

## Promoting the Language Development of Infants and Toddlers - Fact Sheet

### Best Practice

To support young children in the development of language and successful communication:

- We partner with families and give families suggestions and activities to foster their child's language learning.
  - We train, support and supervise special instructors and teachers with additional communications training to maximize the quality of their intervention with children and families.
  - We train and support speech and language therapists to work with children, families, special instructors, teachers with additional communications training (T/ACT) and other members of the team as collaborators, consultants and direct interventionists.
- I. Initial, Annual Evaluations
- All children receive a multidisciplinary evaluation (MDE) that determines a child's developmental needs including general language level.
  - Children may receive a speech and language consultation to further assess the child's language level and needs.
- II. Outcomes
- Based on the information gathered about the child's language development and the MDE, the team of parents and professionals will identify outcomes for the child as part of the child's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).
- III. Intervention
- The approach to intervention that the team recommends is based on the information gathered as part of the child's MDE the child's stage of language development, the child's needs and suggested outcomes.
  - Intervention approaches to address language stimulation and communication outcomes include:
    - A Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP) to work with the child and family to develop and implement a plan for recommended therapeutic techniques.
    - A Teacher with additional communications training (T/ACT) to facilitate and stimulate early language development with the child and family, with clinical collaboration by a Hanen Certified SLP. Both the (T/ACT) and SLP are from the same agency.
    - A Special Instructor (SI) trained to facilitate early language to work with the child and family with consultation by an SLP. The SI and SLP should be from the same agency.

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### IV. Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)

#### A. **Teaming** (excerpted from the *Philadelphia County Best Practice Guidelines for Early Intervention*)

- Consider a variety of options to determine the duration and frequency of service, joint service delivery options, or number of services so that each child's IFSP will be truly individualized.
- Consider:
  - Brainstorming challenges, solutions and effective ways of addressing child and family outcomes
  - Ways to ensure that families understand their critical role on the team
  - Everybody's ideas are needed and helpful
  - Who can address a child's communication issues? (See *Philadelphia County EI Speech and Language Best Practice Guideline Descriptions*)
  - Consultation with an SLP to develop an intervention plan (consultative sessions can be billed to the county)
  - Use of non EI Resources
- Offer:
  - A variety of options such as:
    - Duration of service (e.g., 1.5 hours, 1.25 hours)
    - Frequency of service (e.g., 3 times per month, 5 times in 3 months)
    - Consultation model (e.g., joint service delivery options)
    - Number of services (e.g., service-relay: one service for 6 weeks, followed by another service for 3 months, etc.)

#### B. **How to Identify Services on the IFSP for T/ACT, SI and SLP**

- Teacher with additional communications training (T/ACT):
  - This model includes a Hanen Certified SLP from the same agency.
  - Team decides on frequency and duration for T/ACT only.
  - SLP is usually on the IFSP once in a 90 day period; if the team recommends additional time (more than once per quarter) for the SLP to visit the child with the T/ACT, an IFSP addendum must be written.
  - T/ACT and SLP must be from the same agency
  - Only pre-designated agencies have T/ACT's (See *Philadelphia County EI Speech and Language Best Practice Guideline Descriptions*)
  - The T/ACT will be designated as a Z8 on the IFSP.
- Special Instructor and Consulting SLP
  - Team decides on the frequency and duration of the SI and consulting SLP
  - SI and SLP should be from the same agency
  - An SI from any provider agency in Philadelphia County has training in facilitating communication with young children using Hanen techniques.
- SLP Only

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- Team decides on the frequency and duration of the SLP

### V. Referrals to T/ACT Agencies

- There are trained Teacher with Additional Communications Training (T/ACT) and Hanen certified Speech Language Pathologists at the following agencies:

*Classic Rehab*

*Kencrest*

*Kutest Kids*

*Rescare*

*RHD*

*SPIN*

*Sunny Days*

*Sunshine Therapy Club II*

*Therapy Solutions*

*Village Care*

### VI. Ongoing Service Delivery, Evaluation and Monitoring

- As part of each child's intervention the child's progress in communication and language is closely monitored, regularly discussed with the collaborating speech therapist and reviewed with the team every three months as part of the Quarterly Review.
- In cases where the T/ACT is working with a child, the Hanen Certified SLP also visits the child once in a 90 day period to ensure that the child is progressing and to suggest other language stimulation strategies. If the service delivery team recommends additional visits by the SLP, an IFSP addendum must be written.
- The County has developed a pre- and post-test of language development adapted from one in the Hanen "It Takes Two to Talk" curriculum manual. All SI's and T/ACT's should use this measure to monitor progress and provide a visual documentation to the team of the child's language acquisition.
- The team of parents and professionals from these (and all) agencies will develop a Service Support Plan to address the communication outcomes for the child on the IFSP and develop measurable objectives in order to monitor their progress.

### VII. Ongoing Training and Resources

#### A. **Training**

- Training programs are offered on an ongoing basis. Service providers must show competency in the techniques taught through the following courses:
  - All Special Instructors are trained in "Facilitating Early Communication based on Hanen Principles" This is a specialized language course based on the Hanen curriculum "It Takes Two to

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Talk”. This curriculum teaches strategies to facilitate the communication skills of young children, and how to teach those strategies to parents.

In addition to the course listed above, all Teachers with additional communications training have successfully completed the following additional language topic areas as part of their additional training.

- ❖ “The Foundations of Language Development” provided the T/ACT with information about the basics of child development and how the young child develops language.
  - ❖ “Oral Language Development” reviewed major theories of oral language acquisition and development as well as methods for addressing problems in oral language development in general and those that are associated with specific disabilities.
  - ❖ Indirect language stimulation techniques that teachers can show parents and use in their work with children.
- The Hanen Certified Speech and Language Pathologists at each of the participating T/ACT agencies listed above also receive certification through specialized training. Two levels of courses are offered as part of the Hanen program.
    - ❖ Level One certifies Speech and Language Pathologists in the “It Takes Two to Talk” program and trains therapists in how to work with Special Instructors and Parents as language facilitators.
    - ❖ Level Two certification is available for Speech and Language Pathologists that take additional training for their work with families of children with autism spectrum disorders, families with children who are late talkers and with teachers.

### B. Resources

- In addition to training, all T/ACT agencies (listed above) are provided with supplies and materials that are a resource for the Teachers with additional communications training (T/ACT) as they plan and implement interventions with children. Currently, the following resource has been made available:
  - “Language Development: An Introduction,” 7<sup>th</sup> edition, by Robert E. Owens (2007).
  - “It Takes Two to Talk.” By Jan Pepper and Elaine Weitzman (2004). Canada: The Hanen Centre.