

Communication and Language Development: Early Communication

Teaching Tips:

- It may be helpful to teach early communication after having introduced the concepts presented in the overview of pillar four.
- You may want to begin by explaining that early communication describes all of the non-verbal and verbal ways babies communicate during their first 18 months.
- This module helps parents understand their role in the process of language acquisition.
- Some educators find it helpful to ask a general question such as "When you think of 'early communication' what comes to mind?" or "Can you think of examples of early communication that you have experienced with your own children?"
- Use the key messages below as a focus for teaching this topic as well as a summary of the content.

Learning Objectives for Parents and Caregivers

After learning about early communication, parents and caregivers will be able to:

- 1) Explain the foundation for language acquisition that develops in the first 18 months of a child's life
- 2) Describe how communication skills developed in infancy create the foundation for future language and literacy skills
- 3) Demonstrate activities that can be used to promote language development and communication skills

Key Messages for Parents and Caregivers

- 1) Communicating with infants means recognizing and responding to their needs.
- 2) It is important to consistently respond to a baby's cues to help build a connection with the child.
- 3) In the first months of life, responding to cries cannot "spoil" a child.
- 4) Babies communicate in a variety of ways, including both vocal expressions (such as crying, cooing, babbling) and physical gestures (facial expressions, pointing).

