Effective Promotion of Language Development for Infants and Toddlers and Their Families: Discussant Comments

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A Startling Statistic

By the age of 3, high-income children have double the vocabulary of low-income children.
We need to “Move the Needle”

Broader public awareness of the importance of talking with young children
  ◦ Greater variety of agencies/programs helping to spread the word and influence parents’ and caregivers’ behavior

Develop interventions that engage parents and caregivers to implement effective communication strategies

Coordination of a variety of stakeholders and disciplines
  ◦ Community leaders
  ◦ Healthcare professionals
  ◦ Early childhood educators
  ◦ Family workers
  ◦ Researchers
  ◦ Funders
Today

- Share Reflections
- Ask Questions
- Tell about Bridging the Word Gap and types of interventions
Variability

- What it looks like?
- Why it matters?
- What aspects are important?
- Where does variability come from?
Parent – Child Interaction
The Secret Sauce of Language Development
Why do parents differ in their language input?

- Beliefs about their role in child’s language development
- Knowledge about what they can do to promote language

HOW SHOULD WE CRAFT INTERVENTIONS DIFFERENTLY IF THE ISSUE IS BELIEFS VS. KNOWLEDGE?

IN YOUR PROGRAMS, ARE YOU FOCUSED ON PARENTS’ BELIEFS ABOUT PARENTING, KNOWLEDGE ABOUT WHAT TO DO, OR SKILLS IN HOW TO DO IT?
Pragmatic functions of language:

- Regulatory
- Referential

- Are ethnic differences based on differences in beliefs about how to talk? Differences in knowledge?
- How do we tailor language-promoting interventions that build on cultural beliefs? What do they look like?
140 nationally recognized researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and funders creating a coordinated research agenda addressing the Word Gap funded by HRSA in Fall 2014.
Activities for Identifying Most Promising Practices for Bridging the Word Gap

- Development of National Research Agenda
- Multi-level Pilot Study
- Research Syntheses for Identifying Evidence-Based Practices
- Practice-Based Research Collaborative
Tune In: Notice what the child is focused on and talk about that. Respond when a child communicates.

Talk More: Narrate day to day routines.

Take Turns: Keep the conversation going.
Population-Based Interventions are taking place through city-wide campaigns--Too Small to Fail
Questions?

Questions you have for any of us?

Questions for presenters?

Questions for the audience?
Contact the BWG Research Network

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Bridging the Word Gap Research Network

HRSA Award #: UA6MC27762
How should we design interventions differently if we are addressing parenting beliefs vs. parenting knowledge?

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