

Garnering Family Engagement for Optimal Treatment Outcomes

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Session Description

This session details the when, why, and how to get parents/families involved in the process of intervention as families play a vital and active role in treatment outcomes. We will discuss making connections in light of cultural diversity, demanding work/family schedules, different parenting styles, distinct family structures, and various family values. We will explore how to incorporate target goals into already-established family routines by coaching families to facilitate target skills at home and by offering reasonable expectations and accessible resources.

Session Outcomes

Participants will be able to:

- Describe why and how to pursue family involvement and engagement in the intervention process.
- Name effective family supports that account for cultural, environmental, and family differences.
- Model and implement play-based and naturalistic intervention strategies that families can access with coaching and guidance.

The Incredibles



*“Knowledge Unshared Is
Worthless”*

(Author Unknown)

Underlying Questions

When to get parents involved?

Why get parents involved?

How to get parents involved?

Parent Definition

For the sake of simplicity, the word “parent” will be used throughout this session to refer to any person who serves as the primary caregiver, whether it be a parent, a grandparent, another relative, or guardian.

Early Intervention is Key

As EC professionals, we know that early intervention yields positive results because the early years are crucial for language, cognitive, social and emotional development.

It is our job to empower parents to engage in purposeful interventions early!

Parent = Team Member

Assuming a 12-hour day, the time children normally spend with speech-language pathologists, for example, when seen in therapy once weekly equates to about 1.2% of their week.

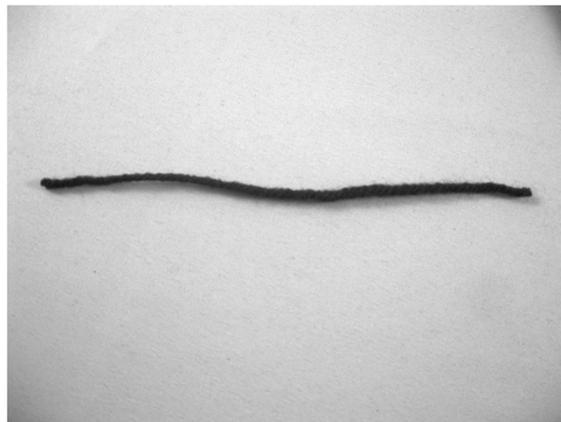
Parents are crucial team members in the intervention process, but they may require training and guidance in order to purposefully and effectively facilitate the communication, cognitive, motor, behavioral, and/or social-emotional skills of their child.

Evidence

Measuring the implementation of supports in the home:

- “With appropriate clinician support and scaffolding, caregiver intervention is as effective in obtaining communication outcomes as clinician-implemented intervention (Ronski, Sevcik, Adamson, Cheslock, & Smith, 2007).”

“Pushing a String” Demonstration



Debunking Assumptions

Assumptions

As professionals and as parents ourselves, many of the skills we have and the speech/language facilitation strategies (or other discipline-specific strategies) we use on a regular basis come naturally to us, so it is easy to assume that parents in general will have many of those same skills.

These skills, however, should not be assumed and are often linked to our individual backgrounds, experiences, education, and culture.

Barriers to Involvement

We often assume that parents don't get involved because they don't want to, but often times parents don't get involved because of:

- Limited time due to demanding work schedules and family dynamics.
- Lack of confidence in their ability to help their child.
- Being intimidated by the professionals working with their child and being afraid to ask questions or seek more specific help.

Addressing Time Issues

Give parents information in small chunks and don't overwhelm them with too much at one time.

When suggesting activities, give them daily and/or weekly activities that are manageable given their schedules and family dynamics.

Incorporate target activities into their already established daily routines.

Addressing Confidence Issues

Show you believe in their ability to help their child.

To the best of your ability, give parents the tools they need, whether it be training and/or materials, in order to facilitate target skills at home.

Acknowledge their efforts with positive feedback.

Addressing Intimidation Issues

Be approachable.

Be clear when discussing delays or deficits, using language and terminology they can understand.

Be a resource parents can trust and rely on.

Treat them with integrity and respect.

Important Considerations

Considering Differences

When working with parents, we must not ignore differences in parenting styles, personal background and experiences, education and culture when attempting to include them in the intervention process.

All of these components will affect if, how, and to what extent they will be able to collaborate with our efforts.

Parenting Styles

Consider the following:

- Are they active parents who pursue shaping their child's environment for emotional, social, cognitive and language growth or are they passive or reserved parents who sit back and go with the flow?
- Are they naturally nurturing in their interaction style?

Personal Experiences

Consider the following:

- How do their personal background and experiences shape their ability and willingness to engage in the intervention process?
- Are there circumstances in the home, in their everyday experience, that hinder their ability to be fully involved, such as another child with significant delays or special needs?

Education

Consider the following:

- If their level of education is low, how can you adapt your training and materials without insulting the parent, where the reciprocal relationship is still one of genuine respect?
- If working with foreign-born parents, the educational goals/expectations and practices they are accustomed to may be very different.

Culture

Consider the following:

- What is their cultural view on appropriate adult-child interactions, including eye contact, initiating conversation, maintaining dialogue, and social interaction?
- Do they lean towards promoting independence or dependence in their child?

Culture (cont'd)

Consider the following:

- Is play viewed as a time of productive fun, exploration, and individual choice-making or as a structured activity directed by an adult?
- We must not assume that all parents desire their children to be expressive, creative, independent, literacy-oriented and active learners!

Ethnographic Interview

Ethnography is “concerned with the meaning of actions and events to the people we seek to understand.”

Allows us to tap into family dynamics, constraints, values, and regular activities.

Parent-Directed Goals

Learn from parents what they deem as necessary and appropriate skills for their child to acquire, and again, “appropriate” activities must be defined in the context of the child as well as family dynamics and culture.

Balance parent desires with clinical judgment and experience.

Goals should address areas that impact the child’s participation in functional everyday activities.

Building Capacity

What do strategies look like?

- Demonstrate
- Show videos
- Practice

Working With Multilingual Families

Multilingual Families

When working with multilingual families, it is important to *never* tell a parent or family member to stop speaking to their child in their native language.

Researchers have repeatedly shown that the native language is the foundation upon which to build the second language of acquisition.

The home language is a family strength!

Multilingual Families (cont'd)

The native language is also important in that it is the language of affection and bonding between family members.

Parents who are counseled to stop speaking to their child in their native language and yet have poor English skills would be providing a poor language model for the child.

Multilingual Resources

Recommended related articles:

- *The Right to Bilingualism?*
- *Tips for Parents Raising Bilingual Children: When the Home Language Differs From the Community Language*
- *Why Should Parents Talk to Their Children in Their Native Tongue?*
- *Losing Language: The Subtle Epidemic*

Articles are downloadable free of charge at www.thespeechstop.com, under Bilingual Resources, Bilingualism.

Parent Participation

Facilitating Participation

Plan a parent training session at a school or library free of charge.

Offer the training multiple days and at differing times so that parents have options that fit their schedules.

Provide lunch or dinner and even childcare so parents are able to fully engage in the session.

If children are not present the first session, arrange for a second session where you can model and parents can “practice” purposeful activities.

Facilitating Participation (cont'd)

Incorporate parent education and training into your long-term and short-term goals.

Utilize a portion of your sessions to model, train, and have parents demonstrate their new skills for promoting communicative, cognitive, motor, behavioral, and/or social-emotional growth in their child.

Sample Goals

Sample LT speech-language goal:

- Parent will return independent demonstration of education and training on enhancing language skills through everyday play activities in 2/3 therapy sessions.

Sample ST speech-language goals:

- Provide written information to parent on enhancing language skills through play in 3/3 therapy sessions.
- Provide parent a model of everyday play activities that promote language development in 3/3 therapy sessions.

Parent Observations

If providing private services, Tatyana Elleseff (*Smart Speech Therapy*) suggests allowing parents to observe all treatment sessions as appropriate (based on the child's age) so they're able to learn and incorporate the same strategies at home.

If the child is very shy or unwilling to work with the professional, parents can be trained to become the primary facilitators of the intervention under the guidance of the professional.

Training Session Specifics

Goal: To make our knowledge base and specialized skills accessible to parents.

For SLPs, for example, one might cover the following in laymen's terms:

- Speech and language development in general.
- Easy and functional activities that promote speech and language at home.
- Practical and appropriate strategies (e.g. parallel talk, giving choices, expansions, narration, time delay).

Keep training session short, simple and yet full of practical ideas and suggestions.

Playgroups

Facilitate a weekly or monthly playgroup where parents and children can engage in purposeful play activities that promote target skills, initially under your guidance.

Once the playgroup is established, empower a dedicated parent to carry on the playgroup with meaningful activities.

Language Facilitation Strategies

Modeling

- Statements/comments modeled by adult (sounds, structures, functions).

Event Casting/Narration

- Ongoing description of activity/actions.

Focused Contrasts

- Target sounds or grammatical structures contrasted.

Open-Ended Questions

- Inquiries not demanding specific response.

Language Facilitation Strategies (cont'd)

Expansions

- Filling in missing words/phrases/sentences to expand utterances.

Recasts

- Rephrasing original utterance with different grammatical forms (while maintaining meaning).

Prompted Initiations/Redirections

- Adult prompts a request or interaction with another child.

Scripting (Scripted Play)

- Ordered sequence organized around a goal including actors, actions, and props.

Play-based Intervention

Routines

Repetitive and predictable everyday routines (caretaking and play routines) “provide a framework in which to embed intervention.”
(Cheslock & Kahn, 2011)

Play-based Interventions

Purposeful play means taking advantage of spontaneous play opportunities and manipulating that environment to purposefully target a variety of skills.

Play-based Interventions (cont'd)

Why do purposeful play interventions work?

- Skills are addressed in a meaningful context of familiar and common everyday activities or experiences.
- New knowledge and new skills go to long-term memory when learning is meaningful.
- The majority of learners are visual/kinesthetic learners, and play provides visual, hands-on, as well as auditory input.

Purposeful Ongoing Play

Purposeful Ongoing Play (P.O.P.) is a term coined to describe strategies to help parents enhance the speech/language skills of their children through spontaneous, purposeful play.

Tip sheets written for parents, referred to as P.O.P. Sheets, are downloadable at www.thespeechstop.com under Parent's Corner, Help with Language.

P.O.P. on Bath Time

Possible Targets:

- Rubber animals
- Body parts
- Action words: wash, scrub, splash, pour, rinse, dry.
- Descriptive words: wet, dry, warm, hot, soapy, dirty, clean.
- Location words: in, out, on, inside, outside.
- Related words: water, soap, shampoo, conditioner, washcloth, bubbles, towel, bathtub.

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Bath Time.

P.O.P. on Bowling

Possible Targets:

- Specialized vocabulary
- Body parts
- Actions: bowl, throw, roll, knock down, knock over, hold.
- Descriptive words: (throwing) hard versus gently/softly, fast versus slowly.

[Download P.O.P. Sheet on Bowling.](#)

P.O.P. on Bubbles

Possible Targets:

- Actions: blow, pop, catch, stomp, reach, go up, go down.
- Body parts
- Descriptive words: big, little, tiny, high, low.
- Location words: up, down.

[Download P.O.P. Sheet on Bubbles.](#)

P.O.P. on Building Blocks & Lego®s

Possible Targets:

- Shapes
- Colors
- Size
- Numbers
- Composition: wood, plastic, foam.
- Position words: on top, above, below, under, next to, beside, in front, behind, right, left.

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Building Blocks & Lego®s.

P.O.P. on Cars, Trucks, & More

Possible Targets:

- Means of transportation: bicycles, motorcycles, cars, trucks, buses, trains, ambulances, canoes, boats, ships, helicopters, airplanes, spaceships, hot air balloons.
- Vehicle parts
- Locations seen: roads, highways, tracks, rivers, lakes, oceans, sky, air.
- Associated people: rider, driver, passenger, bus driver, conductor, captain, pilot, astronaut.

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Cars, Trucks, & More.

P.O.P. on Coloring, Painting, & Art

Possible Targets:

- Colors
- Materials: paper, foam, construction paper, newspaper, canvas, chalkboard, dry-erase board, crayons, colored pencils, markers, dry-erase markers, chalk, paint, fingerpaint, watercolors, glitter, stencils, stickers, stamps.

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Coloring, Painting, & Art.

P.O.P. on Dolls & Stuffed Animals

Possible Targets:

- Action words: eat, drink, burp, clean, wash, change, wipe, cry, lay down, sleep.
- Related nouns: bowl, cup, spoon, bottle, bib, bathtub, soap, water, towel, diaper, wipes, pajamas, crib, blanket, pacifier.
- Descriptive words: hungry, thirsty, full, dirty, stinky, wet, messy, clean, tired, sleepy, fussy.

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Dolls & Stuffed Animals.

P.O.P. on Family Photo Albums

Possible Targets:

- Labeling or describing objects, people, places and outings depicted in pictures.
- Labeling actions people are engaged in throughout the photo album.
- Talking about favorite outings, experiences, or events.

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Family Photo Albums.

P.O.P. on Farm Toys

Possible Targets:

- Farm animals
- Animal associations: cow-moo, sheep-baa, horse-neigh, dog-woof, cat-meow, duck-quack, pig-oink.
- Related nouns: barn, silo, fences, tractor, farmer, hay cart, hay, fields, crops.
- Baby farm animals: cow-calf, sheep-lamb, horse-foal, dog-puppy, cat-kitten, duck-duckling, pig-piglet.
- Comparing/contrasting animals: characteristics, diet, habitat.

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Farm Toys.

P.O.P. on Mr. & Mrs. Potato Head

Possible Targets:

- Primary and secondary body parts: eyes, nose, mouth, ears, head, mustache, teeth, lips, arms, hands, feet.
- Clothing accessories: hats, purses, glasses, earrings, shoes.
- Senses

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Mr. & Mrs. Potato Head.

P.O.P. on Musical Instruments

Possible Targets:

- Instruments: keyboard/piano, guitar, ukulele, harmonica, triangle, drums, maracas, tambourine, xylophone, shakers, cymbals, chimes, jingle bells, flute/recorder.
- Basic concepts relating to loudness, speed, duration: loud, soft, fast, slow, long, short.

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Musical Instruments.

P.O.P. on Playdough

Possible Targets:

- Colors
- Shapes
- Action words: rolling, squeezing, pressing, kneading, cutting, pulling apart, pinching, poking.
- Related nouns: rolling pin, scissors, knife, cookie cutters.
- Size concepts: small, medium, large, smallest, largest, smaller than, bigger than.

[Download P.O.P. Sheet on Playdough.](#)

P.O.P. on Playing Kitchen

Possible Targets:

- Food, food groups & characteristics
- Action words: cook, cut, bake, mix, stir, shake, pour, wash, rinse, dry, clean, sweep, serve, eat, drink.
- Related nouns: stove, oven, sink, faucet, table, cutting board, pan, lid, spoon, fork, knife, plate, cup, bowl, hot pad, apron, other kitchen tools.
- Descriptive words: sweet, sour, salty.
- Sequencing: first, next, last.

[Download P.O.P. Sheet on Playing Kitchen.](#)

P.O.P. on Puzzles

Possible Targets:

- Numbers
- Related words: edges, corners, slots, tabs, top, bottom, sides.
- Common puzzle themes: zoo animals, farm animals, means of transportation, shapes, alphabet.

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Puzzles.

P.O.P. on Reading Storybooks

Possible Targets:

- Wh- questions: who, where, when, what, how, why.
- Sequencing: beginning, middle, end.
- Character descriptions
- Comparing/contrasting characters, settings, plots.

Download P.O.P. Sheet on Reading Storybooks.

P.O.P. on Singing

Possible Targets:

- Gesture and movement words
- Rhyming
- Specific vocabulary related to language and/or articulation targets.

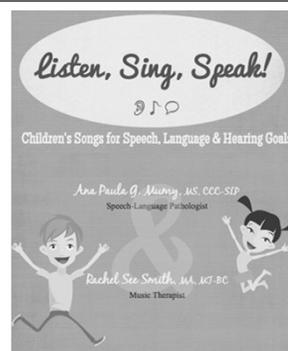
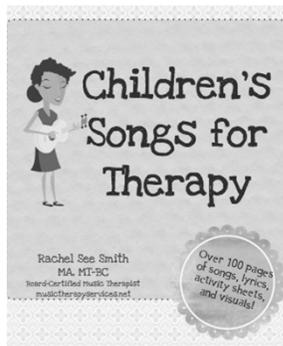
Download P.O.P. Sheet on Singing.

Music, Language, & Learning

Music involves or stimulates both sides of the brain, and when both hemispheres are engaged, we tap into more potential for cognitive growth or learning.

Music/singing is auditory, visual, verbal, tactile and physical, and the more senses that are involved in an activity, the greater the capacity for learning and retention.

Music Resources



Thank You!

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