROWD)

**C: Completion** – Questions where they fill in the end of a sentence

Example: “Sam I \_\_\_\_\_” or “I think I’d be a glossy cat... A little plump but not too \_\_\_\_.” (fat)

**R: Recall** – Questions where they tell you about what happens in a book they’ve read

Example: “Remember when we read this book yesterday, what did the gorilla do?”

**O: Open – Ended** – Questions about what is happening on the page/questions that have more than a one word answer.

Example: “What is happening here?” or “How is the wife feeling?”

# Questions to Ask When Reading with Children (CROWD)

**W: Wh Questions** (Who, What, When, Where, Why)

Example: “What is the name of this?” or “Where is the balloon on this page?”

**D: Distancing** – Questions that connect what’s happening in the book with their lives.

Example: “Remember when we went to that zoo, what animals did we see there?”



# Zero to Three Video

- ▶ [http://main.zerotothree.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ter\\_par\\_012\\_litvid7](http://main.zerotothree.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ter_par_012_litvid7)

# Spreading the word...

1. How can you use and teach these techniques and messages in your daily work with the teens?
2. How can you use and teach these techniques and messages in your environment, with staff, and in your community?
3. What do you see as barriers to this work? What are some opportunities to implement this work with what you are already doing? Brainstorm possible solutions to overcome barriers.

Thank you!  
Let's Talk Trainers

Elena Trueworthy and Maria Sierra

Hartford Area Child Care Collaborative

(860) 241-0411

[haccc@haccc.info](mailto:haccc@haccc.info)

[www.haccc.info](http://www.haccc.info)

