

Team Talk

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Information for Health Visitor

Part of Team Talk Toolkit for health professionals

Aim

The Team Talk project, across health professionals, supports parents to provide the optimal stimulatory environment for their child to reach their neurodevelopmental potential.

Background and rationale

Team talk is a key component of Haringey's relationship based approach to resilience. It is a cross-sector interdisciplinary project to support health professionals working with families with children age 0 – 5 years old. School children with learning and behavioural difficulties, often begin school with delayed or disordered acquisition of core global neurodevelopmental skills and poor emotional regulatory skills. The project seeks to support key early life relationships and to influence family-centred environmental factors which can affect a child's school readiness. In the first 2 years of a healthy child's life, new parents will have up to 25 routine points of contact with health professionals (including the antenatal period) : plenty of opportunities to support and educate.

Objectives

- 1 Increase the information given to new parents about secure parent-child attachment relationships and their child's global neurodevelopment and emotional wellbeing
- 2 Give specific advice that is easily understood, practical and meaningful
- 3 Provide consistent advice which is reinforced across sectors and disciplines

KEY – areas of focus

- Connecting through touch & cuddles
- Responding promptly & consistently
- Connecting through speech language & communication
- Supporting physical development
- Learning to recognise baby's needs



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What to say to new parents

KEY – areas of focus

- Connecting through touch & cuddles
- Responding promptly & consistently
- Connecting through speech language & communication
- Supporting physical development
- Learning to recognise baby's needs

Point of Contact

Communication / Action

28-36 weeks

Some things to think about when the baby is born

- Introduce 'Five to Thrive' & give parents the booklet
- Spend time relaxing & getting to know your baby. What are baby's signs that let you know that they are tired, hungry or need 'down time'? E.g. When they need 'down time', they may look away. To relax together, give baby a rest from talking & play, take three slow breaths & cuddle them -to stimulate oxytocin release – the connection hormone; play favourite music to calm

BIRTH

10-14 days

- When awake encourage 'tummy time' - looking & reaching for toys strengthens muscles
- Play simple games when baby's alert & in the mood such as peekaboo, mimicking baby's sounds, round & round the garden; making eye contact & matching facial expression will build baby's brain. Put phone away sometimes
- Show what baby can see

6-8 weeks

- Remind parents about 'Five to Thrive'
- Respond to baby promptly & consistently – talking, singing, playing with & reading to baby; making eye contact & engaging facial expressions
- Have you found the signs that baby is sleepy, hungry or had enough play & wants some down time? What are they?
- When baby gets upset, it helps them learn to manage their emotions when you (i) name the emotion they are experiencing, (ii) recognise & validate how they are feeling & (iii) offer some guidance e.g. if upset at bath time... "I know you're upset because you're cold & wet & you're getting tired (name the emotion) & it's horrible when you feel like that (validate how they are feeling). Let's get you dry, put your pyjamas on & then we can get cosy, have a cuddle & a bedtime story (offer guidance)
- When awake encourage 'tummy time' - looking & reaching for toys strengthens muscles
- Show what baby can see

12 months

Development at 8-12 months - A critical time for language development

- Introduce 'How to Be - Home' cards
- Put your phone away sometimes
- Parent/carer describe your routine – what you're doing now; what you're going to do next; what you see e.g. let's wash your hair, rinse you off & get you nice & dry with the towel. Then we can get ready for bed & have a cuddle & a story
- When baby gets upset, it helps them learn to manage their emotions when you (i) name their emotions, (ii) recognise & validate their feelings & (iii) offer guidance e.g. if upset because they can't have a toy... "Oh, I know it's frustrating when you can't have a toy you really like (name the emotion). That's so upsetting (validate how they are feeling). That's James' dinosaur & he has to leave now. Let's with this dinosaur? Listen, it has such a loud roar (offer guidance)
- At this age baby will feel anxious when you leave him/her with someone else. Be mindful of this & give him/her opportunities to build trust in others & trust that you will return by arranging for baby to spend a short period of time with other trusted adults. Always be sure to say goodbye & tell them that you will see them later
- Praise good behaviour. Say "no" & re-direct when they do something you don't want them to do; they will not be able to follow rules at this age. They are not naughty – they are finding out what they can & can't do/what is safe & what is not safe
- Limit screen time; - use of computer, phone, TV- negative impact on brain development

24-30 months

- Remind parent/carer about 'How to Be Home' cards to support communication & behaviour management
- Give opportunities to play with children of same age & give them a chance to resolve disputes; be prepared to step in, help resolve disputes & help sharing & turn taking
- If your toddler makes a mistake in their speech, correctly re-phrase what s/he said; do not scold them when they make a mistake
- Play learning games – counting steps, matching toys, name body parts, talk about stories
- Make sure they have lots of outdoor play to walk, run & freely explore
- Limit screen time; - use of computer, phone, TV- negative impact on brain development
- Remember to have times when your phone is away