

The Power of Language: Speaking and Communicating

Speaking and Communicating:

Babies communicate through eye contact, facial expressions, crying, smiles and touch. Preschoolers and school age children begin to use language instead of behavior. When adults respond with words, conversation and attention, it helps promote healthy development and learning for future literacy skills. There is a direct link between speaking, communicating and self-regulation as young children are leaning to express their frustration appropriately by using words rather than aggressive actions.

Young children who have bigger vocabularies are better able to develop self-regulation skills.

Strategies for Infants and Toddlers

- Talk to young children and wait for a verbal or non-verbal response
- Play simple, familiar games that include imitating actions
- Respond to young child's attempts to communicate and extend the interaction back and forth (serve & return)
- Point to and name objects



Strategies for Preschool-Age Children

- Conversations with families about home language learning supports
- Use of open-ended questions
- Letter sound and name recognition starting with familiar word
- Opportunities for reading and practicing print throughout the environment



Strategies for School-Age Children

- Engage in regular conversations with the children
- Ask more complex or complicated questions
- Engage in Brainstorming activities to solve problems or negotiate rules of a game
- Encourage children to take a leadership role in the classroom by providing opportunities for leading an activity or project



More ideas and more can be found by accessing the New Mexico Early Learning System: www.nmels.org.