

Language Links

Toronto Preschool Speech and Languages Services & The Infant Hearing Program **Newsletter**

April 2004

MISSION OF TPSLS: To provide exemplary identification and intervention services responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity, in partnership with community agencies, to enable all preschool children in Toronto to reach their highest communication potential.

INFANT HEARING PROGRAM (IHP)

The ASL Parent-Child Mother Goose Program

by Joanne Cripps, ASL and Literacy Provincial Co-ordinator and Anita Small, Provincial Bilingual Advisor--The Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf

The Ontario Cultural Society of the Deaf (OCS) is developing an exciting new program in collaboration with the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. This program is designed for parents who use American Sign Language (ASL) with their children—these may be hearing parents who have Deaf children or Deaf parents with hearing children. Our innovative program is called the ASL Parent-Child Mother Goose Program.

The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program has traditionally been used with parents singing rhymes to their hearing baby or toddler while baby sits on Mom or Dad's lap. We have the conception that Mother Goose is meant only for use with hearing children and spoken language, but when we analyze this program we see what sharing rhymes with young children really accomplishes. The focus of the Parent-Child Mother Goose Program is nurturing the bond between parent and child in an environment of warmth and fun, while establishing close interaction, eye contact, natural language development through play and rhythm and patterns in nursery rhymes. These rhythms and patterns, whether sound-based or visually based, become the foundation for storytelling as the child grows.



The ASL Parent-Child Mother Goose program focuses on language interaction using ASL handshape rhymes and visual poetry. While toys and books are used for shared interactions between parents and child on many occasions, they are not used in the ASL Parent-Child Mother Goose Program. Instead, this program focuses on the close interaction that is established through shared rhymes and stories.

Because of the principles that are the basis of the Mother Goose Program—bonding, eye contact, language interaction and communication—the OCS is developing two videotapes. One videotape is about the ASL Parent-Child Mother Goose Program (12 minutes) and the other is an introductory educational videotape for parents of newly identified Deaf infants and toddlers (18 minutes).

These videotapes will be ready for sale in fall 2003 and the OCS will also provide a six-week ASL Parent-Child Mother Goose Program for

both Deaf and hearing parents and children across the province. This innovative program, adapted and developed by OCS with training from the original Parent-Child Mother Goose Program staff, is the first of its kind and promises to be exciting and fun for all parents and children involved!

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PRESCHOOL SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SERVICES (PSLS)

Early Identification Partnership with Ontario Early Years Centres and Healthy Babies Healthy Children:

TPSLS has developed a protocol to be used by the Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYC) and Healthy Children Healthy Babies (HBHC) in efforts to identify children who may be at risk for communication delays as early as possible in their lives.

All children involved with these programs will be screened using the following tools, at the very least, by the age of 18 months (no child is too young to be referred to TPSLS):

- a) **TPSLS Communication Checklist**—if one “No” answer received from the parent the child will be considered to be at risk for Speech/Language problems.
- b) **Hearing Screening**—Ages and Stages as outlined in the brochure called “Hearing Screening for Your New Baby”.

Those who are identified to be at Risk from the Communication Checklist:

- a) Contact agency completes the TPSLS Intake Form with the family. Or if the family wishes, the parent can call TPSLS Intake directly and make the referral. The number to call is 416-338-8255 (Voice) or 416-338-0025 (TTY).
- b) If the contact agency completes the Intake Form with the family, it can be faxed directly to TPSLS Intake at

416-338-8511. Once TPSLS receives the Intake Form the family will be contacted to confirm the referral.

- c) It is important to inform the Intake Staff that this is a referral that originates from HBHC, OEYC.
- d) If referral comes from anyone other than parent, the parent will be contacted by TPSLS to confirm the referral.
- e) TPSLS places the child on the wait list for Initial Assessment.
- f) TPSLS arranges date and location for the child to be assessed at a community site (possibly the OEYC) near the family’s home. Each Quadrant will be setting up community based assessment dates in the Early Years Centres in each Quadrant. These will occur on a regular (regular is still being worked out) basis across the system.
- g) Once the assessment is completed, further intervention will be provided if needed. Children with multiple needs can be taken to the Interagency Team by Toronto Public Health or TPSLS.

Those who are identified to be at risk for hearing problems:

- a) For any child from six months of age to two years, the Infant Hearing Program can screen the child.
- b) To book an appointment for a community clinic screening, call 416-338-8255.



Annual Meeting

TPSLS held its second Annual Meeting on October 8, 2003 at the North York Memorial Hall. The meeting provided an opportunity to review the services provided in 2002/2003 by both the Preschool Speech and Language Program and the Infant Hearing Program. To receive a copy of the Annual Report please call 416-338-8255 or e-mail tpsls@toronto.ca

Krista Riko, Director of Audiology, Speech Language Pathology and Hearing Aid Dispensary Services, presented the keynote address for the evening at Mt.

Sinai Hospital in Toronto. Krista is also a consultant to the Ontario Infant Hearing Program. The title of her presentation was “The Ontario Infant Hearing Program—Some Retrospective and Prospective Views.” Her presentation provided a unique, first hand account of key provincial, national and international events that contributed to the development of the Ontario Infant Hearing Program. It was very clear from Krista’s report that we have indeed come a long, long way since the early days of detection of early childhood hearing loss!

It's All in the Bag

CLINICAL
CORNER

by **Becki, Carrie, Julie, Vivian**

(TPSLS staff, North Quadrant, Branson site)

Ever wonder what happens with the wonderful ideas and information that TPSLS staff learn from professional development days? Often, they get stashed away on the “when I have extra time” wish list. After listening to Judith Ball’s presentation on home programming, (Judy is a Speech Language Pathologist from Thunder Bay) we were very excited about her suggestions. With a few adaptations and creative ideas, we have implemented homework bags of our own. So far, the feedback from our families has been very positive. Parents remarked that, “the incentive to do ‘homework’ was there because it was all neatly put together in one bag” and “it reinforced what my child was working on in speech class and it was done in a fun way.”

Currently, we have piloted the homework bags with families in our Parent-Child Program and Phonology groups.

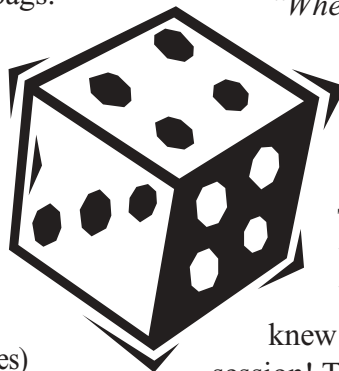
The bags are handed out near the beginning of the therapy block (i.e. 6 sessions for the Parent-Child Program and 8 sessions for the Phonology group) and parents are asked to sign a “Responsible for contents and liability letter.”

This letter includes the due date of the bag, which is usually the second last session.

Listed below, are some ideas for activities and materials that we included in our homework bags:

1) Phonology Bag

- BINGO board (includes pictures of the target sound)
- Dice and tokens
- One set of laminated sound cards
- Story book related to the target sound
- Puzzle (used for hiding sound cards under the pieces)
- Game board with sound cards glued on it
- Mini bowling balls and pins (used for taping sound cards to the pins)



- Instructions for games and other ideas for practicing speech sounds
 - Information on how to produce the speech sound and the speech sound ladder (i.e. Isolationfisyllablesfiwordfiphrasesficonversation)
- The bags are affordable and easy to make. Most of the items were bought from the dollar store and/or made with Boardmaker TM .

2) Parent Child Program Bag

- Bubbles
- Farm scene with farm animals to Velcro on
- Blocks
- Laminated Potato Head with parts to Velcro on
- Book
- Washable puppet with plastic food items
- Each item comes with an index card with strategies and possible words to use with the toy

The initial investment of some time and effort in making the homework bags yielded great benefits for our children and their families. Parents were encouraged to practice strategies and speech sounds, when all of the items that they needed were at hand and activities were motivating.

Some reactions from parents:

“When pulling out activities for my son-it was like a surprise coming out for him.”

“...made my child want to ‘work’. It was a game for him, took away from ‘homework’.”

The only “problem” with the homework bags was that some children hide the bag from their parents, because they knew they had to bring it back for the next session! This is a sure sign that fun and work are “all in the bag”!

We hope that the other Quadrants can “carry on” the ideas and “pack” success in a bag.

Infant Hearing Program

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For more information, please contact the OCSO directly at 905-897-6881 (telephone/TTY) or ocsd@deafliteracy.ca

OCSO is one of the TPSLS Community Partners actively participating in the Infant Hearing Program in Toronto. It provides ongoing training and supervision for the ASL/Literacy Consultants who provide the ASL/Literacy services for our families who choose this communication option for their children.

Transit Shelter Advertising

On February 9, 2004 TPSLS placed posters in 60 TTC bus shelters across the City of Toronto. The City of Toronto provides these placements. The TPSLS Media and Communications Work Group developed the poster with support from the Communications Department of Toronto Public Health. Here is a copy of the poster:

In addition, newspaper ads ran in: Metro Toronto, The Toronto Star and in The Mirror/Guardian.



**You and your child
grow with communication**

- Newborn hearing screening
- Preschool speech, language or sign language services

416-338-8255 (Voice) 416-338-0025 (TTY)

All services are free
Services disponibles en français

www.tpsls.on.ca

Community Partners

Ontario

Toronto Public Health

In Memoriam

*by Marg Whelan, Executive Director,
Geneva Centre for Autism*

On January 28, 2004 the autism community and TPSLS lost a brilliant clinician. Gary Tweedie, a Speech Language Pathologist at Geneva Centre for Autism, died after complications from pneumonia. The depth of grief evident in the community is a reflection of the depth of affection with which Gary was held. He inspired the families and colleagues he worked with to have hope that the kids we worked and cared for could be helped to be their best. In so doing he inspired us with the hope that we too could be our best.

When Gary worked with families they knew immediately that he recognized the gifts in their children, that he loved our kids and wanted to make a difference. His first act was always to get right down on the floor with the children, to engage them, to share his love of life. He could interact with preschoolers like no one else. With colleagues he was generous, sensitive and caring. He was always the first to remind you that you were doing a great job.

The essence of the work of a Speech Language Pathologist is interacting with people to bring out their best. This was his gift.

TPSLS Web Site Redesign

Our Web site has just undergone a major overhaul to include more information about the Infant Hearing Program. Please check it out at www.tpsls.on.ca and give us your feedback at tpsls@toronto.ca

How to get Services from TPSLS

If you have a concern about your child's speech and language development (up to the time your child enters Senior Kindergarten) or your infant's hearing (up to age 2 years), call the TPSLS phone number at 416-338-8255 (Voice) or 416-338-0025 (TTY). Parents, caregivers and health professionals can make referrals.

For hearing concerns, babies 0-4 months who missed the hospital screening can be screened in a community clinic. Children 6-24 months can be screened only if there is a concern about the baby's ability to hear.