



NSW Speech Pathology Evidence Based Practice Interest Group

Critically Appraised Topic (CAT)

CLINICAL BOTTOM LINE:

Training parents and teachers in using books and narratives can be effective in increasing the expressive language of two – four year old children in the general population.

Background and Objectives:

Shared book reading is a common strategy recommended to parents and preschool teachers to stimulate language development but is it an effective treatment technique?

Clinical Question [patient/problem, intervention, (comparison), outcome]:

Does the use of books and narratives increase the expressive language in 2 – 4 year old children?

Search Terms/Systems:

Narratives; story books; expressive language; language stimulation

Selection Criteria:

Although these articles used participants from the normal population rather than our normal clinical population, they support the training of parents and teachers in using books and narratives to stimulate children's expressive language, resulting in a positive evidence base for health promotion and early intervention activities. Three of the four papers were pseudo-randomised control trials (level III-1) and one paper was a randomised control trial (level II)

Results:

These articles indicate that by training parents and teachers in interactive book reading, children's expressive language is increased. Arnold et al (1994) and Whitehurst et al (1998) demonstrated that parent training on shared book reading is an effective technique in increasing the development of expressive language in 2-3 year old children from medium to high socioeconomic backgrounds. Wasik et al (2001) found that training teachers to use books and language extensions activities is effective in increasing the vocabulary of 4 year olds from low income families in the preschool setting. Peterson et al (1999) also determined that training parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to use narrative elicitation techniques is not only an effective strategy to improve parent's verbal interactions with their children but also an effective way of improving their children's vocabulary and narrative skills.

References:

- Arnold, D.H., Lonigan, C.J., Whitehurst, G.J., Epstein, J.N. (1994). Accelerating language development through picture book reading: replication and extension to a videotape training format. Journal of Educational Psychology, 86(2), 235-243.
- Whitehurst, G.J., Falco, F.L., Lonigan, C.J., Fischel, J.E., DeBaryshe, B.D., Valdez-Menchaca, M.C., Caulfield, M. (1998). Accelerating language development through picture book reading. Developmental Psychology, 24(4), 552-559.
- Peterson, C., Jesso, B. & McCabe, A. (1999). Encouraging narratives in preschoolers, an intervention study. Journal of Child Language, 26, 49-67.
- Wasik, B.A. & Bond, M.A. (2001). Beyond the pages of a book: Interactive book reading and language development in preschool classrooms. Journal of Educational Psychology, 93(2), 243-250.

Appraised By: Paediatric Language Group
Clinical Group:

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