Parent Training: Specific Strategies Beyond “Try This at Home”

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Today’s Session
- Introduction
- Enhanced Milieu Teaching (EMT) as a foundation for parent training
- Empirical and conceptual basis for parent training
- Effective strategies for teaching parents
- Teaching parents key EMT strategies
  - Noticing and responding to communication
  - Modeling and expanding communication
  - Communication temptations
  - Prompting communication
- Single subject study and results
- Discussion and questions

Background
- KidTalk/Enhanced Milieu Teaching is an evidence-based practice developed for parents and teachers.
- Our research projects over the last 20 years have included 300+ parents.
- We have trained parents in different formats.
  - Clinic, home and combined
  - Group, individual
  - Trained professionals to teach parents

Enhanced Milieu Teaching
- Naturalistic, conversation based intervention that teaches specific targets in functional contexts.
- More than 50 studies support the effectiveness of EMT and its variants (Kaiser & Trent, 2007).
- Many of the studies of effectiveness have included parents as primary or co-interventionists (Kaiser & Hancock, 2007).

EMT Components Taught to Parents
- Parents are children’s first language teachers.
  - Functional communication is learned at home, with caregivers, in everyday activities
- Amount of parent talk directed to children is associated with more positive language development (Hart & Risley, 1995).
- Parent responsiveness and language modeling are associated with better language development (Kaiser et al., 2001; Yoder & Warren, 2004).
- Teaching parents specific effective strategies may reduce parental stress and increase child generalization of skills.
Why Train Parents?

• Children experience more language growth when their parents are trained.

Review of Parent Training Research

• A recent meta-analysis found that parent-implemented language interventions are effective (Roberts & Kaiser, 2010).
  - 14 group experiments
  - 6 studies included children with developmental delays and 8 studies included children with language impairments
  - 6 studies were the Hanen Parent Program
  - Most interventions lasted between 10 and 13 weeks and included less than 26 hours of parent training

Review of Parent Training Research

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*p<.05, +p<.10

When Is Parent Training a Good Idea?

• Parent is interested.
• Parent has time and energy to commit.
• Parent-therapist relationship is positive and strong.
• Therapist has an effective intervention approach for the child that can be used in natural environments.
• Therapist has skills for teaching parents.
• Therapist has time and flexibility for parent training.

Benefits of Parent Training

• Create a more specifically supportive environment for communication and learning.
• Promote and support child generalization of targets learned in therapy.
• Parents can teach other functional skills in the context of daily activities and routines.
• Increase parent buy-in to the positive benefits of therapy.

Parent Training Strategies
Steps to Parent Training

- Step 1: Teach a specific strategy
- Step 2: Practice and coach
- Step 3: Give feedback
- Step 4: Make a plan for everyday use
- Step 5: Monitor parent and child progress
- Step 6: Ask the parent for feedback

Before You Begin: Build Positive Relationships With Parents

- Prior to intervention openly discuss expectations for therapy.
  - Discuss parent priorities for child goals and their own goals
  - Discuss the positive outcomes of parent training (compared to therapist alone)
  - Discuss coaching and feedback
    - What type of feedback & coaching is most helpful to parent
    - What you will be doing to monitor progress
  - Develop a relationship as co-interventionists.
    - Ask parents about their experience in each session,
    - Invite parent to evaluate child’s progress
    - View the parent as the expert on their child
    - Make plans for sessions together

Step 1: Teach a Strategy

- Workshops – 1 hour parent session that provides an overview of a strategy with the following format
  - Definition of the strategy
  - Rationale for the strategy
  - Video examples of the therapist using the strategy with the child and the child responding positively to the strategy
  - Practice the strategy through role playing and worksheets

Step 2: Practice and Coaching

- Intervention sessions – 45-60 minute sessions with the following format:
  - Quick review of strategy and collaborative plan for the session (toys, activities)
  - Therapist models the strategy and narrates when she is doing the target strategy
  - Parent practices the strategy with the child and the therapist coaches the parent.
    - Praise (e.g., “great responding,” “nice waiting”)
    - Specific constructive feedback (e.g., “Next time he points to the ball I want you to point to the ball and say ‘ball.’”)

Step 3: Feedback

- After the practice session the therapist:
  - Asks the parent how he or she feels about the session and target strategy
    - “What did you think about today’s session?”
  - Describes how the parent used the target strategy
    - “I love how you responded every time Luke communicated, even when he pointed you gave him a word for what he was pointing to”
  - Connects parent use of the strategy with child’s communication
    - “When you expanded when Mary said ‘drive’ to ‘drive the car,’ she said ‘drive car!’ You taught her to say ‘drive car’ today!”

Step 4: Make a Plan for Everyday Use

- Identify family routines and child preferred.
- Choose examples of communication targets that map onto home routines.
- Refer to home routines throughout the training process when teaching and practicing new skills.
- Get parent feedback about use of strategies at home.
- Train at the home whenever you can.
Step 5: Monitor Parent and Child Progress

- Develop goals and criteria for parent and child behaviors
- Develop specific, easy to count measures
- Collect data
  - Your teaching: every workshop, every 4th session
  - Parent use of strategies
  - Child progress
- Chart data with criterion lines
- Review data with parent

Step 6: Ask for Parents for Feedback

- Check for understanding throughout each teaching and practice session.
- Invite parent questions and comments.
- Determine if method and style of coaching are helpful.
- Ask parents to summarize what they have learned.
- Ask parents how each session went.

Skills Needed for Parent Training

- Knowledge of the intervention
  - Skilled doing the intervention with children
  - Can describe fluently, give examples, answer questions
- Communication with parents
  - Ask open ended questions
  - Provide wait time for parents to answer
  - Use understandable language
  - Have generally positive, accepting and supportive affect
- Coaching and feedback skills
  - Analyze parent implementation, child responses
  - Coach to support parent in correct, effective implementation during the session
  - Give feedback that supports parent efforts and teaches skill

Skills Needed for Parent Training

- Ability to chart and evaluate child and parent progress using data collection tools
  - Criterion levels of parent skills
  - Collect data on parent implementation
  - Select and chart child target skills
  - Interpret data and make changes in teaching or coaching as needed
- Flexibility and creativity to improvise in home settings
  - Home routines are brief, variable and involve others
  - Parents and children are easily distracted from the teaching situation
  - Best laid plans may need revision on the spot
  - Child behavior may be more challenging at home

Parent Training Tools

- Teaching tools
  - Handouts and worksheets tailored to the family
  - Modeling the strategy with the child
  - Role playing with the parent
  - Showing video examples of target strategy
- Measures of your parent training
  - Fidelity checklists of parent training strategies
- Measures of parent and child progress
  - Data trackers
  - Graphs

Skill Set 1: Setting the Foundation for Communication

Noticing and Responding to Communication, Taking Turns, Mirroring & Mapping
Skill Set 1: Setting the Foundation for Communication

- Skills parents learn
  - Follow the child’s lead*
  - Notice and respond to all communication*
  - Mirror and mapping when child is not communicating
- Parent outcome and criterion
  - Responsiveness > 90%
  - Matched turns > 80%

* Examples provided in this training

Following the Child’s Lead: Teach

- Provide rationale:
  - Children learn best when they are engaged and interacting with a communication partner.
  - Children are more likely to be engaged and learn language while doing activities they enjoy.
  - When the adult plays with the child at his or her level, the adult optimizes the opportunity for communication to occur.

Following the Child’s Lead: Teach

- Provide specific strategies and examples:
  - Be at the child’s level.
  - Do what the child does.
  - Choose toys that are interesting and engaging.
  - Avoid directions and let the child lead the play.
  - Avoid questions and let the child initiate the communication.
  - Put away toys that aren’t being used.
- Show video examples of following the child’s lead.
- Role play or do process activities

Following the Child’s Lead: Model

- Examples of the therapist following the child’s lead and commenting on her behavior to the parent.
  - Example

Following the Child’s Lead: Coach

- Examples of the therapist coaching the parent on following the child’s lead.
  - Example

Following the Child’s Lead: Feedback

- Examples of the therapist providing feedback on following the child’s lead.
  - Example
**Notice & Respond: Teach**

- Provide rationale:
  - Noticing and responding to all communication teaches the child that their communication is important to you.
  - By acknowledging all communication and communicative attempts you reinforce the child for communicating.
  - The more the child communicates, the more practice they receive and the easier communication becomes.

**Notice & Respond: Teach**

- Provide specific strategies and examples:
  - Notice and respond every time your child communicates
  - Respond by talking about what your child is doing
  - Show video examples of noticing and responding
  - Role play or do process activities

**Notice & Respond: Model**

- Examples of the therapist noticing and responding to communication
  - Example

**Notice & Respond: Coach**

- Examples of the therapist coaching the parent to notice and respond
  - Example

**Notice & Respond: Feedback**

- Examples of the therapist providing feedback on noticing and responding
  - Example

**Monitoring Progress: Therapist**

- Fidelity checklist for therapists
  - Helps therapist remember key components and strategies
Monitoring Progress: Child

- Monitor child progress every 3-4 sessions

Monitoring Progress: Parent

- Collect data on target skills after 4-5 sessions or when you feel that the parent is ready to learn the next skill.

Skill Set 2: Modeling and Expanding Play and Communication

Modeling and Expanding Play, Modeling Language Targets, & Expanding Communication

Model Language Targets: Teach

- Provide rationale:
  - Children learn language through modeling.
  - Contingent modeling that is in response to a child’s communication is the most powerful form of modeling.
  - Simplifying language to match the child’s language targets helps the child learn language more quickly.
  - Easier to imitate, easier to understand

Model Language Targets: Teach

- Provide specific strategies and examples:
  - Use your child’s language targets at least 50% of the time:
    - Single words (noun, verb, proto-verb)
    - Two-words (agent-action, action-object, modifier-noun, preposition-location)
    - Three-words (agent-action-object)
  - Show video examples
  - Role play or do process activities
Model Language Targets: Model
• Examples of the therapist modeling language targets
  – Example

Model Language Targets: Coach
• Examples of the therapist coaching the parent to use language targets
  – Example 1
  – Example 2

Model Language Targets: Feedback
• Examples of the therapist providing feedback on language targets
  – Example

Expand Communication: Teach
• Expansion: imitating what the child communicated and then adding more words.
• Provide rationale:
  – Expansions immediately connect the child’s communication to additional new communication.
  – The more the child hears and practices language that is more complex, the better his/her language skills become.

Expand Communication: Teach
• Provide specific strategies and examples:
  – When the child communicates, imitate his/her communication and add target words.
    • Child: {points to ball}.
    • Adult: {points to ball} ball.
    • Child: ball.
    • Adult: roll the ball.
• Show video examples
• Role play or do process activities

Expand Communication: Model
• Examples of the therapist expanding communication.
  – Example 1
  – Example 2
Expand Communication: Coach

- Examples of the therapist coaching the parent to use expansions.
  - Example

Expand Communication: Feedback

- Examples of the therapist providing feedback on expansions.
  - Example

Monitoring Progress: Therapist

- Fidelity checklist for therapists
  - Helps therapist remember key components and strategies

Monitoring Progress: Child

- Monitor child progress every 3-4 sessions

Monitoring Progress: Parent

- Collect data on target skills after 4-5 sessions or when you feel that the parent is ready to learn the next skill.

Skill Set 3: Communication Temptations
Skill Set 3: Communication Temptations

- Skills parents learn
  - Non-verbal tasks that encourage the child to communicate with you
- Parent outcome and criterion
  - No more than 1 Communication Temptations strategy per minute
  - 80% of the Communication Temptations done in the correct sequence

Communication Temptations: Teach

- Communication Temptations: Non-verbal tasks that encourage the child to communicate with you.
- Provide rationale:
  - Provide the child with more opportunities to practice communicating.
    - Increases the child’s rate of communication
  - Provide you with more opportunities to reinforce and teach new language by
    - Responding
    - Expanding the child’s communication

Communication Temptations: Teach

- Provide specific strategies and examples:
  - Inadequate portions: Providing small or inadequate portions of preferred materials.
  - Assistance: Creating situations in which the child needs the adult’s help.
  - Waiting with routine: Setting up a routine in which the child expects certain actions and then waiting before doing the expected action
  - Waiting with cue: Using associated objects (e.g., shoe to foot) and then waiting before completing the expected action.
  - Choice making: holding up two objects and waiting for the child to communicate

Communication Temptations: Teach

- Show video examples
- Role play or do process activities

Communication Temptations: Model

- Examples of the therapist using Communication Temptations
  - Example

Communication Temptations: Coach

- Examples of the therapist coaching the parent to use Communication Temptations
  - Example
Communication Temptations: Feedback
• Examples of the therapist providing feedback on Communication Temptations
  – Example

Monitoring Progress: Therapist
• Fidelity checklist for therapists
  – Helps therapist remember key components and strategies

Monitoring Progress: Child
• Monitor child progress every 3-4 sessions

Monitoring Progress: Parent
• Collect data on target skills after 4-5 sessions or when you feel that the parent is ready to learn the next skill.

Skill Set 4: Prompting
• Skills parents learn
  – Verbal prompts for language targets in a sequence of least to most support.
• Parent outcome and criterion
  – No more than 1 time prompt per minute
  – 80% of the prompting done in the correct sequence
Prompting: Teach
• Providing: verbal cue to the child to say something (in response to child requests).
• Provide rationale:
  – Gives the child an opportunity to practice communication targets during a highly motivating context.
  – Gives the child functional practice and reinforcement for communication.

Prompting: Teach
• Provide specific strategies and examples:
  – Open Question: A question with no correct answer (e.g., the adult doesn’t know the answer)
    – What do you want? Where should the car go?
  – Choice Question: A question where the adult gives 2 verbal choices and provides a visual
    – “car or truck” (adult holds up a car and a truck)
  – Say Prompt: The adult tells the child exactly what to say
    – “Say ‘car’”

Prompting: Teach
• Provide specific strategies and examples:
  – Wait for the child to request
  – If the child does not use a target ask an open or choice question.
  – If the child doesn’t use a target say “say__” up to 2 times.
  – Always give the action/object at the end (even if the child hasn’t said the target)
• Show video examples
• Role play or do process activities

Prompting: Model
• Examples of the therapist using the prompting sequence
  – Example

Prompting: Coach
• Examples of the therapist coaching the parent to use prompting
  – Example

Prompting: Feedback
• Examples of the therapist providing feedback on prompting
  – Example
Monitoring Progress: Therapist

- Fidelity checklist for therapists
  - Helps therapist remember key components and strategies

Monitoring Progress: Child

- Monitor child progress every 3-4 sessions

Monitoring Progress: Parent

- Collect data on target skills after 4-5 sessions or when you feel that the parent is ready to learn the next skill.

Parent Training Single Subject Study

Single Subject Study: Research Questions

- Does parent training increase parents’ use of Enhanced Milieu Teaching (EMT) strategies?
  - EMT strategies are naturalistic language teaching strategies that can be used throughout the day as part of the everyday interactions
- Does parent use of language teaching strategies generalize and maintain over time?

Single Subject Study: Participants

- 4 caregivers and their children

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Parents received:
- 4, 60-minute Workshop Sessions
- 24, 60-minute Clinic Intervention Sessions

Parent training included:
- Review of target strategy
- Demonstration of the strategy with the child for 15 minutes
- Coaching while the parent practiced with the child during play for 15 minutes
- Feedback and discussion of the session

Single Subject Study: Methods

Single Subject Study: Design
- Multiple baseline across 4 EMT strategies, replicated across 4 caregiver-dyads.
- 2 home observations in book, snack and play at the following time points:
  - Prior to intervention (pre)
  - Following intervention (post 1)
  - 3 months after intervention (post 2)
  - 6 months after intervention (post 3)

Single Subject Study: Design

Strategies Taught to Parents (DV)
- Matched Turns: the percentage of adult utterances that were related and in response to a child utterance
  - Criterion: 80%
- Expansions: the percentage of child utterances to which the adult added a word
  - Criterion: 40%
- Communication Temptations: the percentage of communication Temptations that followed a specific sequence
  - Criterion: 80%
- Prompting Strategies: the percentage of prompting episodes that followed a specific sequence
  - Criterion: 80%

Parent Progress: Single Subject Results

Frequency of Coaching
Child Progress

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Summary of Parent Training Strategies

- Develop SLP skills necessary for parent training
- Develop a working relationship with each parent
- Prepare materials specific to the child and parent
  - Videos, handouts, targets, home routines
- Use effective instructional strategies to teach parents
  - Teach, model, coach, feedback
- Monitor parent and child progress and teach each skill to mastery
- Monitor your own fidelity and teaching

Summary of Single Subject Results

- All caregivers learned all four intervention strategies.
- All children made substantial gains in standardized language scores.
- Only some caregiver skills generalized to other contexts and maintained over time.

Additional Readings


Discussion and Questions

- For more information:
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