



# Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE Vol. VI, No. 8

## 10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

## This Month's Hallmark of Quality Child Care Partnering with Parents

### Speech and Language Delays

According to the University of Michigan Health System, as many as 5–10% of preschool-aged children experience a delay in speech or language development. With that in mind, there is a good possibility that you have, or will have, a child in your care whose speech or language development you may be concerned about.

Although 'speech' and 'language' are related terms, they are two different skills. 'Speech' refers to one's ability to produce speech sounds. 'Language' has two parts: receptive language, which refers to one's ability to understand language; and expressive language, one's ability to share thoughts and ideas. For example, a child with a **speech delay** may have difficulty pronouncing speech sounds or have problems with speech fluency. A child with a **language delay** may have difficulty comprehending what others are saying or difficulty sharing her thoughts, ideas and feelings.

Children develop speech and language at their own pace. Knowing a bit about speech and language development can help you better meet the needs of the child, as well as be a source of information for parents. If a speech or language delay is suspected, it is vital that you partner with the child's parents to determine next steps to ensure that the child gets the needed help as soon as possible. Speech and language delays are highly treatable, and the earlier the child receives needed speech or language support, the better the outcome will be for her.

In this newsletter, we will present strategies to help you partner with parents by:

- Being a source of information regarding speech and language development;
- Sharing available resources if a speech or language delay is suspected;
- Working cooperatively to ensure the child receives needed speech and language support.

This newsletter also includes a few suggested activities that you and parents can use to improve all children's speech and language development at each age level – infants, toddlers and preschoolers.



## Be a Source of Information

By monitoring children's speech and language development using a milestone checklist, and by showing parents how to do this, you can be a helpful source of information to parents. A milestone checklist outlines behaviors and skills that most children demonstrate at a given age, can be done both at home and in child care, and can help you and the child's parents understand typical development.

By completing a milestone checklist before talking to a parent about any concerns you may have, you help the parents understand that you are basing your comments on facts and not just feelings. Here are some milestone checklists that you might consider using:

- CDC's Developmental Milestones <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>
- America Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Identify the Signs. <https://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/chart/>

Keep in mind that milestone checklists provide general guidelines and you and the child's parents should not be alarmed if the child does not meet every criterion for her developmental age. Rather, you and the child's parents should use this as a measure to monitor the child's progress and to set goals on how to work with the child.

## Share Available Resources

If you suspect the child is falling behind, encourage the child's parents to seek help from their child's pediatrician or health care provider immediately, or encourage them to call the Hawai'i Early Intervention Referral Line at 594-0066 or 1-800-235-5477 (Neighbor Islands).

Under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) all states must offer low- or no-cost early intervention



program services (including home-based services) for children from birth through their third birthday, who have been diagnosed with a disability, including a speech or language delay. After age 3 most program support ends and can be continued with the Dept. of Education if the child qualifies for services.

## Work Cooperatively with Parents

The relationship between a child care provider and a child's family members have tremendous potential for affecting the life of a young child. Families benefit from having information, resources, support, empathy, and someone to share the tender and tough moments. As a child care provider you also have the education and experience in working with many children and can often see if there is a concern.

Tips to form a cooperative partnership:

- Keep the lines of communication open.
- Consider using a communication book to share information, communicate needs, and celebrate successes.
- Value and respect the input of family members by listening to their ideas.

# Suggested Activities

Here are some things that you and parents can do to encourage the speech and language development of infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

## Infants

- Get baby's attention before you talk and allow time for her to respond.
- Talk to baby whenever she is awake. Talk about what you're doing, what she's doing/looking at, what you're going to do, eat, etc.
- Label objects throughout the course of the day such as "milk".
- Ask baby questions about familiar objects, such as, "Where's the cup?" and encourage her to point to it. Say, "Yes, there it is!"
- Play repetitive word games, like, "This Little Piggy".
- Sing to her.
- Read to baby from large colorful picture books and encourage her to turn the pages.



## Toddlers

- Play make-believe games, such as pretending to go camping in a "tent" (a blanket over a dining table makes a nice tent), or pretending to have a "tea party" with teddy bears.
- Give toddlers opportunities to follow simple 1–2 step directions such as, "Pick up the ball and bring it to Aunty." When she is ready, challenge her with 2–3 step directions.
- Sing songs together.
- Read favorite books over and over and encourage the child to join in with words she knows. Encourage child-directed reading by pausing at repetitive phrases to let the child join in or having her tell you what's happening by looking at the illustrations on each page.

## Preschoolers

- Read a variety of books to children, including books with poems, rhyming stories, and informational books (e.g., non-fiction books about dinosaurs).
- Help preschoolers verbalize *the use* of objects. For example, ask them, "What do we use to brush our teeth?"
- Allow preschoolers opportunities to learn songs, rhymes or verses from memory.
- Engage the children in conversation. Listen to them when they talk to you. Encourage them to use language to express their feelings and ideas.
- When talking with the children, purposely include positional and directional words such as "under," "behind," "beside," "in front," "around," "first," "last," etc.





## Citations:

Keyser, Janis. (2006). *From Parents to Partners*. Red Leaf Press and National Association for the Education of Young Children.

## Reflection Sheet, Award Book, and Training Certificates

- Providers who fill out the caregiver's reflection sheet and return it by the posted deadline to the Learning to Grow Program are *guaranteed* a children's book in return. A postage-paid envelop is provided.
- Providers who thoughtfully complete the reflection sheet **question #5** can be awarded a certificate indicating one hour of training completed. Training hours will align with the topic areas required to meet DHS requirements.
- Reflection sheets do not need to be returned by the due date in order to earn the certificate. However, the supply of award books is limited and after the due date, award books will be sent only as available.
- Indicate on Question #8 if you would like to receive free technical assistance or support related to a child care issue.



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**Learning to Grow Quality Child Care for Registered Home-Based Providers** is a project of University of Hawai'i, Windward Community College with funding from the Hawai'i Department of Human Services ★ 808-462-4700 ★ [www.learningtogrowhawaii.org](http://www.learningtogrowhawaii.org)