

# Oral Language Development Strategies in Parenting Education and Parent-Child Time

**Gina Phi, Campbell Even Start,  
Campbell CA**

**Gloria Nudelman, Redwood City  
Even Start, Redwood CA**

# Hart and Risley: Meaningful Differences in Young Children

Word exposure by age 4:

- Welfare families – 13 million
- Working class families – 26 million
- Professional families – 45 million

# How do we close the gap?

Even Start uses:

- Early Childhood Education
- Adult Education
- Parenting Education
- Parent-Child Time

# The Search Begins

Parent-child interactions may not produce rich oral language:

- Parents may not understand what to do during parent-child time to foster language
- Staff may not have the knowledge to help parents develop language strategies

# Light at the End of the Tunnel

## YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

- Parent-Child interactions – differences in form and quality
- Evaluation of pre and post-assessments of parent/child oral interactions

# What is a conversation?

- Initiator
- Response
- Response
- Response



# What are the possible elements of language interaction?

- Positive comments
- Negative comments
- Neutral comments
- Questions

# Training

- Staff are trained in order to train parents
- Nine week parent training session
- Parents learn techniques of responsive interaction
- Powerful results

# Strategies

- Parenting and Parent-child time **must be linked**
- Parenting class strategies:
  - ❖ **Listening**
  - ❖ **Observation**
  - ❖ **Following child's lead**
  - ❖ **Mirroring child's actions**
  - ❖ **Adding language to child's experiences and utterances**

# How do we teach these strategies?

- Videos – Examples of skillful and unskillful parent-child interactions
- Interactive activities
- Textbooks
- Discussion – debrief each segment

# Mnemonic Devices

- **“OWL”**

**Observe**

**Wait**

**Listen**

- **“3A WAY”**

**Allow**

**Adapt**

**Add**

# Parent-Child Time Strategies

- Facilitator demonstrates application at infant, toddler or preschool levels.
- Strategies are taught separately and practiced one at a time, but are cumulative during parent-child time.
- Parents watch videotaped parent-child interactions with the whole group.

# Parent-Child Time Strategy Implementation

- After each parenting class, there is a special parent-child session that is videotaped.
- The special parent-child session is one parent and one child.
- Activities are focused and specific.

# Parent-Child Time Strategy Implementation (continued)

- Parents practice specific strategies they learned in parenting class.
- Mnemonic devices assist parents in remembering strategies.

# Parent-Child Time Coaching

Facilitator offers coaching during parent-child session on an as-needed basis.

- Only the most successful moments of videotape are used in next debrief.
- Self and group analysis is crucial for paradigm shift to occur.
- Positive comments only from parents.

# Parents focus on:

- Parent at eye level with child
- Parent face to face with child
- Parent maintains eye contact
- Parent responds warmly when child initiates
- Parent maintains positive mood
- Parent adds words to child's experiences

# What makes a difference for low-income children?

- Frequency of experiences with language in the home
- Quality of everyday interactions in the home