

Parent Training for Young Children Who are Minimally Verbal: "You want me to do what?!"

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Disclosures

- No financial or non-financial disclosures
- Not promoting any specific parent training program
- Employed by UNMC



Importance of Parent Training

- Parents are their child's first teacher
- Spend more time with their child than we can or do
- Generalization of skills across settings
- Increases parent knowledge and confidence that they can successfully interact with their child





Parent Quote

"The examples and expanding on basic techniques to interact with my son have been a life saver... This has helped make our bond stronger and I have the confidence to continue to help him grow"

"[the opportunity] to learn and take this class can never be repaid. My son's language explosion and interaction is more than I could ever have expected."





Parent Training Resources

- Hanen Centre
 - It Takes Two to Talk
 - More than Words
- DIRFloortime
- JASPER
- Project ImPACT





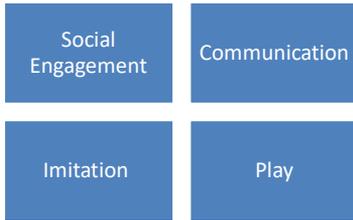
Important Aspects of Parent Training

- Rapport between parent, child, and therapist
- Identifying caregiver's learning preferences, as well as potential barriers
- Therapist Modeling
- Parent Practice in Session
- Feedback/Coaching
- Plan for Parent Practice at Home
- Review of "Homework"



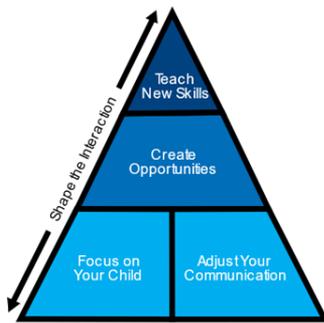
Core Areas of Intervention

- 4 core areas



(Ingersoll & Dvortcsak, 2019)





remember the
F.A.C.T.S.

(Ingersoll & Dvortcsak, 2019)



Building Shared Enjoyment

Focus on Your Child:

- Be face to face
- Let your child choose the activity
- Imitate your child
- Wait for your child's response
- Respond to all of your child's actions as meaningful

Adjusting Communication:

- Be animated
- Show excitement
- Wait with anticipation
- Use gestures and visual cues
- Simplify our language
- Modeling and expanding language about the child's current interest





Creating Opportunities

- Playful Obstruction
- Balanced Turns
- Communicative Temptations
 - In Sight, Out of Reach
 - Use Items That Require Your Assistance
 - Give Small Portions
 - Control Access to Items
 - Have an Item Missing

(Ingersoll & Dvortcsak, 2019)





Potential Barriers

1. Very early communicator
2. Unique relationship between parent and child
3. Limited follow through from parents
4. Challenging behavior





1. Very early communicator

- Consider AAC strategies
 - What is the child already doing?
 - Reaching/pointing/making choice
 - Eye contact or gaze shift
 - Giving for help
 - Manual Sign Language
 - Pairing a specific gesture with meaning
 - Low-Tech Strategies
 - Communication boards
 - Picture exchange
 - Speech Generating Devices



“But when will my child talk?”

- Always our ultimate goal
- Unfortunately, imitating speech is not something we can physically prompt the child do (like using a sign, reaching, etc)
- But we can set up opportunities that may make it more likely
 - Modeling
 - Wait time
 - Capitalizing on parents’ speech input
 - Developmentally appropriate targets



2. Limited follow through

- Time
- Be specific with suggestions for practice
 - One situation at home
 - Choosing a breakfast item
 - After dinner, before going outside
 - How to prepare for the communication opportunity
 - How they can help their child be successful



Toy Play Example:



- Joining play
- Controlling access
- Playful obstruction
- Taking turns
- Making a choice
- Requesting action or object



Gross Motor Example:



- Outside
 - Choose what to play before they go outside
 - Being pushed on a swing/stopped on slide
 - “Ready, set,...”
 - Ask for help
- Physical interaction
 - Tickling
 - Chase
 - Throwing in air



Food Example:



- Snack/Lunch
 - Choose what they want to eat or drink
 - Provide small amounts, so they can ask for more to eat or pick a new snack
 - Having food in a container that the child cannot reach or cannot open
 - E.g., animal cracker container with large circular lid



Media Example:



- TV/You Tube
 - Choose a show/movie/video
 - Picture board with show's logo
 - Pause the show/movie so they ask to turn it back on
 - **May evoke problem behavior



3. Challenging behavior

- Consider “why” the behavior is occurring
 - What happened before?
 - I turned the YouTube video off
 - I said “my turn” and/or took the toy
 - What typically happens after?
 - Typically, results in getting the show back on or the toy returned to the child
 - If desired outcome, we can expect it to happen again



Potential "Why"s for Behavior

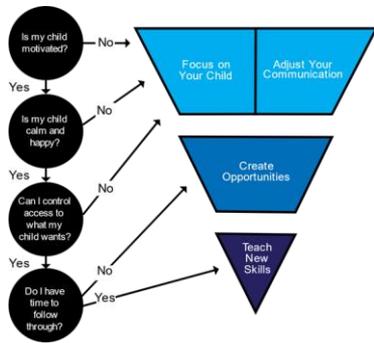
To get something	To escape or avoid
To get attention	Enjoyable/sensory



Strategies

- Teach a replacement behavior or skill for what the child is trying to communicate
 - Help them be successful!
- Differentiate amount and type of attention
 - “Catch” them being good
 - May not be verbal praise
 - Reduce amount of attention provided for behaviors we do not want to see
- **Remember:** What is reinforcing to one individual may not be reinforcing to another





(Ingersoll & Dvortcsak, 2019)



Before and After: Video Examples

- https://vimeo.com/301085566/860a596fd_a
- https://vimeo.com/301070668/812d80c03_2



What We've Learned

- Some parents have difficulty providing communication expectations – for many different reasons (e.g., time, behavior)
- Parents who are willing to practice principles IN session make the most gains
- Parents report gratitude for being "told what to do" – even things that seem intuitive to us
- Even parents who are using good techniques benefit from teaching & feedback



References

Ingersoll, B. & Dvortcsak, A. (2019). Teaching social communication to children with autism and other developmental delays: second edition. New York, NY: The Guilford Press

Pepper, J. & Weitzman, E. (2004). It Takes Two to Talk. The Hanen Program. Toronto, Ontario: Transcontinental Interglobe.



