

Talking Tips FOR PARENTS

For the March, 2018 newsletter, we will be learning about **“Creating a Need to Talk.”** There’s an old song from the 50’s by Joe Jones called, “You Talk Too Much.” It goes like this, “You talk too much, you worry me to death. You talk too much, you even worry my pet. You just talk, talk too much.” **So, do YOU talk too much?**



- What do you mean? I’ve been telling you to talk to your young children about everything they are doing and thinking! What do I mean? Well, yes, you need to talk to your children, but **you also need to PAUSE after you talk to your child, and give him a chance to respond.**
- When you ask your child a question designed to gather information, **pause, and let your child have the opportunity to think about it and answer.** Some children have longer “wait time,” so you might have to wait a little longer and give them a little more time to think about their answers.
- Sometimes it’s hard to let your child struggle and even fail. Some of us are “helicopter moms” (as one of the moms in our playgroup said this morning). **We hover and if we think our child doesn’t know the answer, we swoop down and rescue our child by giving him the answer.** Now you might argue that you are giving him a “model” of what he could say. That may be true, BUT give him a chance to make an attempt to answer first.
- There is another pitfall in being the “rescue” parent. I’m sure you think you are helping, but you are essentially demonstrating to your child that he can’t answer on his own. You may be holding him back, preventing him from learning to communicate for himself, and every time you ask your child to talk to someone or answer a question, he will hide behind you and hope that you will answer for him. **If a child doesn’t have a need to talk, he won’t.**
- **What about babies? We still need to PAUSE and give the baby a chance to respond.** The response may be vocal, visual, or physical. For example, if you are playing a Bouncing on the Knee Game with your baby and you reach the end, stop and pause. Pause. Wait to see if baby indicates by rocking his body, wiggling up and down, or vocalizing, that he wants more. If you wait and watch, he will--that is if he really wants more.
- **Good grief! Talk, don’t talk, talk, don’t talk. How are you supposed to remember? Here’s a 6-step sequence to help you remember:**
 1. Engage your child in a game, conversation, or activity.
 2. Do or say something that requires some kind of a response from your child.
 3. Pause and give your child a chance to respond.
 4. Model what your child was trying to say in his response.
 5. Pause and give your child a chance to imitate your language model (if your child is ready!).
 6. RESPOND!

