

KidTalk: Naturalistic Communication Intervention Strategies for Parents and Teachers of Young Children

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Today's Presentation

KidTalk/Enhanced Milieu Teaching Communication Intervention

- Research
- Strategies for supporting communication
- Teaching parents



What is Enhanced Milieu Teaching?

- EMT is a naturalistic, conversation-based intervention that uses child interests and initiations as opportunities to model and prompt language in everyday contexts.
- EMT can be used throughout the day as part of the everyday interactions.
- EMT is an evidence-based intervention with 20 years of research.
- EMT is an effective intervention.

KidTalk/Enhanced Milieu Teaching

- Program of research
 - NICHD program project on children with intellectual disabilities
 - Spanned 6 major funded projects, and many smaller ones
 - Broad population of children: ID, DS, ASD, language delayed, children in poverty
 - Multiple methods: group, single subject
- Based on two assumptions
 - Communication is learned in interactions with partners
 - Changing partner support for communication can change child outcomes
- Goals:
 - Improving outcomes for children
 - Understanding the conditions in which communication and language are learned

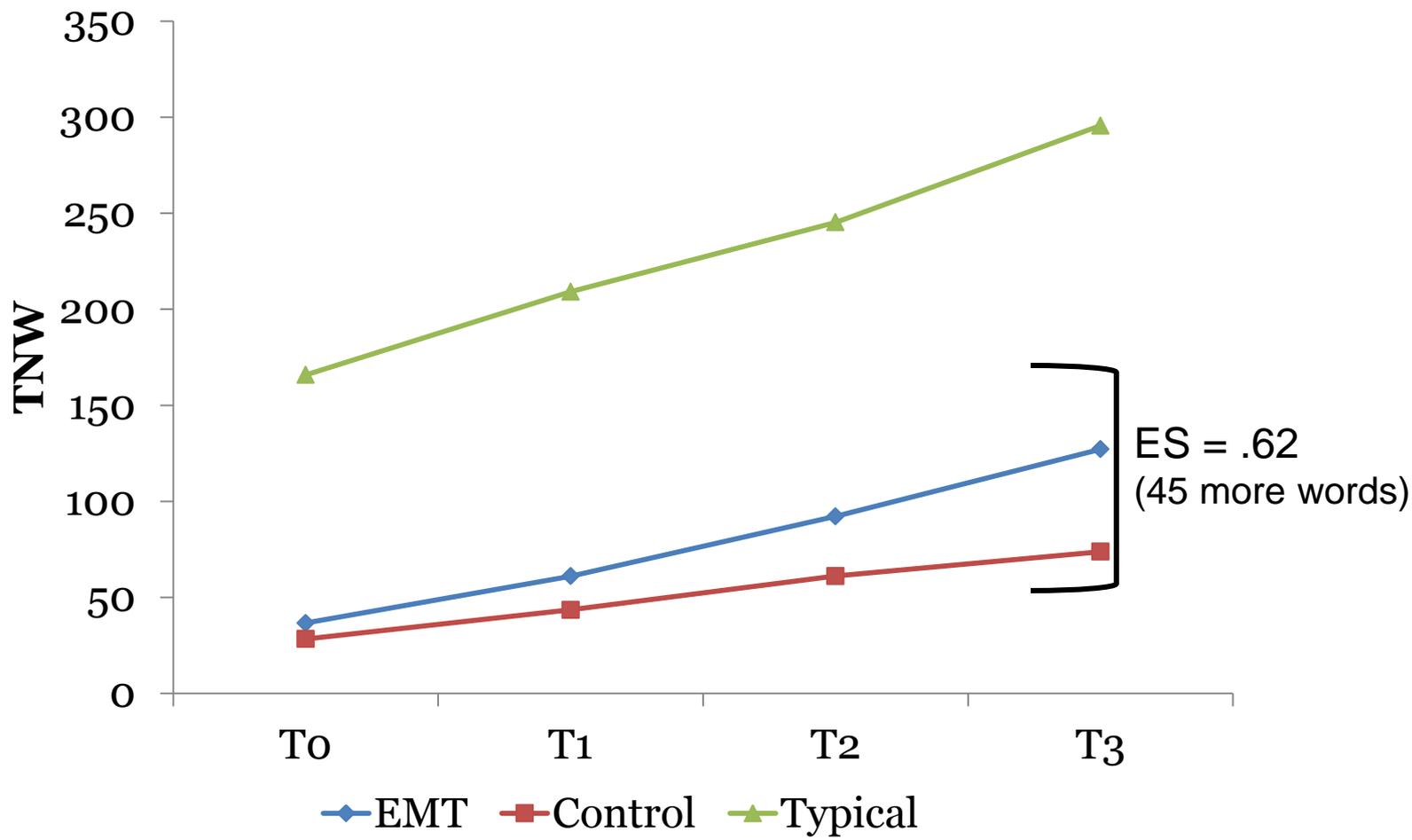
Parents Learn and Use EMT

- Parents learn a range of strategies to criterion levels.
 - Environmental arrangement (Alpert & Kaiser, 1992; Hemmeter & Kaiser 1990)
 - Responsive interaction strategies (Hancock & Kaiser, 2002; Kaiser et al., 1996)
 - Modeling language targets (Hancock & Kaiser, 2002)
 - Prompting target production using MT techniques (Kaiser, Hancock & Nietfeld, 2001)
- Parents generalize these strategies to home interactions with their children (Hancock & Kaiser, 2002).
- Parents maintain their newly-learned skills over 6-18 months (Kaiser, et al 2001).

EMT's Positive Effects

- **Increases child use of language targets**
 - Vocabulary (Kaiser et al, 1993; Scherer & Kaiser, in press)
 - Early syntactic forms (Kaiser & Hester, 1994)
 - Moderately complex syntax (Warren & Kaiser, 1986)
- **Increases child frequency of communication**
(Warren et al, 1994; Kaiser et al, 1993)
- **Results in generalization across settings, people, and language concepts** (Warren & Bambara, 1989; Goldstein & Moussetis, 1989)
- **Results in maintenance of newly learned targets** (Warren & Kaiser, 1986)
 - Is more effective than drill-practice methods for early language learners (Yoder, Kaiser et Alpert, 1991; Kaiser, Yoder, et al., 1996)

EMT's Positive Effects



EMT Strategies

- A set of tools to help facilitate a child's communication growth
 - Part 1: Setting the Foundation for Communication
 - Play and Engage
 - Notice and Respond
 - Take Turns
 - Mirror and Map
 - Part 2: Modeling and Expanding Play and Communication
 - Modeling and Expanding Play
 - Modeling Language
 - Expanding Communication
 - Part 3: Using Environmental Arrangement (EA) Strategies to Promote Communication
 - Part 4: Using Prompting Strategies to Promote Practice
 - [Example](#)

Strategy 1: Play and Engage

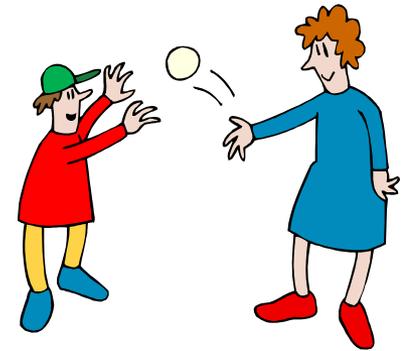
- Communication develops on a platform of shared joint attention and engagement.
 - Be at the child's level.
 - Do whatever the child is doing .
 - Follow the child's lead.
 - Avoid directions and let the child lead the play
 - Avoid questions and let the child initiate the communication.
 - Choose toys that are interesting and engaging.
 - Put away toys that aren't being used.
 - Substitute undesired activities with desired activities.

Strategy 2: Notice & Respond

- Notice and respond every time the child communicates.
- Respond by talking about what the child is doing.
- Language is most meaningful when it's related to what the child is doing OR in response to what the child is communicating.

Strategy 3: Take Turns

- Take turns communicating with the child.
- Allow time for the child to communicate.
- Play a game of “communication catch”
 - Child communicates
 - Adult responds (and waits)
 - Child communicates
 - Adult responds (and waits)
- Only say something after the child communicates.



Strategy 4: Mirror and Map

- A strategy to use when the child is not communicating.
 - Mirroring: adult imitates the child's nonverbal behaviors.
 - Mapping: adult “maps” language onto these actions, by describing these actions.
- Example
 - Child feeds the baby.
 - Adult feeds the baby and says “feed the baby”

Strategy 5: Model and Expand Play

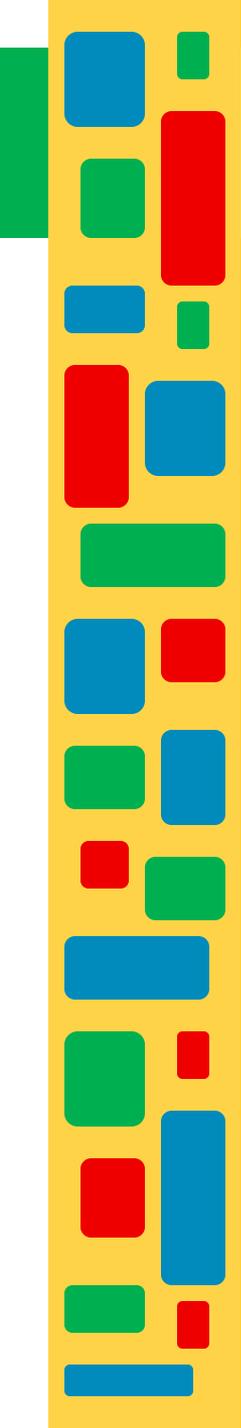
- Extend the time the child plays with a toy by choosing toys that are interesting and keeps the child engaged.
- Expand the different actions the child does with the same toy.
 - Add a new action to the same toy
 - New actions = new words
- Expand the types of different toys the child uses.
 - Add a new object to the same action
 - New objects = new words

Using Routines in Play

- Routines are a predictable sequence that have a beginning, middle and end.
- Children learn language during small routines in play because they know what actions (and words) will come next.
- Examples
 - Scoop beans, pour beans, dump beans.
 - Person in car, drive car, get out of car

Strategy 6: Model Language

- 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



Language Goals

1. Increase the rate at which the child communicates.
2. Increase the diversity of communication.
3. Increase complexity of communication
4. Increase the child's independence.
 - Increase spontaneous communication
 - Decrease the dependence on adult cues

Strategy 7: Expand Communication

- An expansion is imitating what the child communicated and then adding more words.
 - Expansions immediately connect the child's communication to additional new communication.
- The most powerful expansion includes one of the child's communication targets.
 - Expansions help the child learn new vocabulary and talk in more complex sentences.

Strategy 8: Environmental Arrangement

- Non-verbal contexts that encourage the child to communicate with you.
 - Offering choices
 - Pausing within a routine
 - Waiting with a cue
 - Inadequate portions
 - Assistance
- EA Steps
 1. Set up the opportunity to encourage the child to communicate by using an EA strategy.
 2. Wait until the child communicates
 3. Expand this communication with a target.

Strategy 8: Prompt Language

- A prompt is a signal to the child to do or say something in response to his request
 - Environmental Arrangement
 - Begins with an EA strategy
 - Hold up two trucks
 - Open questions
 - What do you want to do?
 - Choice questions
 - Drive bus or drive truck?
 - Model procedure
 - Say “ I drive truck.”

Least Support



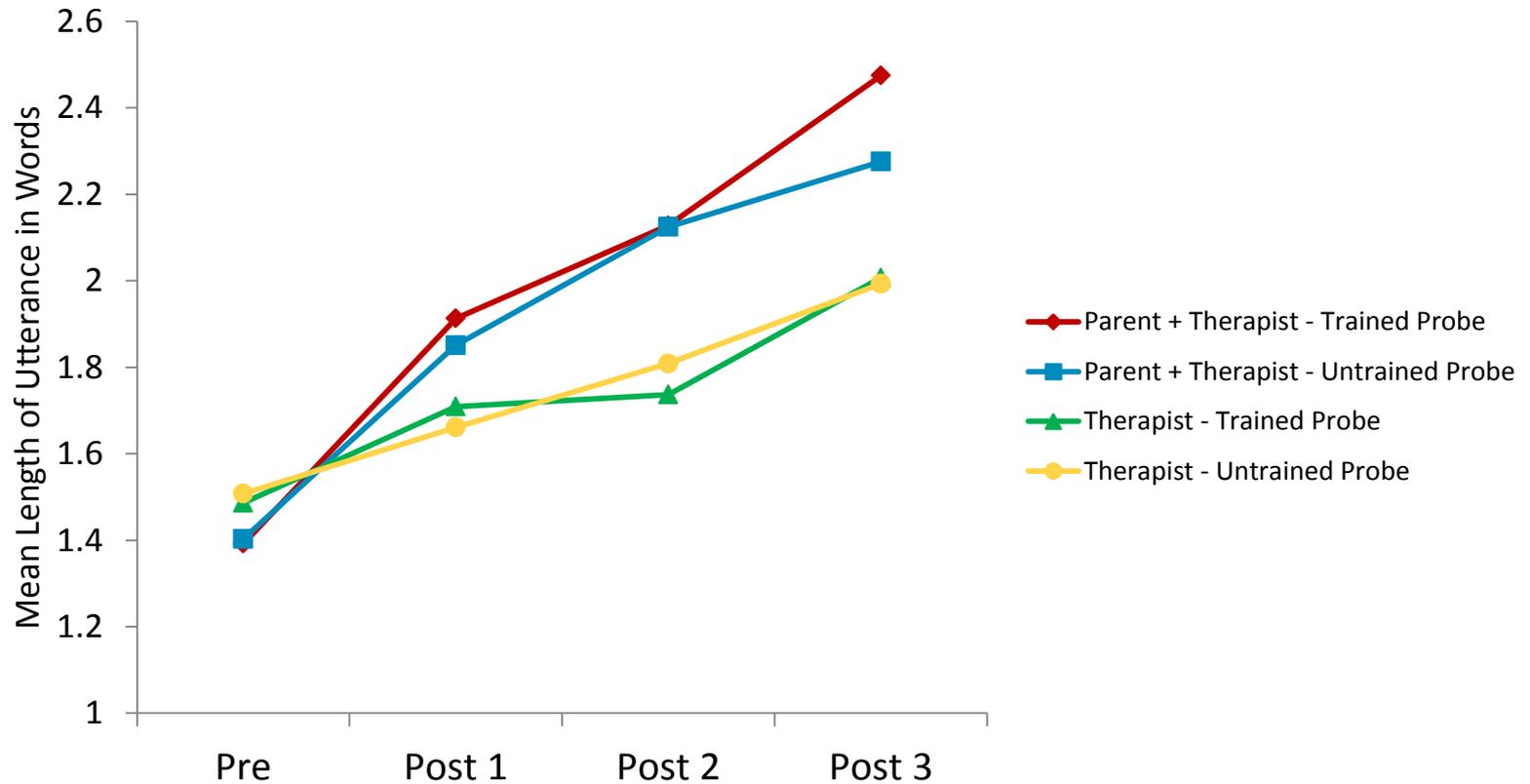
Most Support

Why Train Parents?

- Parents are children's first language teacher.
- Amount of parent talk directed to their child is associated with more positive language development in children (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.



Teaching Parents

- We teach parents in play and routines, often at home.
- We teach with modeling, video, handouts, role playing.
- We provide feedback and coaching while parents practice with their children.
- Typically 24-30 individual sessions in clinic and at home.
- Assessments and follow up over 12-18 months.



Four Steps in Parent Training

- Build a relationship
- **TEACH** specific EMT skills
- **MODEL** the specific strategy
- Parent practice with **COACHing**
- Provide **FEEDBACK** on progress
- [Example](#)

Step 1: Build a Relationship

- Create positive expectations
 - Goals for parent and child
 - Discuss the positive outcomes of parent training
 - Discuss expectations about coaching and feedback
 - What type of feedback and coaching is most helpful to parents
- Develop a relationship as co-interventionists
 - Focus on child outcomes
 - Ask parents their opinions and preferences
 - View the parent as the expert on their child
 - Make plans for sessions together

Step 2: Teach a Strategy

- Workshops – 1 hour parent session that provides an overview of a strategy with the following the format:
 - Definition of the strategy
 - Rational 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 3: Model + Coaching

- Intervention sessions – 45-60 minute sessions at home or in clinic
 - Quick review of strategy and collaborative plan for the session (toys, activities and routines)
 - Therapist models the strategy and illustrates when she is doing the target strategy
 - Parent practices the strategy with the child and the therapist provides live coaching to 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 4: 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!”
 - Provides data and video based examples of progress

Summary

- KidTalk is an evidence-based communication intervention.
- KidTalk strategies are easy to learn and apply.
- KidTalk strategies can be used to improve children's communication by therapists, teachers and parents.
- When parents are trained to use Kidtalk strategies, there are benefits in terms of children's generalization, maintenance and long term developmental outcomes.

Reviews of EMT Studies

- Hancock, T.B., & Kaiser, A.P. (in press). Implementing Enhanced Milieu Teaching with Children Who Have Autism Spectrum Disorders. In P. Prelock & R. McCauley (Eds.), *Treatment of autism spectrum disorders: evidence-based intervention strategies for communication & social interaction*. Baltimore: Paul Brookes
- Kaiser, A.P., & Trent, J. A. (2007). Communication intervention for young children with disabilities: Naturalistic approaches to promoting development. In S. Odom, R. Horner, M. Snell & J. Blacher (Eds.), *Handbook of Developmental Disabilities*, (pp. 224-246). New York: Guilford Press.
- Hancock, T. B., & Kaiser, A. P. (2006). Enhanced Milieu Teaching. In R. McCauley & M. Fey (Eds.), *Treatment of Language Disorders in Children*, (pp. 203-233). Baltimore: Paul Brookes.
- Kaiser, A. P., & Grim, J. C. (2005). Teaching functional communication skills. In M. Snell & F. Brown (Eds.), *Instruction of Students with Severe Disabilities*, (pp. 447-488). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Kaiser, A. P., Yoder, P. J., & Keetz, A. (1992). Evaluating milieu teaching. In S. F. Warren & J. Reichle (Eds.), *Causes and effects in communication and language intervention Vol. 1*, (pp. 9-47). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.