

0-5 Matters



**Welcome to the September 2010 edition of 0-5 Matters.
Please find included in this edition**

- **Focus on Every Child a Talker**
- **Feedback from Thurrock Early Years Conference 2010**
- **Your ideas**
- **Useful Resources**
- **Training reminders**

If you would like any further information, advice or support in relation to children under three please do not hesitate to contact us:

Kelly Barker (0-3s Support Development Officer) 07767425958
kbarker@thurrock.gov.uk

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dshepherd@thurrock.gov.uk

If you would like any further information, advice or support in relation to children between 3-5years please do not hesitate to contact your Early Years Consultant.

FOCUS On:

Every Child a Talker (ECaT)

By Michael Jones,
ECaT consultant



Every Child a Talker (ECaT) is a national project for children from birth to five years that started in England in 2008. Thurrock's project got underway in April this year, and ends in March 2011. 20 settings

(including two Childminders) have been given funding to develop confidence and skills in supporting children's communication and language in the setting, to involve parents, and invest in resources.

The project was originally created because of concern about many children's limited language development when starting school, and the impact this has on learning and achievement. In Thurrock we want *all* young children to be the best talkers they possibly can be: in English, and in their home language if they are learning English as an additional language.

Michael Jones and Tina Cooke are the Early Language Consultants leading the project, guided and supported by Debbie Shepherd and Catherine Croft.

It is hoped that what we develop through ECaT will have a lasting impact on all Thurrock settings, through sharing good practice and new ideas.

ECaT's big themes

Children need something to talk about, someone to talk with, and someone to listen to them. Our 'big themes' are:

Parents and practitioners are the biggest influences on young children's communication. How we talk *with* children makes more difference than anything else. 'All you need is chat'!

'Interaction'... 'conversation'... 'chat'... they all mean the same thing. And it should start from birth! Talking with children about what they are doing, and asking genuine questions, are what really matters, for learning language and for learning for life. So if you think you are 'just having a chat' with a child, take away the word 'just'. Chatting is the most important thing you can do!

Confident children can become confident communicators. Most children are confident communicators at home. Our job is to help them develop confidence in our settings.

All children like to talk about what they know most about. All children are experts in their home life, and usually enjoy talking about home. Finding out about home makes an important link with parents too.

Many children watch children's TV, so activities that involve TV characters are likely to produce a lot of excited chat!



Children need support to take part in groups.

Some of the most successful groups are those where lots of adults take part with the children, and especially at storytime. We can help children get the most from storytime by planning how we will tell the story, and using lots of props such as puppets. Preparing children by involving them throughout the session in fun activities related to the story can increase children's understanding, participation and enjoyment.

Children with well-developed vocabulary are likely to do well at school. We need to improve children's 'word power' by increasing the number of words they understand and use.

Let's really boost our children's vocabulary. Try the 'Five for One' activity. If children know one item of clothing, such as 'top', can we help them to know five more, such as 'jumper, sweatshirt, polo shirt, t-shirt and vest'? If they know 'duck', can we help them to learn 'swan, goose, eagle, and owl'? We can do this through sharing books and games, but most importantly in being more exact about how we talk with children, as part of everyday activities.



Children who understand rhyme often become successful readers and spellers: so we say, 'A rhyming child is a reading child!'

English is the most difficult language to read and spell in the entire world!! Being able to rhyme is one of the most important skills we can give children to help them understand the link between individual speech sounds and whole words (phonological awareness). This is vital for later reading and spelling. Lots of rhyming, through singing, rhyming games and sharing rhyming books is a great place to start!

An understandable environment is important in encouraging wellbeing and understanding of language.

Very young children learn language quickest if everything around them makes as much sense as possible. Helping children understand routines and instructions with visual clues can help to boost confidence as well as encourage understanding. Simple things like always putting a plastic tablecloth on the table with pictures of fruit on it before snack time, and singing a 'snack time song', immediately helps children know what is going to happen next, and understand what is being said to them... and you will get an immediate reaction!

An exciting environment encourages chat!

Children learn language by practicing talking, and especially talking about what they are *doing*. And if they can be doing interesting things indoors and outdoors, then they will have plenty to talk about. Some of the most absorbing activities are the simplest, and might not even cost anything! One setting has a water butt where children can collect water that they use for watering the plants, or for filling buckets that they use with old paintbrushes for washing the walls (after they have covered them in chalk drawings!) Other children painted a cardboard box red and turned it into a fire engine, so they could play at being fire fighters.



Do you have an interesting idea or activity that you would like to share with other settings in Thurrock?

Or would you like to find out how you can get involved in Every Child a Talker?

Please contact Michael Jones on

jonmic57@yahoo.co.uk or 07743 665100

Or Tina Cooke on tina.cooke@thurrock.gov.uk or 07920 750961

ECaT at EAST THURROCK KIDS CLUB

East Thurrock Kids Club began work on the “Relationships and Interactions” module for QuILT (Quality Improvement in Learning and Teaching) and decided to link this with their ECaT project.

They decided to complete observations to find out where the most “chatter” was taking place between children and between children and adults.

In the outside area it was children’s interests that led the interactions. Within the garden area the children can dig, weed and plant and search for minibeasts. Here children were sharing ideas, showing what they had found and shared stories from home easily.

The role play area was a submarine where the children chatted together. Children were taking turns being the driver and asking each other where they would like to go.

The children created dens. Staff supported this by creating a fabric roof and placing cushions inside to encourage children to sit and chat.

The observations highlighted how adults play a key role in supporting the children’s interactions and relationship building. They discovered that the areas promoting the most chatter were where children felt most **comfortable, relaxed and interested**.

TALKING AND DUMMIES

Did you know?

Using a dummy too much may affect children’s development of Speech, Language and Communication as they...

- have less opportunities to talk
- have a limited range of tongue movements
- are limited in their facial and verbal responses to situations
- prevent babies from babbling and practicing talk

So what can we do?

- ☞ Consider having a discussion with your colleagues in your setting about the use of dummies: only encourage dummy use for initial settling in and sleep time
- ☞ Refer to the Parents Guide from the South West Essex PCT Speech and Language Therapy Service called “Talking and Dummies”. (If you would like any further information please contact **Children’s Centre Speech and Language Therapy**: Phone: 01375 859161)
- ☞ Establish a consistent approach to dummies across your setting and include in your settling in policy



IN CONVERSATION WITH...

Tina Cooke, ECat Consultant

I have been particularly encouraged by the enthusiasm of our Early Language Lead Practitioners, who have been excited to try new ideas. They haven't been put off by the data collections they have had to do!

One of the great ideas is making "chatterboxes" where practitioners make up a shoe box containing items that interest the children and using it as a stimulus for conversations. This can be extended by asking the children and families to make their own chatterbox containing items that reflect the family - photos, objects, cards...* It is a wonderful way to encourage conversations with and develop the confidence of children, particularly if they are learning English. (see Michael's website for more details)

* Chatterboxes or "treasure boxes" can be used very successfully to assess statements about culture and beliefs in the EYFS giving children the opportunity to talk about their own lives, faith and culture.

THURROCK EARLY YEARS CONFERENCE 2010

Another very successful Early Years Conference was held in June at the Culver Centre with the theme of "Every Child a Talker". The key note speaker, Roop Singh, challenged us and gave us insight into the world of children who are learning English as an Additional Language.

Below are some of the key points practitioners fed back to us from a selection of the workshops:

Workshop: Relationships and Communication by Dr. Maria Robinson

"Nappy, bath and feeding times are perfect opportunities for talking and singing"

"Storytime is a time for being held, have attention, wrapped in an emotional pashmina in a small group"

"How much time do we allow for children to 'just be' – giving them time to reflect, think and talk?
No pressure to go on to another activity"

Workshop: We have stories to tell by Alex Pascall

"Use open-ended resources such as a bag of rags or objects, as a starting point for talk"

"Grandma said, 'talk does bring talk. When mouth open words just jump out'" (children learn to talk by talking)

"Use action, dance, movement to get everyone involved in the story and change people's facial expressions" (get them smiling!)

"Everyone is a story"

Workshop: Raising Boy's Achievement by Gary Wilson

"The number one predictor for success is a positive attitude – If you think you can, then you can."

"It is vital to have good male role models."

"A lot of boys comment that writing actually hurts them. So give them lots of opportunities to be physically active."

Workshop: Mathematically Speaking by Judith Twani

"We all do a lot more in terms of mathematical activities than we think we do. It's about recognising it."

"We need to create a relaxed atmosphere around maths where children can just play and be part of it."

"Have space to allow children just to ponder – develop 'pondering places'."

"Commercial equipment and resources have in built rules which can be very limiting. Natural objects allow more freedom because they are not rule bound."

Training Reminders

Here are details of just some of our forthcoming training for those working with children from birth to five years below. Check the brochure online for other courses offered. You will notice that we have only given details of training for one term.

All courses need to be booked through Shelley at the Culver Centre, booking forms and full details

about each course are in your training brochure.

★ ★ It is vital to inform the culver if you are unable to attend, as non notification will result in a £50.00 cancellation fee per delegate. Please note that if there are not sufficient delegates booked on a course Thurrock Council reserves the right to cancel the course two weeks prior to the course date.

Course Title	What Is It About?	Date + Time
Building futures, believing in Children	Reflect on the quality of provision for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children and their families	Nov 10 th 9.30-12.00
Progress Matters	Developing systems for tracking the progress of young children's learning and development	22 nd Sept or Nov 10th 9.30-12.00
Can you measure culture and beliefs?	Exploring the EYFS statements about culture and beliefs – what do they mean? What do they look like in practice? ***PLEASE BRING SOMETHING THAT YOU FEEL REPRESENTS YOUR OWN CULTURE AND / OR BELIEFS.	8 th Oct (settings) 9.30-12.00 14 th Oct (schools) 4.15-5.45pm
Inclusion Development Programme: Behaviour, Emotional and Social	To focus on supporting all children in developing behavioural emotional and social skills thus avoiding later difficulties in learning and development. To support practitioners who are working with children whose behaviour emotional and social development is already causing concern.	19 th Oct Or 20 th Oct 9.30-12.00
Letters and Sounds: Phase One	How to use Phase One activities as outlined in the Letters and Sounds document and lots of ideas. (With input from Michael Jones)	4 th Oct 9.30-12.30
Putting attachment theory into practice	Gain an understanding of attachment theory and its implications for working with young children	Oct 12 th 9.30-12.00
Supporting all children's learning and development in the outdoors	Using the outdoors to its fullest potential as a learning environment. Particularly supporting boys. (With input from Michael Jones)	Sept 27 th 9.30-3.30
Young Children Thinking mathematically	Introducing new documents to support work in PSRN.	Schools 7 th Oct 4.15pm Settings:22 nd Oct 9.30-12.00

CORE TRAINING

Paediatric First Aid: 22,29 Sept 6, 13th October / 16, 23 Nov / 27 Nov & 4 Dec

Safeguarding: 15th Oct

Level 2 Food safety: 6 November

Safer recruitment: 9 November

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE COURSES 2010-2011

For professionals working with Pre-School Children

The 2010-2011 training schedule is now available. Please phone or email for a copy.

Phone: 01375 - 859161

Email: ann-marie.gray@swessex.nhs.uk or esther.hiley@swessex.nhs.uk

SPEECH & LANGUAGE DROP IN FOR PARENTS OF PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

Do you have any families who have concerns about their child's speech and language development? Let them know they can come and meet a Speech and Language Therapist at their local Children's Centre. NO APPOINTMENT IS NECESSARY.

The service is for **parents** of pre-school children. It is for children who are not seeing a Speech and Language Therapist at their local Clinic. For more information please contact the local Children's Centre or contact Speech and Language Therapy on: 01375 859161

Your Good Ideas: "SWAPSIES"

"Have a bag of different cuddly toys. Hand them out among the small group so that everyone has one, including the adults.

Ask if everyone is happy with what they have got. This is unlikely so then say, "I don't want my giraffe/owl/monkey...Would anyone like to swap with me?" Someone will probably want what you have so swap with them. Then say, "But I don't like the dolphin that Zak gave me. Would anyone like to swap...?" This can go on for some time. It works best when the adult leads the swapping. Eventually, after playing many times children may become confident to take on the role of leader. It can work with other objects such as different fruit, vegetables, dinosaurs, or anything from a theme or story."

Michael Jones (www.talk4meaning.co.uk)

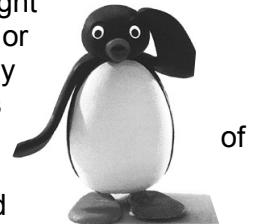


"I went on Michael's website and found the game of swapsies. I only tried the game a couple of times but it was great to see not only siblings sharing and communicating with each other but other children too. It was interesting to see that although there may have been 2 or 3 wanting the same puppet in the end we all ended up with something we wanted. Also at the same time the children were learning some social skills such as saying "please" and "thank you".

This is something I will be trying out on the older children within the setting after the holidays to see how it works in the older age group.

After one of our meetings with Michael Jones I thought that using something as simple as a magazines or birthday cards with children seemed a bit too easy. However, on return to my setting I asked around for any old magazines. We had Ben 10, Dora, Cbeebies and Pingu. I put some in the book corner and some on a drawing table. One of our children learning English as an additional language picked up the magazine and started to turn the pages. When an adult sat close by he started to point at the pictures and say some familiar names and words, which continued each time he returned to the nursery. We then decided to make visual displays of the characters within the book corner and around each picture placed some of the key words relating to that character.

Although this is a small step for us and much more can be done we feel that something has been achieved just by using something so simple.



of



We have also decided to use the magazines within the garden by laminating them to make them a bit more weather proof."

By Nichola Hall, Early Language Lead Practitioner (ELLP) at Treasure Children Forever, Grays



Not Boxes

Cardboard boxes provide hours of imaginative play. One childminder commented that she had never known the children cooperate on something for so long without falling out! They spent 2 ½ hours creating a rocket.



Consider the possibilities contained in a simple cardboard box in your setting. Just imagine all the talk, negotiation, skills and techniques wrapped up in one basic box! Get hold of the wonderful picture book: "Not a Box" by Antoinette Portis



Useful Resources:

The Pyramid Resource Centre: Members can fill up a black sack of scrap resources for just £3. Resources often available include large pieces of textured material – great for babies at the rolling/crawling stage, CDs great for making mobiles and items to add to a treasure basket or heuristic play collection.

Address: Heath Road, Chadwell St.Mary, RM16 4XH Tel: 01375 387738

"Learning Playing and Interacting" an excellent free downloadable book from the National Strategies <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dfes.gov.uk>

Inclusion Development Programme – Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs." Free downloadable guidance for practitioners working in the Foundation Stage <http://nationalstrategies.standards.dfes.gov.uk>

Useful links

Check out Michael's website:

www.talk4meaning.co.uk



www.standards.dfes.gov.uk Every Child a Talker materials can be downloaded from this website.

www.nationalliteracytrust.org.uk Lots of really useful information and links. Click on the link Early Years section.

www.talktobaby.org.uk (National Literacy Trust) A great section: Talk to your baby (Resources) to encourage communication with babies. - Lots of excellent resources that you can download for parents and professionals. Top tips – advice sheets for parents/carers available in thirteen different languages

www.ican.org.uk - excellent articles and resources. The Learning to talk, Talking to learn DVD is brilliant and comes with two free posters: Top techniques to develop children's speech and language & Stages of speech and language development – (These are downloadable from the resources section).

Chatter Matters DVD – Great resource for working with parents.

www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk The Communication Trust is to raise awareness of the importance of speech, language and communication across the children's workforce and to enable practitioners to access the best training and expertise to support the communication needs of all children. Lots of Speech, Language and Communication information.

www.early-education.org.uk A variety of information including a set of 13 great leaflets to help parents, practitioners and students of children from 0-5.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE YOUR NAME / SETTING IN PRINT?

WHY NOT CONTRIBUTE TO OUR NEXT EXCITING EDITION?

Have you found a particular resource useful? Or would you like to recommend an activity/experience? We would love to hear about it.

Please email Kelly Barker: k.barker@thurrock.gov.uk

With thanks to all those practitioners who contributed to this edition of 0-5 Matters.

