



## Maximizing Parent Involvement in Pre-K Auditory-Oral Programs (Ages 3-5): Toward Successful Outcomes in Listening, Language, and Speech Generalization

### IMPORTANCE OF PARENTS AND PLAY:

The importance of play as a learning strategy for normally hearing pre-school children is well recognized. See, for example, the position statement by the National Association for Education of Young Children, 2009 (p.14)

(<https://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/files/Play%20references%20in%20NAEYC%20position%20statements%2011-12.pdf>).

The same principles of play apply to children with hearing loss although play may need to be guided, modified, or intensified to help accentuate stages of listening and language stimulation. Some children with severe and profound hearing loss learning to listen and talk may be transitioned out of Early Intervention services directly into a regular education pre-school programs with regular education teachers who have little experience coordinating play in classroom routines with specific individual listening, language, and speech goals and are likely unfamiliar with an “auditory learning hierarchy” (e.g. Sindrey, 1997) or with scaffolding activities (e.g. see Pakulski, 2006) to help parents engage in learning groups and follow up listening and spoken language development at home. Pre-school children with hearing loss who wear cochlear implants are trending away from self-contained specialized programs with other deaf and hard of hearing children toward enrollment in local public or private mainstream programs (Geers, et al. 2007).

Specialized classroom providers, whether in the mainstream, daycare setting, or inclusive private school are a wonderful resource for regular education teachers to coordinate, coach, and model specific activities for parents of children with hearing loss to play with their child at home with learning to listen and spoken language needs. Mainstream classes organized or supported by specialists in hearing loss, are usually integrated with normally hearing peers, and may employ auditory-orally experienced Teachers of the Deaf, (e.g. LSLS Cert. Auditory-Verbal Educators), Speech-Language Pathologists (e.g., Auditory-Oral Therapists, LSLS Cert. AVTs), Educational Audiologists, teaching assistants, and/or specialized clinicians to work as a team with parents to stimulate auditory development with developmentally appropriate goals and activities. In all settings, parent involvement in a program positively contributes to academic performance, and for children with hearing loss, parent’s communication skills predict positive language and academic development (Calderon, 1999).

Estabrooks (1998, 2006) has stated several ways in which parents can be directly helpful in auditory-verbal learning strategies in the classroom or individual session; Parents may model techniques, plan strategies/understand goals, be interpreters and partners, manage behavior, develop confidence in their interactions; advocate for their child; and record and discuss progress. In all types of pre-school programs, **a confident and knowledgeable parent partner is a significant contributor to a child’s success and readiness for entering Kindergarten.** The focus of this article is the intersection of pre-school curriculum and development with parent participation, and play, for the facilitation of listening, spoken language, and speech goals,

### HOW TO PLAN FOR PARENTS:

**Parent observations and direct involvement in classrooms can be incorporated into small groups, play groups, outside support groups or individual lesson plans for students, in formal and informal instruction.** A pre-school curriculum might include Empathy (Social Development/Social Language), Group Learning (Awareness, Attending, Empathy Behaviors); Self-Help; Fine and Gross motor development, Creative and Dramatic Play (Including Role Play, Theory of Mind) Early emerging Literacy (e.g. Speech Sound, Letter, Word, Book Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, Shared Story Time); Individual Listening Behaviors, Language and Speech development; and Discovering & Observing the World (Pre-Science). All areas of individualized listening, language, and speech goals may be embedded in curriculum and apply concepts of time, space, community, sound-symbol and print-symbol relationships, creativity, numbers and problem-solving (See Figure #1).

Shy or more hesitant parents who may opt for less responsibility and initially choose to observe or view videotaped samples, or journal their questions. As parents are guided to become confident in their interactions, they learn how to follow their child’s lead in free play, or maintain guided conversations with their child in other settings. Curricula in some specialized programs provide more structured language techniques and present opportunities for parents to learn specific tools and techniques for listening and spoken language. (See \*\*Lesson Plan Resources below.) It is important to remember that in some cultures, teachers and clinical professionals are seen as the doctors or experts “who know best” and parents may appear uninspired or unmotivated to join in. By understanding the child’s at-home culture, teachers help parents learn to be the key drivers to their children’s achievement of specific developmental goals. Parents may feel empowered by bringing their child one step closer to school success.

**FIGURE 1: Curriculum Areas, Developmental Concepts across Parent Participation Strategies and Listening, Language, & Speech skills.**

Small playgroups, observational schedules, and one on one time with teacher or clinician for development facilitate generalization and carryover of auditory/spoken language goals to the natural home environment. . \*Areas of Curriculum and Pre-K concepts are in shaded cells.

CURRICULUM AREAS COVERED:

1. Group Behaviors: Awareness, Attending, Empathy
2. Self Help;
3. Fine Motor and Gross-Motor Development;
4. Creative, Theory of Mind, and Dramatic Play
5. Auditory/Listening
6. Language and Speech Development
7. Observing the World (“Pre-Science” Discovery)

DEVELOPMENTAL CONCEPTS EMBEDDED IN PLAY

- a. Community, Social Thinking
- b. Self-Regulation
- c. Early Language and Literacy (Phonetic, Phonologic Awareness, Alphabetic Principle, Emergent Writing)
- d. Creativity and Perspective Taking
- e. Time
- f. Space and Movement
- g. Number
- h. Problem-Solving

	LISTENING		LANGUAGE			SPEECH	
	Device Detection and Trouble-Shooting	Auditory Learning Hierarchy of Acoustic Contrasts	Comprehension Familiar Phrases, Following Directions, Auditory Memory	Vocabulary Expansion	Expression: FORM CONTENT USE	Phonetic Targets	Phonologic Practice with specific Targets
PARENT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY							
Parent Class Observation	2, 3, 5,6 b, d	>>>>>	1,2,3,4,5,6,7 > a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h >	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>>
Small group class participation—Play Groups	1,3,4,6 b, d	1,2,3,5,6 b,c,d,e,f	1,2,3,4,5,6,7 > a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h >	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>>
1:1 Play in class (Teacher models)	2,3,5,6 b, c, d	2,3,4,5,6,7,8 b,c,d,e,f,g	2,3,4,5,6,7 > a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h >	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>>
Virtual (on-line) Support; Activity, Club, Show and share	2,3,5,6 b, c, d,,e, f, g, h	2,3,4,5,6,7,8 > a,c,d,e,f,g,h	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 > a, b, c, d, e ,f, g, h >	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>>
At home Parent-child play (Natural)	3,4,5,6 b,c	2,3,4,5,6,7,8 b,c,d,e,f,g, h	>>>>> >>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>>
At home directed play- goal directed	3,4,5,6 b,c	2,3,4,5,6,7,8 b,c,,d,e,f,g,h	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>	>>>>>>

**HOW TO PLAY**

For oral language to develop, all listening lessons, play, and activities must serve a meaningful, social, and communicative purpose in interactions throughout the child’s day at school and at home, and not be taught as a separate “training” activity (Ling, 1976, 1989). Parents should be guided to be actively engaged, predominantly child-directed, and have fun! Play at school or at home can be social conversations, pretend/role-taking play, construction play (e.g., building objects or creating together), and/or object oriented (e.g., turn-taking with a car sliding down a track or inside a tube). Play may be symbolic or simple with objects from the child’s natural environment (stuffed animals, action figures, toys, books, photos, pictures, leggos, stickers) or those from the classroom environment (tokens, blocks, musical toys, dolls, puzzles, story books, manipulable books, blocks); and enhanced by music and songs in all cases.

Parents of children with hearing loss will likely need to be coached in listening, speech, language, and pre-literacy activities (e.g. Cole & Flexer, 2006); and language facilitative techniques, (as for example, DesJardin, Eisenberg, and Hodapp , 2006; Table 1, p. 186). Shared story time is an effective activity for parents and pre-schoolers with hearing loss (DesJardin, Ambrose, & Eisenberg, L., 2007; Kaderavek & Pakulski, 2007; Pakulski, . & Folkerth, , 2006), and many resources for predictable stories can help facilitate listening and language interaction.. For children with hearing loss who have significant other developmental or learning challenges, remedial or more structured play may be warranted to break down tasks, build new patterns, and remediate weaknesses. (See Perigoe, & Perigoe, 2005)

Play methods and techniques, coordinated with curriculum activities, may be shared with parents to achieve group and individual goals for listening, language/speech, and literacy development and to strengthen communication. (See Figure 2). Gradually introducing learning hierarchies may help parents understand their child’s developmental level of language (e.g., simple to complex); listening challenges (e.g. detection, discrimination, identification and/or repetition, auditory comprehension, auditory memory); speech targets

(based on individualized assessment); and auditory processes (e.g., chaining, sequencing, tracking, closure) while playing at home, but care should be given not to overload consultations with new terms and information.

**FIGURE 2: Coordination of listening/language, speech activities within tasks and objectives, and parents’ potential involvement through play; Parents may take specific roles in several areas of pre-school curriculum (Example)**

PLAY ACTIVITY (Examples)	TARGET AREA (Types of Play)	TASK/GOAL (Individualized to child; scaffold for parent use)	TEACHER ROLE / CLINICIAN’S ROLE	PARENT OPTIONS
CIRCLE TIME (and EQUIPMENT TROUBLESHOOTING)	<b>LISTENING: Auditory Hierarchy</b>	Closed Set: Patterns	Model for parent, u-tube Video for parent share; Handout with Words;	Observation Support At home play: 1:1 Practice w/ stuffed animal toys in child’s bed, toy animals or doll’s bed Records progress
	Group- Parent Observation (Social conversation, object play)	Open Set: Identification Turns to spoken name		
	Individual- Parent Observation, (1:1 Play with objects)	Discriminate Syllables: 1 v. 3, 1. v. 4; Discriminates “me” v. “[3-4 syllable animal name from story ]: Records progress		
STORY TIME: <u>Ten in the Bed</u> - by Penny Dale. (Possibly adapt to play “Three in the Bed” with 3 toys in bed?)	<b>LANGUAGE (CONTENT)-Vocabulary</b>	Receptive & Expressive Vocab.	Give parent copy of story to read at home; Invite parent to join in play group at story time or “show”	Play-group story reader, sing-along share with virtual parent group
	Group-	Rec. Vocabulary in context- in/out On/off; sad/happy Fell, bump, bed, hurt, roll over		
	Individual- *Reciprocal Teaching, Barrier board, child’s turn “What <u>fell</u> ?”	Expressive: “again” “another one” *What fell? Where is ---?		
SNACK TIME	<b>SPEECH/LANGUAGE (FORM)</b> Specific Observation Days for Individual Children	Examples: [sh] phoneme’ [s] phoneme	Teacher models activity; Parent takes turn using specific speech and language forms	Observation At home 1:1 practice in context of listening to story; Parent learns “Pause & Wait” Strategy for child to make sound
	Group -(Shared Phonetic, Phonologic Targets to Model)	“One more”; plural [s] for two items; [sh] be quiet to get snack [o] “uh-oh” if snack falls		
	Individual - (Targeted Sounds at Phonetic, Phonological levels)	Child repeats sound (syllables, words, phrase) associated with action in story: “WhooSH’, “uh-oh”, “Bump!” “owww!”		
“GAME TIME”	<b>LISTENING/AUDITORY MEMORY</b>		Give parent number extension activity to play at home (e.g. with puzzles)	Parent Demonstration therapy;
	Group- (Object play)	“Let’ s see who fell out? “ (Name 2 animals to pick up)		
	Individual (three item memory or appropriate level for child)	Name 3 animals to pick up		
DRAMA/ART/OBSERVING THE WORLD	<b>LITERACY/LISTENING/LANGUAGE</b>	Language Conversation: (form, use) Let’s draw some animals and write what sounds they say; Let’s create another picture story with different animals.	Parent finds and sequences pictures; captions child’s statements; binds child’s story pages	Parent observation and assistance in preparation and read alouds
	Group: (Creative Play, Emergent Literacy)			
	Individual: (Social Conversations, Role-taking)			

**TIPS AND GUIDELINES FROM TEACHERS TO PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS**

Several checklists, brochures, and manuals are available for parents to help their child generalize listening, language, and speech skills in coordination with cognitive development from school to home. Natural language stimulation strategies and play are not “natural” for many families. Cultural variations or traditions that dictate how an adult talks to a child may make it counter-intuitive to suggest to some parents that a child should take his turn to ask questions or make requests. An orientation to natural communication consultation may be more helpful if followed by a pre-scheduled phone conversation, school-to-home daily or weekly forms, simple self-check questionnaires, texts or e-mails, and a checklist to facilitate carryover of skills with parents and caregivers at home and/or day care.

Excellent resources for teachers and parents guide them through group conversations (e.g., Weitzman, 1992: *Learning Language and Loving It*; individual parent-play interactions, (e.g., Manolson, 1992: *A Parent's Guide to Helping Children to communicate*); suggest settings and themes for communicative experiences (e.g. Cole and Flexer, 2007, p. 246: “*Everyday Routines that Can be the Scene for Providing Abundant, Auditorily-Based Communicative Experience for Children*”; Rossi, 2000: *Learn to Talk Around the Clock*”); or focus on working as a team (e.g., Robertson, 2009, p. 198: *Practical Ways for the Team to Communicate*). Some guides are specific for at home speech goals (Resciniti, 2009: *Speech goals at Home: Ideas for Parents*) or auditory learning (e.g Bader, 1999: “*Top Ten Strategies for Parents*”), and others may be actual curriculum skills for developing listening with hearing aids or cochlear implant use at home auditory-verbal sessions. (for example, Estabrooks, 1998, p. 91, Caleffe-Schenk, 2016: *Start Listening*) Several on-line resources may be useful for teachers to help parents tune in to strategies as well (e.g. [hearingfirst.org](http://hearingfirst.org); [AGBELL.org](http://AGBELL.org): *Listening and Spoken Language Academy: Listening and Spoken Language Knowledge Center*).

**In summary, teachers may include parents as partners in several ways:**

1. **Scaffolding lessons for at-home play in Listening, Language, and Speech:** Directions may be: “Adapt a play activity to the interests of your child and provide many opportunities to play with the language, sounds, words your child is learning to listen to at school.” Lesson plan forms should be written simply for parents and include sections such as equipment checks, communication behaviors, auditory comprehension, language expression, vocabulary, listening skills, speech imitation, and cognitive Skills. U-tube and cell phone videos may be motivational for parents to ask questions in regard to their practice sessions and their child’s progress.
2. **Regularly Scheduled Observations or in-class Play Group Participation.** Parent may be motivated to come to possibly meet other parents or obtain resources mentioned above.
3. **Live or Virtual Parent Support Groups.** This is a great way to do Book Shares, create, libraries or share lists of predictable stories (For example, see references below); share apps or programs on electronic devices.
4. **Parent Journaling of Creative Ideas for Listening and Speech Development:** Parents share their use of familiar routines with teacher to generalize and carryover learning-to-listen sounds, or speech target vowels and consonants, such as “Peeep, peep”-Time to feed the bird!” for “ee” “or “Shhhhh. too noisy” for “sh:” or “I hear the water, let’s wash hands before dinner;” “Turn off the faucet after we wash.” or “ohhhhh” [o] “Uh-oh,” it broke, oh-no!” Journaling also includes noting possible language extension activities. See [hearingfirst.org](http://hearingfirst.org): Parent-Professional Partnerships on Linked-in, for example.
5. **Consistent, Culturally Sensitive, Individualized Communication:** Value parents as team members and create opportunities for communication and forward thinking. Listen to parents’ individual concerns and fully embrace working as a team; set up mutually convenient meeting times before-during--or after school; utilize a communication notebook and back-up points of contact to reach out as well as answer parent questions;.

**REFERENCES, \*TIPS/PARENT GUIDELINES RESOURCES, \*\* SAMPLE LESSON PLANS, SPECIFIC SPEECH/LANGUAGE LESSON PLANS, AND SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS, AND \*\*\* MUSIC & SONGS FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARENTS. \*\*\*\* LITERATURE FOR USE WITH LANGUAGE**

\*Bader, J. (1999). *Top Ten Strategies for Parents*. [JBaderConsultant@AOL.com](mailto:JBaderConsultant@AOL.com)

\*Bader, J. (1999) *Top Ten Strategies for Professionals*. . [JBaderConsultant@AOL.com](mailto:JBaderConsultant@AOL.com)

Bloom and Lahey (1988). *Normal Developmental Sequence of Expressive language*: <http://firstyears.org/c4/bloom-lahey/BLchart.pdf>

\* \*\* Caleffe-Schenck, N. (2016) *Start Listening @ Cochlear Americas* (on-line)  
<http://www.cochlear.com/wps/wcm/connect/in/home/support/rehabilitation-resources/early-intervention/start-listening>

\*\*Cottage Acquisition Scales for Listening, Language, and Speech Development (1999) @ [www. Sunshinecottage.org](http://www.sunshinecottage.org);  
<https://sunshinecottage.secure.omnis.com/edstore/english/caslls-complete-english.html>  
<https://sunshinecottage.secure.omnis.com/webinars.php>

\*, \*\*Cochlear Americas (2003) *Integrated Scales of Development Listen, Learn, and Talk*; Cochlear Corporation:  
[http://www.cochlear.com/wps/wcm/connect/a7a47900-c232-4810-8bdc-d53e7b48a25f/product\\_cochlearimplant\\_rehabilitationresources\\_earlyintervention\\_integratedscalesofdevelopmentfromlistenlearnandtalk\\_en\\_612kb.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT\\_TO=url&CACHEID=a7a47900-c232-4810-8bdc-d53e7b48a25](http://www.cochlear.com/wps/wcm/connect/a7a47900-c232-4810-8bdc-d53e7b48a25f/product_cochlearimplant_rehabilitationresources_earlyintervention_integratedscalesofdevelopmentfromlistenlearnandtalk_en_612kb.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CONVERT_TO=url&CACHEID=a7a47900-c232-4810-8bdc-d53e7b48a25)

\*, \*\* Cole, E. and Flexer, C. (2007) *Children with Hearing Loss Developing Listening and Talking (Birth to Six)*. San Diego, Plural Publishing

\*\*\*\*Connecticut State Dept. of Education, (2007) *Preschool Experiences In Early Language and Literacy: Teacher’s Guide* p. 57 Predictable Stories.  
<http://www.ctserc.org/rfi/Preschool%20Experiences%20in%20Early%20Lang%20&%20Literacy%20-%20Teacher's%20Guide.pdf>;

\*DesJardin, J. Eisenberg, L, Hodapp, R. (2006) *Infants and Young Children*, 19 (3) 179-189.

DesJardin, J Ambrose, S. & Eisenberg, L. (2009) Literacy Skills in Children with Cochlear Implants: The Importance of Early Oral Language and Joint Storybook Reading. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 14 (1), 22-43.

\*\*Estabrooks, W. (1994). *Hear and Listen! Talk and Sing!* Toronto: Arisa Publishing.

\*\*Estabrooks, W. (1998). *Cochlear Implants for Kids*. Washington D.C.: AG Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

\*\*\*Estabrooks, W. and Birkenshaw-Fleming, L. (2003) (Eds.) *Songs for Listening! Songs for Life!* Washington D.C.: AG Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

\*\* Estabrooks, W. (2006) *Auditory-Verbal Therapy and Practice*. Washington D.C.:AG Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Geers, A. Nicholas, J. and Moog, J. (2007) Estimating the Influence of Cochlear Implantation on Language Development in Children *Audiol Med.* 2007; 5(4): 262–273.doi: [10.1080/16513860701659404](https://doi.org/10.1080/16513860701659404)

\* \* \* \* \* Parent-Professional Partnership: *Hearingfirst.org*. Also see: <http://oberkotterfoundation.org/hearing-first/>

\*\*\*\*Hurst, C. (1990). *Once Upon a time, an encyclopedia for successfully using literature w/ Young children*. Allen, TX: DLM.

\*Ling, D. (1976). *Speech and the Hearing-Impaired Child: theory and Practice*. Washington, D.C.: Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, Inc.

\*Ling, D. (1989) *Foundations of Spoken Language for hearing-impaired children*. Washington, D.C.: Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, Inc.

\*Manolson, A. (1992) *It Takes Two to Talk*. Toronto, CA. Hanen Centre Publications

National Association for the Education of Young Children: *National Association for the Education of Young Children Position Statements* (2009, 2011): <http://www.education.com/pdf/play-preschool-matters/>

<https://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/files/Play%20references%20in%20NAEYC%20position%20statements%2011-12.pdf> or <https://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/position%20statement%20Web.pdf>

\*Pakulski, L., Folkerth, J. and Zanni, C. (2006) *Bridging Listening, Language, and Literacy for Oral-Deaf Preschoolers* Presentation at the National convention of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, Miami, FL. Available on-line or contact [lori.pakulski@utoldedo.edu](mailto:lori.pakulski@utoldedo.edu) for reference.

\*Perigoe, C. & Perigoe, R. (2005). Multiple-challenges, multiple solutions: Children with hearing loss and special needs. *The Volta Review*, 104 (4), 211-392.

\* \* \* \* \* **Pinterest: RESOURCES**

<https://www.pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=Predictable%20Literature%20for%20use%20with%20early%20Pre-K%20language%20lessons&rs=typed&0=Predictable%20Literature%20for%20use%20with%20early%20Pre-K%20language%20lessons%7Ctyped> or <https://www.pinterest.com/audielynn/auditory-verbal-resources/>

\* \*\*Rossi, K. (2000) *Learn to Talk Around the Clock*. Washington, D.C.: Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf, Inc. See: <http://www.learn totalkaroundtheclock.com>

\* \*\* Schwartz, S. (2004). *The New Language of Toys*, Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

\*Sindrey, D. (1997) *Listening for Littles*. London, Ontario, CA: Word Play Productions.

\*Weitzmann, E. (1992). *Learning Language and Loving It. A guide to Promoting Children's Social and Language Development in Early Childhood Settings*. Toronto, CA. Hanen Centre Publications.