



The Learning Institute

Supporting Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) - Part 3

Overview

Speech, language and communication are important in almost everything children and young people do. Being able to make their thoughts, ideas, and needs known, things they like and dislike, interacting with others and making friends are critical life skills. Parents and carers can be in as much need for guidance and clarification as their children in this situation. Therefore effectively communicating with the parents of children and young people with speech, language and communication needs can also provide support for the child.

This CPD activity is the third of a set of four and will help you to explore how to communicate effectively with parents of children and young people with SLCN and to reflect on how this communication happens in your workplace.

Target audience

Teaching assistants, support workers

Duration

Approximately 1 hour

The Learning Institute provides opportunities for individuals and communities through high quality education, training and research programmes that challenge personal barriers and promote social inclusion. To find out more, please get in touch.

Introduction

Children and young people with speech, language or communication needs (SLCN) cover the whole ability range. They may find it more difficult to:

- communicate with others
- take part in conversations

This is either because they find it difficult to understand what others say or because they have difficulties with fluency and forming sounds, words and sentences:

- understand meaning when they hear or see a word

This can lead to words being used incorrectly or out of context and the child having a smaller vocabulary. It is important to remember that difficulties in speech, language and communication are not always entirely separate and can overlap.

“The ability to communicate is an essential life skill for all children and young people and it underpins a child’s social, emotional and educational development.” (Bercow, 2008, p. 6)

Making a Difference

“Children whose language difficulties were resolved by the age of five and a half were more likely to go on to develop good reading and spelling skills and keep pace with their peers” (Conti-Ramsden et al, 2009 in Gross, 2013, p. 7)

“Socially disadvantaged children can catch up with other children in language skills in just 9 months if their teachers are trained to have the right kind of conversations with them” (Hank and Deacon, 2008 in Gross, 2013, p. 7)

“KS2 children with poor reading comprehension made greater improvements in reading when provided with an intervention to develop their oral language skills” (Snowling et al, 2010 in Gross, 2013, p. 7)

60.5% of 3 year-olds on SEN support have a primary type of need of Speech Language and Communication needs. This reduces to 13% of 10 year-olds and 6.9% of 15 year-olds. (Department for Education, 2016).

Objectives

- To explore ways to communicate effectively to parents or carers who have a child or young person with a speech, language or communication need.
- To reflect on communication with parents and carers in your setting

Resources

Pen and paper for note taking

Notes and/or mind maps from *Supporting SLCN – Parts 1 and 2*

Internet access to following:

- The Communication Trust: Talking to parents [video] available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78lQunDHL3o&t=942s>
- The Communication Trust: Talking to Parents Check List [document] available at https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/601838/checklist_v6.pdf
- BBC: Speech and Language Difficulties [webpage] available at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/speech-and-language-difficulties>

Task 1: The Communication Trust

The Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice highlights the importance of parental and family involvement for children with SEND. Supporting and talking to parents or carers about a child's difficulty in speech, language and communication can be difficult. Parents can react in many ways. How you plan for these meetings and talk to families is very important and key to good future relationships.

1a. Watch The Communication Trust video *Talking to parents*, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78lQunDHL3o&t=942s>. Watch the first 18:30 minutes.

Make notes against these questions on how to support conversations with families.

- What might be some useful 'openers' to begin a conversation with parents/carers?
- What could you do before, during or after the discussion to help parents/carers feel comfortable?
- How would you ensure that the conversation is two-way?
- What strategies would you use to make you involve parents/carers in the discussion?

Watching the film through once and just listening to understand the key points can be helpful. After, read the questions again, just as a reminder, and then play the film a second time. This time make notes against the questions. Stopping and starting the video to make notes can also help.

1b. The Communication Trust offer a checklist you can download to support talking to parents about observations of a child's difficulty with speech, language or communication. It is available at https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/601838/checklist_v6.pdf. If possible, print yourself a copy for future reference.

Task 2: CBeebies

The BBC has produced a page for parents/carers called *Speech and Language Difficulties*, which can be accessed at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/speech-and-language-difficulties>.

This resource gives clues of what to look for at home that might signal a speech or language difficulty. It also suggests small strategies parents/carers can implement themselves into their daily

lives to support a child or young person with a SLCN. Read the article and consider if it may be useful to signpost families to.

Consider:

- Who could you share this with
- Could it be adapted to produce a leaflet for families

Task 3: Reflection on learning

Please consider:

- What knowledge did I already have that has been refreshed by this CPD?
- How has this CPD developed my knowledge and understanding?
- How does your setting support families with a child who has a SLCN?
- What other strategies could help? Who will you talk to?
- One thought I will share with a colleague is...

Sources

Bercow, J. (2008) *The Bercow Report: A Review of Services for Children and Young People (0-19) with Speech, Language and Communication Needs*. Available at:

https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/8405/7/7771-dcsf-bercow_Redacted.pdf. (Accessed: 19 April 2020)

British Broadcasting Corporation (2020) *Speech and Language Difficulties*. Available at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/speech-and-language-difficulties> (Accessed: 20 April 2020)

Department for Education (2016) *Special Educational Needs in England*. Available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539158/SFR29_2016_Main_Text.pdf (Accessed: April 19 2020)

Gross, J. (2013) *Time to talk: implementing outstanding practice in speech, language and communication*. Available at:

https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/9683/nwm_final_jean_gross_two_years_on_report.pdf (Accessed: 17 April 2020).

The Communication Trust (2018) *Talking to Parents*. Available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78lQunDHL3o&t=942s> (Accessed: 20 April 2020)

The Communication Trust (2018) *Talking to Parents Check List*. Available at:

https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/601838/checklist_v6.pdf. (Accessed: 20 April 2020).

Further reading

British Broadcasting Corporation (2020) *Using Signs and Symbols to Communicate*. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/british-sign-language-and-makaton> (Accessed: 22 April 2020).

This is the third part of a series of four professional development modules on speech, language and communication needs in children and young people. The professional development modules should be undertaken in order, 1 - 4. All of the modules will be available on the Learning Institute website at www.learninginstitute.co.uk/cpd.

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