



Responsive Caregiving as an Effective Practice to Support Children's Social and Emotional Development

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Presenter:


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Session Objectives

At the end of this presentation, you should be able to:


- Identify the strategies children use to connect to other people and learn about their world in the first years of life.
- Summarize the importance of healthy and supportive early relationships and responsive caregiving.
- Describe at least three research-based components of high-quality interactions with children.



Session Agenda


Here's what we're doing today:

1. Young children learn from social interactions with the people around them.
2. Responsive, back-and-forth interactions are key to learning.
3. A deeper look at responsive caregiving as an effective teaching practice.



Responsive Caregiving

What Is Responsive Caregiving?



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Responsive Caregiving: An Effective Teaching Practice

- Responsive caregiving refers to a parenting, caregiving, and effective teaching practice that is nurturing and responsive to an individual child's temperament and needs.
- Responsive caregiving lets you get to know each individual child, their strengths and challenges, and allows you to customize interactions accordingly.
- Responsive caregiving allows educators to adapt classroom and home activities for children of all abilities and language backgrounds.

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Responsive Caregiving: Learning from Families

Observations of children's families can help guide your interactions according to home language, culture, and children's differing abilities.



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Responsive Caregiving Essentials

1. Young children learn through social, responsive back-and-forth interactions with other people.
2. Each child has unique needs and preferences: caregivers and teachers can, with attention and reflective practice, be responsive to and build upon each individual child's pattern of development and learning.
3. Because of the social and relationship-based nature of young children's learning and brain development, responsive caregiving supports the foundation for most other learning in young children.

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Outcomes of Responsive Caregiving




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Outcomes of Responsive Caregiving

- Improved relationships and confidence with others
- Improved motivations in academics
- Increased likelihood of completing high school or attending college

*Key for outcomes is responsive caregiving **early on and consistently.***



Johnson, Dweck, & Chen, 2007; Johnson et al., 2010; Erickson, Sroufe, & Egeland, 1985 ; Moss & St-Laurent, 2001

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Children Learn from Social Interactions




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Forming Emotional Bonds – Essential for Learning



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Born Ready to Interact




Meltzoff & Moore, 1977, Science

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 Born Ready to Interact

A  B 

Adapted from Mondloch et al., 1999



 Learning from Social Interactions – Sharing Attention: Part I



Meltzoff et al., 2009



 Learning from Social Interactions – Sharing Attention: Part I



Meltzoff et al., 2009



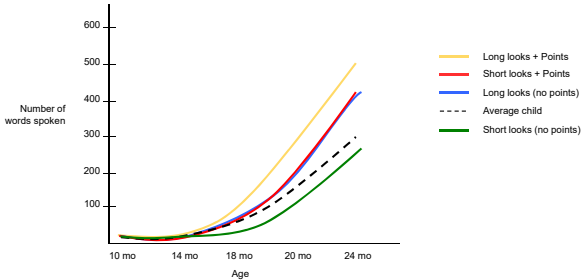
Learning from Social Interactions – Sharing Attention: Part I



Meltzoff et al., 2009

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Learning from Social Interactions – Sharing Attention: Part II



Age	Long looks + Points	Short looks + Points	Long looks (no points)	Average child	Short looks (no points)
10 mo	~20	~20	~20	~20	~20
14 mo	~40	~35	~30	~30	~25
18 mo	~100	~80	~60	~60	~40
20 mo	~200	~150	~100	~100	~70
24 mo	~500	~400	~300	~300	~200

Adapted from Brooks & Meltzoff, 2008

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Born to Interact – But Familiarity Matters!

- Babies learn through social interactions with others – even strangers.
- However, familiarity matters: babies prefer specific, individual people they have lots of experience with.
- Includes familiar teachers, education staff, and caregivers: importance of continuity of care.



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Sharing Attention – In Practice


- Use face-to-face social cues as a guide.
- Point out and label things throughout the day.
- Wait for an infant or toddler to “catch up” so that you can share attention.
- Try following their lead by following their eye gaze or gestures so that they can share attention with you.
- How have you seen eye gaze used? How might you use what you know about sharing attention as a strategy?



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Responsive, Back-and-Forth Interactions Are Key to Learning



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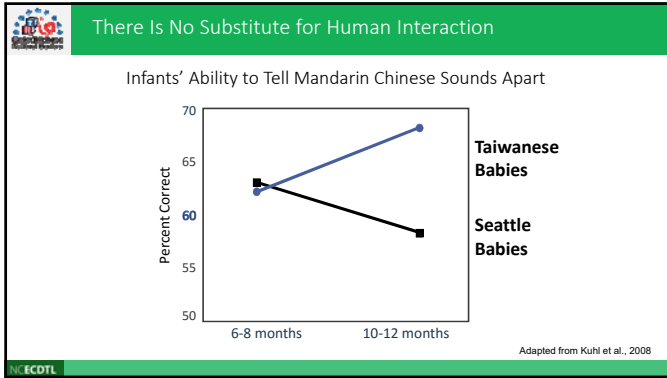
There Is No Substitute for Human Interaction

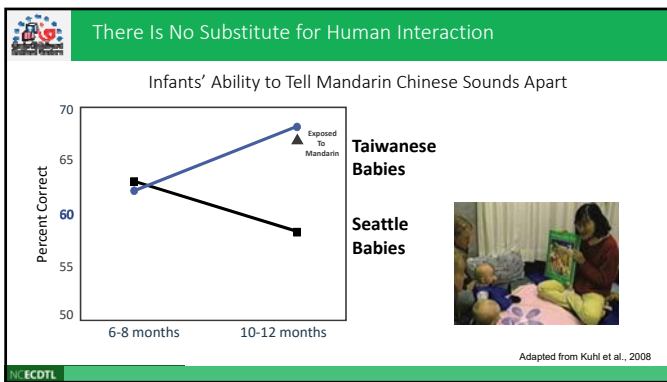
Foreign-language exposure

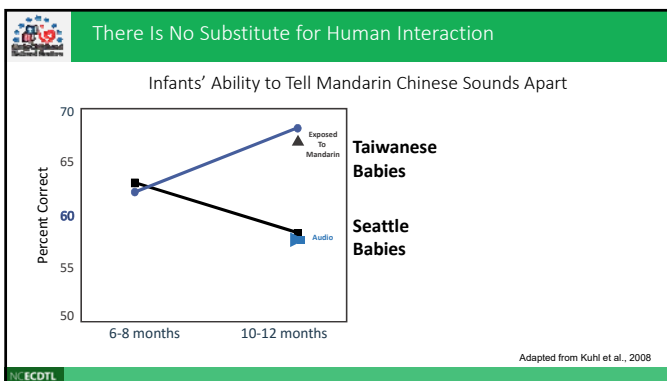
Live exposure	Television exposure
	

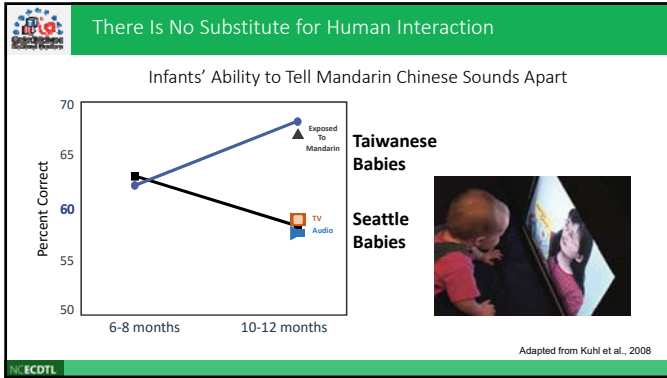
Kuhl et al., 2008; Kuhl et al., 2003

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Responding Contingently Boosts Language Growth

- When infants receive immediate, or contingent feedback to their sounds or actions, babies babble more and babbles become more complex.
- These results suggest that infants that are not yet speaking can learn new sound patterns when adults respond contingently to babbling.
- High-quality interactions should be in-person and contingent to boost learning.

Goldstein & Schwade, 2008

Research to Practice: Learning Happens in Relationships

- Young children learn from social interactions – they notice our speech, gaze, actions, mood, and whether we respond to their behaviors.
- Learning happens in relationships.
- The relationship teachers and other educational staff have with the children in their group is fundamental to a child's learning.
- Contingent interactions can happen in any situation, even in large group settings like a classroom.

Responsive Caregiving

A Deeper Look at Responsive Caregiving as an Effective Teaching Practice



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Responding to the Unique Needs of the Child



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Importance of Continuity of Care for Responsive Caregiving

- Caregivers who are attuned to child and respond consistently help the child feel safe and supported.
- Education staff can be trained in how to watch and respond to these cues.
- It can take time and experience with an infant to figure out what they need.
- Continuity and consistency in caregiving can build stronger relationships.



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 Responding to the Unique Needs of the Child






 Responsive Caregiving in Practice: Reading Cues from Children





 Responsive Caregiving in Practice: Reading Cues from Children






 Schedules and Routines Help with Learning




- Individualized schedules and routines help children to focus on learning.
- Consistency of the pattern is key.
- How have you used schedules and routines in your work with young children?

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 Sometimes Babies Just Need a Break!

- Babies have a LOT to learn – and that can be exhausting!
- What signals do babies give to tell you when they need a break?



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 Reading Cues from Children: “I Need a Break!”




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 Not all Stress Is Equal: Mild Stress




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 Tolerable Stress




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 Toxic Stress

- Toxic stress can occur by experiencing severe and/or chronic stress (especially during childhood) in the absence of protective, adult relationships.
- Results from strong, frequent, and/or prolonged activation of the body's stress-response systems in the absence of the buffering protection of adult support.
- Responsive caregiving creates strong bonds with children, building resilience to toxic stress.



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 Children Are Resilient




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 Responsive Caregiving in Practice: New Experiences





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 Wrap Up: Building a Pattern of Responsiveness

- It is impossible to be completely responsive all of the time.
- Most important that child has at least one responsive, consistent caregiver that is responsive to their needs *most* of the time.
- An overall responsive, nurturing relationship with an adult teacher, educator, parent, or caregiver that is consistent over time builds a strong relationship between adult and child that has many beneficial outcomes.




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 **Resources**

Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center


- Introduction to Temperament: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/mental-health/article/introduction-temperament>
- Infant Toddler Temperament Tool for Infants: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/infant-toddler-temperament-tool-infants>
- Infant Toddler Temperament Tool for Toddlers: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/infant-toddler-temperament-tool-toddlers>
- Quick Start Guide for Responsive Interactions: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/webisode-8-quick-start.pdf>
- Early Essentials Webisode 8: Responsive Interactions: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/early-essentials-webisode-8-responsive-interactions>
- Individualization - Resources: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/browse/keyword/individualization>
- Social Emotional Development - Resources: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/browse/keyword/social-emotional-development>


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Thank you!

Please fill out a survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BabyTalks_11-07-17



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