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UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY - NCHAM
FOCUSED CONVERSATION
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>> Good day, everyone. Welcome to today's hear to learn webinar
brought to you by the Department of Communicative disorders and
deaf education at Utah State University.

>> This webinar is being recorded. Today's presentation is
entitled focused conversations which will be presented by Sarah
Law. Sarah Law is a clinical assistant professor in the
Department of Communicative disorders and Deaf education at Utah
State University. She teaches courses in the graduate training
program in Deaf education masters students and oversees their
clinical practical. At the conclusion of this presentation, I
will be opening a text field for you to submit any questions or
comments you may have for our presenter. Now I would like to
welcome Sarah Law to today's webinar.

>> Hello, everyone -- and thank you, Nicole.
I am excited for today's webinar and to talk about Focused
conversations. There is a buzz term going around in the area of
language development, "serve and return".
Today you will learn how to have conversational turns with
children starting at infancy.
Be able to use strategies to encourage child's participation in
conversations.
Learn how to follow simple tips to help make the most out of

"serve and return" interactions.
First I want give you a quick overview of the amazing work a
individuals brain does to acquire language, starting at infancy.

Communication between infants, toddlers, or young children and
their caregivers, naturally focuses on the development of
turn-taking, joint attention, and signaling of intention. It is
common for mothers and fathers to talk the fetus as if it can
understand and even respond. From birth on, caregivers interpret
any movement or vocalization from the child, even basic reflexes,
as acts of communication, and respond to these acts in a
communicative manner themselves. These are early serve and
return interchanges.
One fundamental rule of fluent communication requires the
participants to have a shared topic about the messages being sent
and received. For infants, and toddlers, gaze and gesture are
two of the means through which joint attention is established.
Through gaze and gesture, children eventually acquire an
understanding that part of communication involves a common topic/
joint   Then at nine months of age the child starts to showing
gesture as a communicative attempt to request someone else to
look at what they are looking at, too.
This may be accompanied by vocalizing. The responsiveness by the
caregiver encourages the child's attempt at joint attention, as
well as encourages to opportunity for language input. Soon after
this "showing" stage the child will engage in the "giving"
gestures. After showing, and giving, comes pointing, where a
child points to objects in a communicative fashion, maybe to
request object, or point out an object, as an effective way to
obtain and maintain the other persons attention.

Caregivers embed communication in culturally Such as bath time,
giving them a car seat, et cetera.
This presents infants and toddlers with the task of acquiring at
least two types of abilities during the first year of life.
First, they must make sense of the constant talk they are exposed
to. This involves the development of speech/language perception
and language comprehension. The second task is to develop
controlled vocal motor patterns, learn how to appropriately make
the speech sounds used in the language at the home, and gain
competency with their expressive language.

The goal is for infants and toddlers to not only differentiate
between vowel and consonants sounds, but to have the ability to
perceive and comprehend larger segments or units of language. The
must determine where one syllable, word or segment begins and
another ends.   When individuals are listening to constant talk,
what they hear is a continuous stream of speech. When an early
child hears these streams of speech, their task is to group
segments so that meaning can be attached, and then comprehend
those groups.

Intonational patterns provide invaluable aid to infants in their
learning to segment rapid speech into meaningful units. When
articulating sentences, we are also likely to produce stressed
syllables more precisely than unstressed ones. These stressed
syllable patterns become the basis for unit perception. Hearing
a string such as, thisisthePUppy'snoseitissoCUTE, the new
listening brain has to decide if the word is thePU or Puppys.

Once an infant has begun tot segment the speech string, she/he
must also learn to attach meaning or social significance to these
strings. In addition, she/he must determine how these strings
are organized into longer units of meaning. A child must learn
to interpret the extended talk they are exposed to, interpret how
the various sentences in any conversation relates to one another
and what social goals the interactions are trying to achieve.
This is referred to having discourse comprehension. Discourse
are the areas of social communication goals they want to achieve.
For example, sharing experiences, this is sharing a personal
narrative about oneself. Providing directions. This is giving
instructions, explaining phenomena. This is explaining why
things happen. And describing objects and events. Persuading
and fantasizing, for example play.

Here is a chart that shows what is happening in language
development from birth to 6years. In our previous slides we
talked about the listening and comprehension the child is doing,
just in the first year of life. Let's -- and when learning at
the table let's focus on the talking or expressive language.
A newborn start's expressing its discomfort with crying, 0-3
months the infant is cooing smiling, cries differentiate meaning
that the baby uses a different cry for different -- the infant
uses a different cry for different situations. One cry says I'm

hungry. Another says I have pain.
4-6 months there is laughing, vocalizing (gurgling vocal play),
babbling gets going with the consonants p, b, w, even sounding as
though they are talking and imitating some of the caregiver's
mouth movements and sounds. Around 7-12 months the babbling
changes, it is including more consonants and more long and short
vowels, they are using speech and other sounds to get your
attention and hold on to it. First words start to appear,
caregivers are interpreting these words for the infant to hear to
correct pronunciation, "baba'=bottle (oh, you want your bottle,
let me get your bottle, here is your bottle). At 1-2 years the
child is acquiring more and more words as months pass, and
combining two words to state or request, for example, "no doggie"
or "more milk". 2-3 years their vocabulary is exploding and
using longer phrases. When 3-4 years of age comes, phrases are
becoming sentences, they can carry on conversations about what
has happened away from home, their friends, preschool, family,
outings and interesting experiences. At 5-6 years they are
speaking clearly and fluently, and they can construct long
detailed sentences.

As you can see a lot must happen in the child's brain to get them
to the point of speaking clearly and fluently. Majority of it
happens within their familial unit. Research shows that infants
require a substantial amount of listening to situated discourse
(social context), meanings and grammatical structures for
expressing one's thoughts before spoken language appears.
Learning to express language is embedded in the same interactive
processes that occur between caregiver and child as language
comprehension.

Hearing loss can affect the development of spoken language.
Without appropriate early auditory the child's listening brain
will miss out on developing the essential auditory skills needed
to acquire receptive and expressive language development, which
in turn affects their reading comprehension. Also, without a
means to communicate, a child's social and emotional skills are
The goal of listening and spoken language is to help the child
have developmental synchrony. Which is the domains of the child's
development are equal to their hearing age. The age at which
that started to have appropriate auditory access in order to
acquire spoken language.
By the age of 5, the goal of LSL is for a child with hearing loss

to have closed the chronological and hearing age gap in terms of development, and now developing on an equal plane as their hearing peers.   There is an abundance of research that shows early identification of hearing loss, appropriate and well managed audiological services and quality intervention, that starts with the professional learning about each families culture, daily routines and desired outcomes for their child, and incorporating LSL techniques and strategies to use within their family life, is the best indicator of success for children who are deaf or hard of hearing closing to develop spoken communication. Parents and caregivers are a child's first and best teacher. As you can see, communication in learned in the home, during daily routines. Parent's and caregivers of children with hearing loss can follow the same "serve and return" strategies below to boost their child's language development. Absolutely children with hearing loss can learn language using a natural approach In fact, following a typical model, is the most beneficial and meaningful way any child can acquire language. What children with hearing loss need, in addition to appropriate hearing technology, and quality intervention, is an abundance of "serve and return" interaction's.

Responsive interactions are critical to a child's language development. Starting at birth parents and caregivers can have these, vital back and forth conversations. The responsive interactions are referred to as "serve and return" interactions. When an infant or young child cry's, coo's a parent or caregiver responds with appropriate eye You may have heard it called mother-ese. Sing-song voice is essential. Instantly when the serve and return interactions happen, neural connections in the infant's brain are built, supporting the development of language and communication. So I'm really excited to show you this next video that melts my heart. It's an example of an early serve and return interaction. So I'm going to pull it over.

>> Hi, Greta. Whoa, what a good yawn. Hi, baby. Are you getting tired? Oh, that's just so cute. I've watched it multiple times in preparation for this and still it warms my heart.
Mom is responding to Greta's serves with non-verbal cues, her arm movements, her eye contact, and her yawn. Mom returns the serve I assume facial expressions, smile eye contact, and the appropriate words to match Then Greta serves again with maintained eye contact, more facial expressions, another yawn and

mom returns immediately giving new appropriate words to match
Greta's cues. Then this is my favorite part. At the end of this
clip, Greta shows just how amazing the brain truly is. She
mimics the mouth movements of a yawn, pauses slightly,
expectantly looking at mom, knowing mom will respond with another
return. And sure enough mom does. Let's watch it one more time.
Give you a chance to see that.

>> Hi, baby. Getting tired? All right, I hope you enjoyed this
as much as I do. I just love it. Okay, just need to put this
back over. Say bye to Greta, cute.

As the infant grows in a toddler, and then into young childhood,
these serve and return interactions are still very much critical,
the difference is the complexity that the child starts to serve
and returns being made!
Kathy Hirsch-Pasek and Roberta Golonkoff, wrote a research report
on how babies learn to talk, and 6 principles of early language
learning. The principles are Children learn the words they hear
most. Interactive and responsive rather than passive context
favors language learning-social interaction matters. Children
learn the words for things and events that interest them.
Children learn words best in meaningful contexts. Vocabulary
learning and grammatical development are reciprocal processes.
Keep it positive.
According to Hirsh-Pasek and Golonkoff, "Language learning
requires sensitive and responsive conversations with children
where language input is tailored to the interest and timing of
the child's attention. Adults who take turns in interactions with
young children, share periods of joint focus, are sensitive and
responsive to children, and express positive affect, provide
children with the scaffolding needed to facilitate language and
cognitive growth".

>> When parents and care givers are able to return to build on,
this rehelping their child's language increase exponentially.
Here are three strategies for responding to a child's
communicative efforts. They can be used throughout the home, day
care, school, et cetera. And during a variety of routines and
play. So the first is extension. Extension is going beyond what
the child has said to include new information. So for example,
if the child says, me run. And the adult says, yes, and you were

very fast. So they gave nothing but new information.
Incorporation is taking what the child has said and incorporating
it into new information. For example the child again says me
run. And the adult says, yes, and you ran very fast. So they
incorporated that run and gave new information, too. And the
third is direct expansion. And this is taking what the child has
said and reflecting back by expansion what he could or should
have said. So if the child says me run, the adult and the adult
says I ran. That's correcting the child and focusing on form
only.
Kretchmer and Kretchmer found that all three strategies are
useful, but the best is a combination is incorporation and
extension. This combo gives the child something to serve back to
their communication partner. It also encourages the child's
participation. Using only direct expansion, stops the
conversation. There isn't anything to encourage another round of
serve and return.
Responsiveness is essential and, as mentioned before, a child
needs something to build on and if the child is acting with no
input from the caregivers, the necessary communicative back and
forth, doesn't occur.

    Next I want to show you one -- another of my favorite
videos. It's short and it's of a mom and a four-year-old child
cooking eggs. And like the other short clip, there are multiple
serve and return interchanges in a matter of seconds.

>> I'm going to start that again because it started kind of
mid---

>> Thinking back on the Hirsh-Pasek and Golinkoffs 6 principles,
mom was interactive and responsive, cooking eggs was an event the
child was very much interested in, and a meaningful context to
learn vocabulary used around making eggs. Mom also responded to
the multiple serves he gave, and in particular she responded to
his non-verbal cue of pointing and looking at the edge of the
counter. She returned his serve by interpreting his actions, and
giving him the appropriate words to the he wanted to express
(crack, counter, edge). Mom, incorporated new information to what
the child had said, as well as extended and went beyond what he
said and included new information. Then, incredibly, without her
having to use direct expansion, he used the new vocabulary with
an appropriate sentence that he came up with on his own!   All of

this happened in a matter of seconds!I find it fascinating.

Finally and I want to leave you with 5 steps for successful serve and return interactions shared by, The Center on the developing child at Harvard University, where they have done extensive research on Serve and Return interactions.You can read more about their research at the website listed on the slide as well as you can download a handout that we have and also a brief research that was done on serve return, serve and return. There are five steps:

1. Notice the serve and share the child's focus of attention.

2. Return the serve by supporting and encouraging.

3. Give it a name!

4. Take turns…and wait. Keep the interaction going back and forth.

5. Practice ending and beginnings.

   So thank you all for coming and you can download these slides and the other stuff. So this was really great. I hope you enjoyed what I had to share.

>> Thank you, Sara for your presentation. The power point slides and session handouts are available for download in the bottom left corner pod. At this time we are open for questions. I'm bringing over the question and answer pod here. Please type your questions in the Q&A pod is that opening up and Sarah will respond. After this webinar if you still have any follow-up questions or comments, please e-mail me at Nicole.Jacobson @USU.edu as noted in the left side pod.

>> Will you be holding more webinars on strategies in the future.

>>   I can answer that. We will continue to have webinars. You can check in August for the upcoming webinar schedule. We

typically have one per month through the academic year. Hannah hollow way, do you have any brain storming ideas for how to utilize the serve and return principle in the virtual settings. Would you like to answer that?

>> That definitely is pertinent to what we are experiencing right now in this unprecedented time. I think depending on the age of the child, you know, if they are preschool age or younger, I would encourage mom in a coaching manner and reward her with these serve and return interactions and kind of base the learning that's happening virtually around daily routines. And I know one of my grad students is going to be doing next week with a family getting ready to take the dogs for a walk. So like the daily routines or whatever these families do. If the child is older, you want to make sure that they are able to access you auditorily as clearly as possible. And then follow those same steps virtually in having a serve and return interchange.

>> I'm going to respond to Cindy Pichler. Can you replay the Greta video? It did not play when you presented it. We did see the Greta video so I don't know if there was an issue of streaming on your end, Cindy, but perhaps an answer to both you and to Becky F, can you get a copy to share with co-workers. You can access the recording of this presentation within a few days on the hear to learn website. It's just all one word, hear to learn.org and you should be able to access not only recording of this presentation, but also other recorded past webinars as well.

     We have Christina Khan says mother-ese needed to learn to group segments.

>> Mother-ese definitely helps learn that grouping of segments, but the natural intonational patterns, like just the ones that I'm doing right now that I would have to record my voice and then go back and analyze it, just that happening in children being exposed to it, the babies and children learn how to segment. They have to. That's one of those tasks that they have to do.

>> So I apologize, it looks like some people did see the videos and some did not. I would encourage you again to perhaps look on the website for the recording of this presentation. You will be able to see the videos at that time. I do want to point out Ellen's comment here. She says I would want to encourage folks to think broadly about these really important principles of serve and return. This is true for all languages and certainly true

for languages using ASL with their child. All of the same
principles are in play and equally important. Thank you, Ellen.
I do feel like that's an important message to bring out. We
would like to thank all who participated on-line today including
thank you to Lenore who provided the captioning service. And we
will remind you again, a video recording of today's presentation
will be available on our website hear to learn.org. At the close
of this session you will be invited to complete a very brief
survey that will help us improve future webinars. We again want
to thank you for your participation in today's webinar and hope
to see you back for the next one. In the next academic year.
Thank you for joining us.