



Little Talks: **Enhancing and Expanding Parents' Facilitation of Their Infants and Toddlers Language Acquisition and Emergent Literacy**



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Acknowledgement & Appreciation

- Early Head Start Program, Community Services for Children, Inc. administrators, Child Development Partners, and families
- Lehigh University Team: Rachel Eisenberg, Julie Manzo, Amanda Gernhart, Jaqueline Faison, Tamique Ridgard, Jamie Whitenack, Laura Wallace, Kristen Martin, Alana Telesford
- This study was supported by grant R62 MC 24848-01-00 from the MCH Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Research Program, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (Title V, Social Security Act, as amended by the Affordable Care Act, 2010), Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services as well as through the Faculty Innovation Grant program at Lehigh University.



Birth-to-Three: Critical Period

- Rapid development of language competencies
 - Cornerstone of emergent literacy skills
- Parents' care and interactions are pivotal in children's language development

(Hart & Risely, 1995; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Zigler, Singer, Bishop-Josef, 2004)



Book Sharing with Infants & Toddlers

- Books create context and opportunity for talking and exposure to print
- Associated with a number of language and literacy-related outcomes (Bartl-Pokorny et al., 2013; Karrass & Braungart-Rieker, 2005)
 - However, what constitutes effective book sharing varies by culture (Casper, 2008; Cline & Edwards, 2013)



Socioeconomic Disadvantage Impacts

- 25% of children below 3 years lives in poverty (Jiang, Ekono, & Skinner, 2014)
 - Percentage nearly doubles for low-income status
 - Among Hispanic children, 66% are low income
- Socioeconomic disadvantage can be detrimental (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Yoshikawa, Aber, & Beardslee, 2012)
 - Parenting is a pivotal factor in mediating poverty's impact



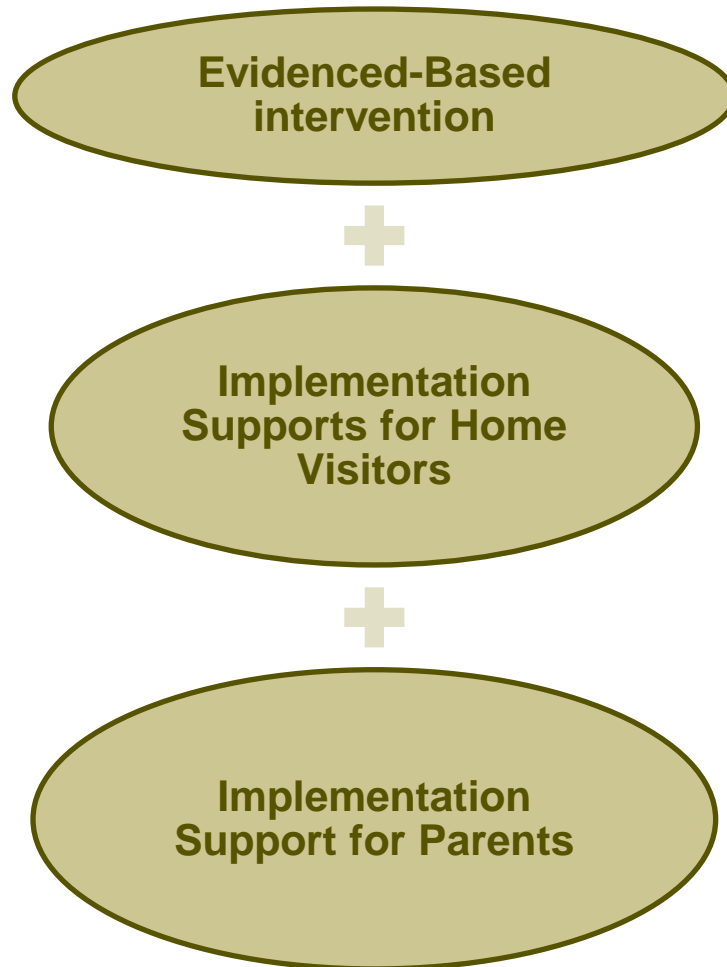
Offsetting socioeconomic impact

- Interventions for promoting book sharing among young children and their parents, who are from low-income and ethnic minority backgrounds have insufficient evidence (Manz et al., 2010; Mol et al., 2008)
 - *Strengthen implementation supports for families may be one way to achieve effectiveness*



Home Visiting

- Developmentally- and theoretically-sound intervention approach
- Evidence for benefits to children's development is inconsistent (i.e., HomVEE; Avellar, Paulsell, Sama-Miller, & Del Grosso, 2013)
- *Integration of evidenced-based, child development intervention is one way to achieve consistent child outcomes*





Developing Little Talks

COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY

Collaborative Inquiry



Steps

- Shared understanding of:
 - EHS program
 - Families
 - Book sharing intervention procedures and research
- Iterative process
 - Implement intervention
 - Obtain feedback
 - Refine intervention
- Formulate intervention for evaluation

(Nastasi et al., 2000; Varajas, Nastasi, More, Jayasena, 2005)



Iterative Process

- Starting intervention: Dialogic Reading
 - 8 to 10 week “trial”
- Home visits conducted by doctoral students on weekly basis
 - Combined parent training, assessment/observation, and parent input
- 3 iterations across 1 year
 - Intervention modified based on input



Iterations 1 & 2: Dialogic Reading Focus

Early Head Start Mothers & Toddlers ($n = 18$)

Caregiver age, yrs (M, SD)	30.7 (5.4)	Primary Language in Home (%)	
Child gender: female (%)	50%	English	68.8%
Child Ethnicity Hispanic (%)	81.4%	Spanish	18.8%
Child age, in months (M, SD)	25.9 (7.3)	English & Spanish	12.5%



Iterations 1 & 2: Findings

- Parents increased use of Dialogic Reading Strategies
 - Most frequently asked “what” questions
- Children acquired vocabulary related to books
 - 11 new words versus 5 new words for comparison
- Parents reported higher level of involvement in literacy activities



Reflection and Revision

- Dialogic reading strategies were too prescribed
 - Praise was challenging, yet also expressed in various ways
- Flexibility in intervention was necessary, so that it could be adapted to parents' natural styles and existing routines
- Book sharing intervention needed to be intertwined with collaborative goal setting to assist families' ownership of it



Emergence of Little Talks

- Educate parents in various speech acts versus trained specific reading behaviors
- Broaden expression of praise
 - Address it early and repeatedly
- Individualize families' use of Little Talks through collaborative goal setting





Little Talks: “Basics”

	Labeling	Simple Events	Character feelings	Personal Experience
Provision	<p>That’s the lion.</p> <p>A frog!</p>	<p>The frog jumped up high!</p> <p>The wind blew the umbrella.</p>	<p>The pig is so happy!</p> <p>The frog looks angry.</p>	<p>We went to the beach with grandma just like Little Critter.</p>
Request	<p>Where is the boy?</p> <p>What is this? (a Wild Thing)</p> <p>What color is that?</p>	<p>What did the boy do?</p> <p>What is happening on this page?</p>	<p>How did the little boy feel?</p> <p>Does the lion feel happy or scared?</p>	<p>“Do you remember when we went to the beach?”</p>

(Based Caspe, 2009; Reese & Cox, 1999)

Add On



Strategies

- Reflection
- Expansion
- Apply to gestures, babbles, and words

Praise

- Parent encouraged to offer verbal & non-verbal
- Recognize child's behavior as well as verbal contributions



Little Talks

CURRICULUM



Little Talks Curriculum



Managing book sharing interactions

- Praise and positive book sharing
- Following your child's lead
- Engaging your child in book sharing

Responding to your child's communications

- Reflecting your child's communications
- Expanding your child's communications

Telling/Asking about

- Labels
- Events
- Feelings
- Personal Experiences

Applying Little Talks to other activities



Materials

- Handouts for modules
- Books



Asking Questions About the Story: Labels

Children not only learn from what you tell them about a story, they also learn when **THEY** can **TELL YOU** about a story. To get your child to understand and say more words, you can ask him or her different kinds of questions related to the story. Asking your child to tell the names, colors, shapes, and other characteristics of items in the book helps your child learn those words.

For babies and young toddlers, you may want to use yes/no questions or give the answers yourself. This shows children how to respond to questions.

During Book Sharing with your Toddler:

- What animal is that?
- Look at the moon! What shape is it?

During Book Sharing with your Infant:

- Where is the mouse? Yes, he is hiding over there.
- Point to the lion. There he is!



During Other Activities:

- What color is that truck?
- What kind of juice are you drinking?

Give Your Child Lots of Praise

High five

"Awesome!"

Let Your Child be the Leader

Let your child turn the pages

Keep Your Child Interested

Make the story into a song



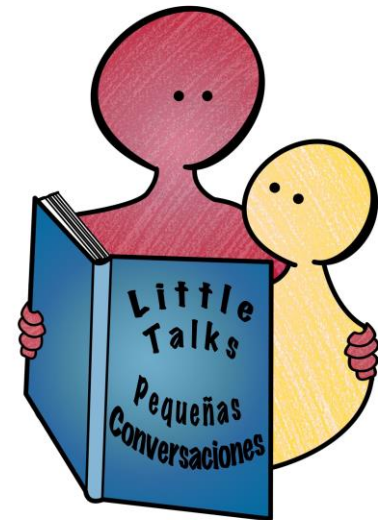
Little Talks Design

- Individualized to families
 - Modules are sequenced and timed according to parents' book sharing practices and preferences
 - Sequence and timing are collaboratively determined by home visitor and parent



Little Talks

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT FOR PARENTS





Starting Point: Book Sharing Plan

- **Who** would be with reading with your child?
- **What** would you be doing?
- **What** would your child be doing?
- **Where** would you like to share books with your child?
- **When** you like to share books with your child?
- **How long** would you like to share books with your child?
- **How often** would you like to share books with your child?



Home visit structure for Little Talks



- Observe parent-child book sharing
- Discuss observation



- Review books sharing plan and prior target
- Check on progress

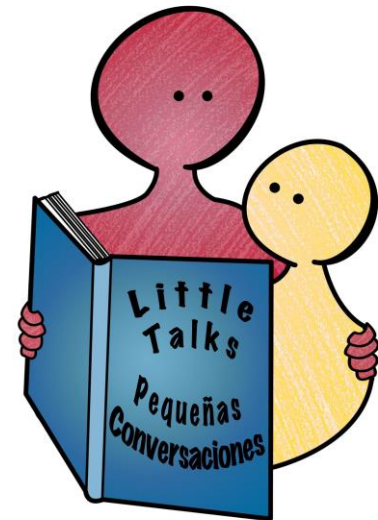


- Teach or reinforce Little Talks module
- Problem-solve challenges to book sharing plan



Little Talks

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT FOR HOME VISITORS





Performance Feedback

- Performance Data
 - Little Talks record
 - Home visitor recording of Little Talks activities
 - Recorded through a mobile application
 - Video
 - Parent-child interactions (PICCOLO)
 - Home visitor-parent interactions (HVORS-A+)
 - Children's language skills (ECI)

Supervision Plan



Supervision Plan				
Community Development Partner (CDP): _____		Supervision Session: _____		
Lehigh Supervisor: _____		Date: _____		
PLANS DETERMINED AT END OF PREVIOUS SUPERVISION SESSION				
1. _____				
2. _____				
PROCEDURAL ITEMS				
1. _____				
2. _____				
GENERAL NOTES FROM BI-WEEKLY REVIEW OF LITTLE TALKS HOME VISIT SUMMARY FORM				
1. _____				
2. _____				
PLANS AND PROCEDURES FOR CURRENT SUPERVISION SESSION:				
1. Review the weekly data gathered from the Little Talks Home Visit Summary Form across families.				
2. Prepare a <u>visual</u> (e.g., graph, video clip) for the supervision session for performance feedback. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use the SLAC-P model to guide your use of the visual in planning discussion for your supervision session. (What do/would you: See, Like, Add, Change – Plan?) b. Record what visual you will be using: _____ 				
3. Complete the "strengths" and "supervisor observation" portions of the table below during planning.				
4. Follow the order of items in the table to guide you through the supervision session and record your responses during/after supervision.				
REVIEW OF LAST TWO WEEKS General Discussion Across Families				
	Observation to be Discussed	Summary of Discussion	Was the concern addressed?	
			CDP	Supervisor
CDP "Describe a strength or concern for a family" <i>(child development focused)</i>			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Partially	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Partially
Leverage 4 strengths from the previous two weeks' Little Talks Home Visit Summary Forms for discussion of constructive feedback:				
Strength 1: _____				
Strength 2: _____				
Strength 3: _____				
Strength 4: _____				
1				

Supervision Plan



Supervisor <i>(Write 1 area of concern based on data review across families. Consider the LT Visit Records from previous weeks. Use the visual.)</i>	Little Talks Modules:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Partially	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Partially
	OR Collaborative Goal Setting:		
"TEACHING" PREPARATION FOR FOLLOWING WEEKS' HOME VISITS			
Items to Discuss	Summary of Discussion		Did teaching happen? <i>(supervisor report)</i>
Little Talks Modules: AND/OR Collaborative Goal Setting:			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Partially
EVALUATION OF SUPERVISION SESSION			
	What is one big take-away from supervision today?	What is one thing we can do to make our time here more helpful?	Plans for next supervision
CDP			
Supervisor			
2			



Preliminary Findings

- Performance feedback in supervision
 - Little Talks curriculum was implemented well
 - Significant enhancement in home visitor decision making and collaboration with families
 - Little Talks home visitors increased collaboration with parents in other aspects of EHS visit



Preliminary Findings

- Possible improvement to parents' teaching behaviors when interacting with children
- Possible increase in parents' general involvement in children's learning



Thank you!

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

