

Module 4: Launching Language and Communication Through Sign

Section: Pre-Language Development



Activity 4.1: Guiding Families in Understanding the Importance of Building Parent/Child Relationships

- A. Focus on the following quote from the section of the module on pre-language development: “Engaging and interacting with babies from the moment they are born supports the establishment of the parent/child relationship which in turn supports development of communication and language.”
- Discuss and expand upon some of the strategies mentioned in the module that can promote bonding and interacting with a baby who is deaf or hard of hearing (e.g., eye contact, touch, gestures, body language, facial expressions).
 - Remind parents to continue humming, singing, talking to their baby, and responding to vocal babbling. Babies continue to feel their parents communicating, especially while being held. Also, it unknown the level to which the child is accessing spoken language.
 - Discuss with families the importance of responding to sign babble, early sign approximations, and their child’s attention to sign language.
- B. The module mentions the importance of building a sense of security with babies who are deaf or hard of hearing through strategies such as using heavy footsteps so the baby can feel the vibration as you enter a room or turning lights on and off to let the baby know you are there. Brainstorm other ideas to support how infants who are deaf or hard of hearing may begin building attachment and security.
- Use specific gestures (or signs) to indicate “I love you.”

- Make sure the lights are on when you communicate visually.
- Use specific touch indicators (e.g., rubbing foot or leg) to indicate you are there when the baby is in a rear-facing car seat.
- Hum while holding the baby. He or she may or may not hear it but can feel it and may be comforted by it.

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