good4growth
for healthier, smarter kids

Building Children Up with Words

Talk Early. Talk Often.

A presentation by:

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Why Are Nurturing Words Important?

Positive and reinforcing words help children to develop the skills to cope with stress and everyday life. Parents and caregivers who nurture children through caring and compassionate words help their young ones to grow into happy, healthy, and successful adults.

Communication Wires the Brain

The first 3 years of a child's life lay the foundation for healthy brain development. During these formative years, a child builds massive synaptic connections that are strengthened by use and lost if unused. Stimulation and experiences (via communication) are what build connectivity for life.

The 30 Million Word Gap

By age 4...

- A child from a professional family experiences **45 million words**
- A child from a working class family experiences **26 million words**
- A child living n poverty experiences only **13 million words**

The Solution

We can close the language gap among socioeconomic groups by educating parents on the importance of talking with their children at an early age.

> *"The quality of parent-child communication is "mediated by parental knowledge of child development"*
>
> - Rowe ML. J Child Lang, 2008; 35:185

Building A Supportive Communication Style

Adults can build a supportive relationship with a child through highly responsive, encouraging, and interactive communication. These language experiences should occur one-on-one and use both emotion and expression.

Supportive communication on a consistent basis helps a child to develop:

- Planning Skills
- Inhibition
- Cognitive Flexibility
- Working Memory
- Problem Solving Skills
- Reasoning Skills
- Initiation Skills
- Attention

Language is Play

A child's use of language evolves as they begin to explore and play with different sounds, words, and structures in language. Help make learning language skills a fun game for children by encouraging them to:

- Play with sounds (0-12 months)
- Plays with words (1-2 years)
- Play with grammar (2-5 years)
- Perform songs, rhymes, and chants (3-5 years)

The Magic of Everyday Moments

Take advantage of every moment by practicing the following with your child:

- Serve-and-return style parenting
- Match talk to development
- Promote the brain's executive function
- Establish everyday routines
- Play, with lots of feeling
- Play, while reading
- Play, to build muscle skills

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