Getting to the Core of Language

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Let's Play!! Language Activity

- ▶ Each table has a common toy or object.
- ▶ Work together to come up with a list of words or phrases you could focus on while interacting with your child. (2-3 minutes)
- ▶ Share with the group.

What is Core Vocabulary

Did you know...

"80% of what we say comes from 400 core words regardless of age, gender, background or cognitive ability."

Marvin, C.A., Beukelman, D.R., & Bilyeu, D. (1994)
Banajee, M., Dicarlo, C., & Stricklin, S.B. (2003)

- ▶ Small set of words
- ▶ Used frequently and across contexts
- ▶ All parts of speech
- ▶ Primarily pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs & question words

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Fringe Vocabulary

- ▶ Makes up about 20% of what we say.
- ▶ More specific to a topic, environment or individual
- ▶ Mostly nouns
- ▶ Still important

- ▶ Apple
- ▶ Toronto
- ▶ Favorite foods
- ▶ Brother's name
- ▶ Curriculum vocab

Why Teach Core Vocabulary?
WHY USE COMMUNICATION BOARDS?

1. More bang for our buck. These are the most common words kids are using to communicate.
Ex: We do not talk in nouns. Chair? Door? ...or sit here, get up, open, go in, go out, who is there?

2. Follows normal language development.

3. Focus is on communication not just vocabulary development.
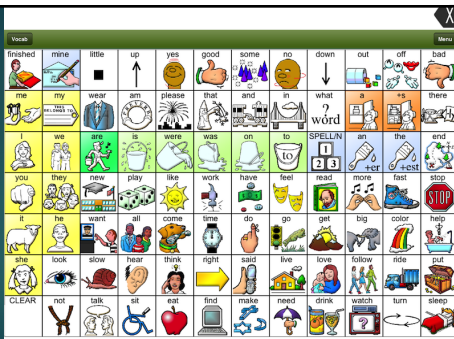

Top Words Used by Toddlers

A	All done/finished	Go
Help	Here	I
In	Is	It
Mine	More	My
No	Off	On
Out	Some	That
The	Want	What
Yes/yeah	You	

These 23 words make up 96.3% of the total utterances by toddlers ages 24-36 months.

Banajee, M. DiCarlo, C., & Buras-Stricklin, S. (2003)

Core Vocabulary Boards are available and used in all classrooms

- Visual support for language
- Visual support for expanding utterances
- Multi-sensory approach for stronger pathways and connections
- Modeling for our children who use this as their main form of communication

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BY 18 MONTHS babies have heard 4,380 HOURS OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE and we don't expect them to be fluent speakers YET

If AAC learners only see symbols modeled for communication twice weekly for 20-30 minutes, it will take 84 YEARS for them to have the same exposure to aided language as an 18 month old has to spoken language.

statistic from Jane Korsten - QIAT Listserv 2011
photo by Rachael Langley - AAC Specialist

Language Expansion Strategies

▶ **Modeling:** use the language you want your child to use
  ▶ Example: when your child wants to be picked up and grunts or gestures to communicate, model words such as "up," "up please" and eventually "Can you pick me up please?" or use "self-talk" (where you talk about the things you are doing)

▶ **Sabotage:** set up situations/problems that your child has to solve or purposefully keep something away so your child has to request
  ▶ Example: keep lids on or toys out of reach, model the words you want them to use such "help" "more please," etc.

▶ **Waiting:** allow wait time for your child to process and respond.
  ▶ Example: when you ask a question or give a demand, provide time for a response. Children with language delays often have slower processing time.

Mize, Laura. (2014). A Little Frustration CAN Go A Long Way....Using Sabotage And Withholding Effectively to Entice Your Toddler To Talk. In Teach Me to Talk. Retrieved August 23, 2018, from teachmetotalk.com.

Language Expansion Strategies

- Parallel Talk: Use words to describe what your child is doing, seeing, hearing, or feeling when your child is nearby or within hearing range. There is no pressure on them to perform, but this provides excellent language models!!
  - Example: When your child is playing with a toy truck on the floor, you might say, **Sam has a truck—big truck—push the truck—The truck goes—The truck stops---pick up the truck---drop the truck—boom!"**

- Expansion: When your child say something, try to add one or two words to what they have said when you respond back to them. This may include correcting the word order, so they can hear the correct word order and grammar, if necessary
  - Examples: "up"---"come up," "boy eat"--"The boy is eating."
  - "doggie run all gone"--"The doggie ran away"
  - "no pie eat"--"I didn't eat the pie."

Functions of Communication

Not only to request...

1. Protesting
2. Commenting
3. Labeling
4. Describing
5. Asking questions
6. Answering questions
7. Sharing information
8. Socialization

Using what you now know about core vocabulary...

- With your tablemates, revisit and add to your list of ways to communicate with your child using the toys at your table.
- Think about the core vocabulary you could use. What words and/or phrases could you model for your child?
- How is this different than the original list you came up with?

Questions?

Thank you for your time and participation! We enjoyed having you today! Please don't hesitate to contact us anytime for additional information!