



# Family Engagement Newsletter

## Speech and Language Development Begins at Home

By Wendy Overturf

Children's speech and language development begins at birth, long before they can say words, or even understand the meaning of words. Speech is the ability to produce the sounds that form words. Language is the words that a child understands and uses. The early development of speech and language relies on parents, families, and caregivers to provide the necessary tools and experiences which encourage what words children learn, and later, how they use those words and the way they communicate.

The first 3 years of life, when the brain is developing and maturing, is the most intensive period for acquiring speech and language skills. These skills develop best in a world that is rich with sounds, sights, and consistent exposure to the speech and language of others. There are many ways parents, families and caregivers can help children develop speech and language skills and set them on a path to learning.

Lots of parents feel a bit silly talking to a baby who does not talk back. But listening and watching you talk helps your baby understand the basics of communicating. For example, your baby might gaze into your face and watch your mouth move as you talk.

- The best way to encourage your baby's speech and language development is to talk to them and treat them as a talker, beginning in their first year. Chat to your baby about the things you are doing around the house, even if you think it is boring. For example, "Daddy is helping get dinner ready."
- Sing songs and make up rhymes.
- Read books and tell stories to your baby from birth.
- Name the toys and objects around you. For example, "Look, these are your socks. We're going to put them on your feet before we go outside."



Talking to their baby is a choice parents can make that is free, takes no equipment or significant training and will have enormous impact. Research shows that the amount of talk a child hears is more important than the subject the parent is talking about, and babies and very young children should hear many, many thousands of words each day. Additionally, parents who also listen, respond, and imitate the sounds their baby makes develop stronger emotional bonds with their baby. It also should be noted that good evidence suggests that screen viewing (e.g., television, ipads, cellular phones) before age 18 months has lasting negative effects on children's language development, reading skills, and short-term memory.

Children develop speech and language skills at different rates, but generally follow a natural progression of development. One out of 5 children will learn to talk or use words later than other children their age. This [website](#) gives typical language and communication developmental milestones. If you are concerned about your child's development, talk with your child's doctor. A hearing test may first be recommended to rule out any possible hearing disorder. You may also be asked to complete a questionnaire to gain a better understanding of how your child is currently functioning.

In certain situations, if your pediatrician feels that there is a significant delay, they may refer you to an early intervention program or you can also make contact yourself. In Wisconsin, the early intervention program is known as the [Birth to 3 Program](#). It is an early intervention special education program that supports the growth and development of children under the age of 3 who have delays or disabilities. If your child qualifies for services, a team of specialists will work with you to develop an *Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)*. This plan becomes a guide for the services your child will receive until 3 years of age. It may include parent training and support, direct therapy, and special equipment. Other services may be offered to benefit your child and family depending on your specific needs. If your child needs help after 3 years of age, the early intervention staff will transition your child to services through your local school district.

## Statewide Events

### [28th Annual State-wide Institute on Best Practices in Inclusive Education](#)

This Institute is co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and the Inclusion Institute, Inc. In 2021, this conference will be held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consider using this Institute as the venue for your administrative team, school staff, or individual planning retreat. Institute staff and DPI consultants are available to assist you and your colleagues in planning and problem-solving.

**Date:** July 26-28, 2021

### [Endless Possibilities 2021: Successful Transitions](#)

This virtual conference, coordinated by WI FACETS, and other family support/disability organizations allows parents and professionals affordable access to gain knowledge to enhance their ability to better support students with disabilities.

**Keynote & Presenter:** Creating a Roadmap for Inclusive IEPs and Transition, [Dan Habib](#)

**Sessions include:** ACTION! Effective Practices in Transition \* DVR: Possibilities During Times of Change and Transition \* College & Career Ready IEPs and Transition Back to In-person Learning \* Completing a Successful PTP \* Including Health Care Transition into the PTP & IEP \* Self-Care Sessions: How to Forgive in an Unforgiving World and *Fall* into Gratitude and Joy-It's that Easy!

[Register to Attend!](#)

Registration Fee: \$20

Parent Scholarships available, contact:

[Lori Karcher](#)

**Date:** August 6, 2021

Registration [closes](#) July 30, 2021 [at noon!](#)

### [Virtual Transition Parents in Partnership \(TPIP\)](#)

### [Youth in Partnership with Parents for Empowerment \(YIPPE\)](#)

Click on this [link](#) to view training options, dates, and registration information for both of these no cost events.

**Learning Opportunities**



## At Home Learning Strategies

### [Early Literacy Activity Calendar: July 2021](#)

Summer learning is more important than ever this year! Share the July early literacy calendar to help parents get their little ones excited about reading, math, science, and more. This month's activities include building edible castles on National Graham Cracker Day, learning about sizes on National Tape Measure Day, and exploring the sounds of the outdoors on Hop-a-Park Day.

### [Children's Activity Calendar: July 2021 \(older children\)](#)

Summer learning is out of this world! Celebrate World UFO Day and National Moon Day, plus down-to-earth holidays like National Park and Recreation Day and National Picnic Month. Learn about charity and conservation with Give Something Away Day, Plastic Free July, and International Tiger Day. Find crafts, recipes, and book suggestions for the rest of National Anti-Boredom Month, too!



\*Read [When Charley Met Emma](#), by Amy Webb, to celebrate the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act! This delightful book will help kids think about disability, kindness, and how to behave when they meet someone who is different from them.



Summer is in full swing and your kids are probably enjoying their vacation from school. While it is good to have a break from the daily grind of schoolwork, kids can lose some of the progress they made over the previous school year. You can help avoid this "summer slump" by incorporating some educational content into the summer schedule. Take time to sharpen your child's literacy skills with these fun 4th of July themed activities.

- 4th of July Word Search – Make your very own word search with [Discovery Education's free puzzle generator](#). Simply type in the patriotic terms you wish to use, and your customized puzzle will be ready in a matter of seconds.
- History Lesson – Older elementary, middle and high school students will enjoy the interactives, videos, articles and pictures about the 4th of July at [History.com](#). Take advantage of this fun way to incorporate a history lesson for Independence Day.
- Patriotic Writing Prompts – Want to give your children an opportunity to practice their writing skills? Give them a patriotic writing prompt to get their creative juices flowing. Writing prompts such as, "I love living in America because...", or "My favorite American hero is..." are just a few ways to get your child going.

### [Summer Recipes for Kids](#)

Following recipes is a great way to practice reading and measuring skills. These recipes for kids are the perfect springboard to hours of summer fun ... and deliciously nutritious eating. Whether your children are little and still need lots of help in the kitchen, or they are teens who can handle most of the cooking themselves, all will enjoy these yummy, easy, adorable ideas.



### [Summer Olympics Family Style](#)



Now that the threat of COVID has decreased and families are getting together more, it might be time to have your own family Olympics. Try some of these [fun and engaging outdoor games](#) meant for larger groups. Most of the needed supplies can be purchased at a dollar store.

### [Engaging Summer Olympics Activities and Resources](#)

While the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo were postponed due to COVID-19, they are now set to begin on Friday, July 23rd, 2021 and end on Sunday, August 8th. Although taking place in 2021 they still will be called the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games. Things will look a bit different than in previous Olympics due to COVID. If you are viewing the Olympics on television you will notice the following:

- The stadiums will be more empty and less noisy than we are used to.
- Foreign visitors, including fans, are banned from the Games.
- Only people with essential operational roles such as media members, trainers and of course the athletes themselves, will be permitted to enter stadiums and other Olympic sites.

Also note that Tokyo, Japan is 14 hours ahead of Central Time. Many key events will be held in the evening in Tokyo, and therefore will be in the early morning hours for U.S. viewers. However, many of the more popular events will be replayed during prime time TV hours.

Here are some [Summer Olympic activities and resources](#) parents can use to help kids learn about the games and to keep them more actively involved. This website has both literacy and math activities.

## Online Resources: Speech and Language

### [Center for Parent Information and Resources](#)

This website provides fact sheets about milestones of typical speech and language development. It also provides information about speech and language impairments and provides links to many other resources related to speech and language development. This website is also available in Spanish.

### [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#)

This site outlines services for students with speech and language disabilities. There is information on eligibility criteria as well as links to other resources on the web.

### [U.S. Department of Education](#)

This is a very comprehensive site offering information on language development activities for children from infancy to age six. These are activities parents can do with their children that not only promote language development but also assist in helping children learn to read.

### [The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders \(NIDCD\)](#)

The NIDCD, part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), conducts and supports research in the normal and disordered processes of hearing, balance, taste, smell, voice, speech, and language.

### [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association \(ASHA\)](#)

This link provides information about your child's communication development-kindergarten through fifth Grade. (it is also available in Spanish.)

### [The Stuttering Foundation](#)

The organization provides free online resources, services and support to those who stutter and their families, as well as support for research into the causes of stuttering.

### [icomunicate](#)

icomunicate provides a wealth of information about a wide variety of speech and language disorders (such as apraxia, phonological delay, aphasia, dysarthria, stuttering etc.), communication development, hearing impairment, autism, brain injury, special needs and learning difficulties, and assistive communication (AAC).

### [Summer Reading Lists for Reluctant Readers-Grades 3-5](#)

During the summer, many children will not get the reading practice that they get in school. But books that engage the imagination can motivate kids to keep up skills until school starts again. The website gives some lists of books to captivate reluctant readers.

### [Free Online Speech Apps for Kids](#)

This site provides links to free online apps that offer parents a way to refine and practice their child's speech skills at home.

### [What's the Difference Between a Speech Impairment and a Language Disorder?](#)

Often the words *speech* and *language* used interchangeably. However, these words have very different meanings. Check out the link to learn more.



## WI FACETS



### Event title links to information & registration for WI FACETS FREE workshops & webinars:

To register by phone: 877-374-0511

All webinars 12:00—1:00 PM  
(unless otherwise noted)

### [Compassion Resilience – Self Care Snapshot Series: Wellness Strategies](#)

**Presenter:** Emily Jonesburg, Rogers InHealth

**Date:** July 12, 2021, 12pm-12:30pm

### **It's My Life - Taking the Lead: A Youth Conference**

WI FACETS is hosting this event in partnership with the Wisconsin Statewide Parent Educator Initiative (WSPEI), CESA 1, the Transition Improvement Grant (TIG) and the School District of Elmbrook. High school students or recent graduates learn about what life with a disability will be like after high school and the rights and options available to them, while in the company of other youth with disabilities. Featured sessions include:

- Mock Job Interviews
- Writing & giving "elevator speeches"
- College Jeopardy
- Disability Disclosure
- The PTP & the WI Transition App

The event is free- please register as soon as possible [here](#). In person or Zoom attendance available. A monetary stipend is given once youth complete all requirements of the program. For more information, contact Matthew Zellmer at 877-374-0511 or [mzellmer@wifacets.org](mailto:mzellmer@wifacets.org)  
**Dates:** July 27-29, 2021, 10am-2pm

### [Compassion Resilience – Self Care Snapshot Series: Connecting to Our Purpose](#)

**Presenter:** Emily Jonesburg, Rogers InHealth

**Date:** August 9, 2021, 12pm-12:30pm

### [IEP 1: Special Education Basics](#)

**Presenter:** Bonnie Vander Meulen, WI FACETS

**Date:** August 10, 2021, 12pm-12:30pm

### [Friendly and Productive IEP Meetings \(Spanish\)](#)

**Date:** August 12, 2021

Training in Spanish - To register, contact Nelsinia Ramos, [nramos@wifacets.org](mailto:nramos@wifacets.org)



### Revisions to the Disability Category Web Pages on the Wisconsin DPI Website

The updated pages have common sections for incidence rates, disproportionality, criteria resources, as well as links to common resources applicable to all students with IEPs, including [Special Education Professional Learning Resources](#), [College and Career Ready \(CCR\) IEP Development](#), and a link to a new set of resources related to Comprehensive Special Education Evaluation coming this fall. Updated web pages were created for the disability categories of [Autism](#), [Blind and Visually Impaired](#), [Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#), [Deafblind](#), [Emotional Behavioral Disability](#), [Intellectual Disability](#), [Orthopedic Impairment](#), [Other Health Impairment](#), [Significant Developmental Delay](#), [Speech or Language Impairment](#), [Specific Learning Disabilities](#), [Traumatic Brain Injury](#). The disability category web pages will be updated as proposed rule changes to any of the disability category criteria go into effect as well as when revised disability category criteria IEP forms are finalized. Redesigning of disability category web pages led to ideas for new web pages that may also be of interest to those supporting students across disability categories such as [DPI Resources to Support Neurodiverse Students](#), [National Organizations to Support Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices for Students with IEPs](#), [College, Career, and Community Readiness for Students with IEPs](#), [Early Learning Evaluation Support Tools](#), [Medical and Health Conditions that May be Related to Students with IEPs](#), [Special Education and English Learners](#), and [Special Education Professional Learning Events](#).

## Research to Read

### A culturally responsive framework for enhancing phonological awareness development in children with speech and language impairment

Gail Gillon & Angus Hikairo Macfarlane (2017) A culturally responsive framework for enhancing phonological awareness development in children with speech and language impairment, *Speech, Language and Hearing*, 20:3, 163-173, DOI: 10.1080/2050571X.2016.1265738

### [Article Link](#)

In this article an example of a culturally responsive approach to working with children with speech–language impairments is discussed. The approach is centered on the premise that early literacy success is critical to these children's academic achievement and that multiple variables will contribute to children's literacy development. The example is novel in that it integrates a science-based model, the Component Model of Reading, with writings related to indicators for academic success, namely the importance of cultural identity, resilience, a sense of place, bicultural education, and the importance of family. This framework is termed 'A Braided Rivers Approach'. It is used in this article to discuss how speech–language therapists and teachers can advance children's phonological awareness development in ways that maximize the benefits for their early reading and spelling development. The approach values and respects children's cultural identity and background, particularly for children with speech–language impairment who are at risk of experiencing written language difficulties.

This monthly update is provided by the Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. *If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, contact: Wendy Overturf at [woverturf@wifacets.org](mailto:woverturf@wifacets.org).*



## **Contributions to the Newsletter**

**Upcoming newsletter topics:** August: Other Health Impairment  
September: Assistive Technology  
October: Learning Disabilities

*To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources, you may use the attached word document. Send submissions to [woverturf@wifacets.org](mailto:woverturf@wifacets.org). If you are unable to access the form, you may send the information in an email.*

*Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to sources of family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.*

***The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter  
can be found online at:***

***<https://servingongroups.org/resources>***



This document was produced under grants from the U.S. Dept. of Education, (PTIC-#H328M200017) and WI Dept. of Public Instruction (CFDA# 84.027A/2022-M132-WIFACETS-342) to WI FACETS. The content does not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Dept. of Education, WI Dept. of Public Instruction, or WI FACETS. You should not assume endorsement by the U.S. Dept. of Education, WI Dept. of Public Instruction, WI FACETS, U.S. Dept. of Education Project Officer, David Emenheiser; or WI Dept. of Public Instruction Grant Director, Rita Fuller of any product, commodity, service or enterprise mentioned in this publication. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. The citation should be: U.S. Dept. of Education, WI Dept. of Public Instruction, and WI FACETS, Milwaukee, WI, 2022.