

El Poder de los Padres: Volunteering in a Multicultural Parent-Child Group that Supports Language Development and Literacy Skills

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Connections to “Diverse World” Component of Husky Compact

As volunteers, we have developed and expanded our views of cultural diversity:

- Parent-child group members include Latino families who have a wide variety of levels of Spanish-English bilingualism
- There are a variety of cultural factors that impact personal identities
 - **Parents** have diverse life experiences related to family make-up, environment, education, employment, social interactions, poverty, immigration, and violence.
 - Their **children’s** language development is shaped by these factors. This group helps parents understand developmental milestones, activities for nurturing their child’s language development, and resources if they are concerned.
- Exposure to new perspectives
 - Each family has unique knowledge and views.
 - Differences may exist in strategies, priorities, and family structure, but all of us are unified by the common goal of having each child be ready to learn by kindergarten.

We have opportunities for growth in our field of Speech-Language Pathology:

- Expand upon our knowledge of bilingual language development
- Continue to develop cultural competence to best serve members of different cultural groups

Connections to “Think Critically/ Creatively” Component of Husky Compact

As volunteers, we face new challenges each session:

- Variation among children in English and Spanish skills
 - Adapting and adjusting the activities to fit each child’s current level.
 - This helps ensure that every child benefits from the group.
 - *Example:* working one-on-one with a child to simplify a task or make it more complex
- Nurturing language development throughout each session
 - Utilizing strategies during both structured and unstructured times.
 - *Example:* Modeling simple vocabulary for a nonverbal child, or asking a verbal child an open-ended question about a toy that they are playing with to promote vocabulary development
- Integrating multiple perspectives into the planning process
 - Considering views of graduate students, clinical supervisor, other volunteers, and parents when debriefing after the session.
 - This enables us to learn and grow from each other.
 - *Example:* Both graduate students and volunteers need to help implement a new strategy to ease transitions.

We have opportunities for growth:

- Develop strategies to incorporate parents’ goals and input into sessions
- Expand upon existing strategies to ensure that every child has the opportunity to improve his/her language skills.

Lesson Plan - Role of Volunteers

- **Free-play**
 - Interact with the children while using language-building strategies
 - *Examples:* communication temptations, open-ended questions, verbal prompts, expansion, self-talk, parallel talk
 - Encourage social communication skills
 - *Examples:* turn-taking, asking others to play
 - Expose the children to adult forms of language (longer sentences, correct grammar, diverse vocabulary, etc.)

- **Circle time**
 - Book
 - Model attentive listening
 - Redirect children who are distracted
 - *Example:* gesture to the book or remind them to listen
 - Songs
 - Model singing with rhythm
 - Demonstrate song actions to promote gestural participation
 - *Example:* doing the hand motions for “Itsy-Bitsy Spider”

- **Snack**
 - Request children to make choices
 - Prompt children to respond to questions
 - *Example:* “How many crackers would you like?”
 - Promote verbal communication attempts
 - *Example:* “Let’s count the fruit snacks together.”

- **Craft**
 - Set up tables with craft supplies
 - Guide children through craft steps
 - Point out target vocabulary words during the craft activity
 - Ask children to make choices between materials to promote language growth
 - *Example:* using a red or blue marker

- **Language activity stations**
 - Provide one-on-one support to children
 - Can simplify a task or make it more complex
 - Motivate children to focus on the task by offering praise
 - Collaborate with student clinician to ensure each station runs smoothly
 - *Example:* remind children to follow clinician’s directions and take turns
 - Assist children with transitioning between stations

- **Motor activity**
 - Encourage each child to participate
 - Serve as a role model for the children
 - *Example:* do the movements/actions for the song
 - Demonstrate enthusiasm and a positive attitude

Integration of Courses

Courses	Knowledge	Application
CSD 220 Phonetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Memorize International Phonetic Alphabet. ● Compare phonetics of various languages to English. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compare phonetics of children whose primary language is Spanish to those whose primary language is English.
CSD 460 Language Development CSD 461 Language Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understand all stages of language development, including birth, reading to learn, and social-communication skills. ● Identify various methods for encouraging gestural and verbal language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply knowledge of bilingual language development. ● Use these methods to effectively increase children’s communication attempts. ● Use strategies to expand language complexity. ● Provide information on language skills of individual children.
CSD 434 Articulation and Phonological Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compare differences between typically developing and disordered speech patterns. ● Identify red flags indicative of articulation and phonological disorders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● When we notice warning signs in a child’s speech, we pass along the information to supervisor and graduate students, who can administer an assessment, if needed.
CSD 450 Clinical Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write goals, clinical procedures, and satisfactory lesson plans. ● Demonstrate self-reflection as we develop skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review lesson plans to provide optimal support to graduate student clinicians. ● Use self-reflection after each session to share feedback and brainstorm ideas for improvement.