Creating Language-rich Environments

A Facilitators’ guide of workshop activities to support parents of children birth to five years
This resource is intended for service providers and agency or school staff who work with young children (birth to five years) and their families.

A PDF version of this resource is available on the Alberta Children’s Services Web site at http://www.parentlinkalberta.ca/publish/920.htm

Copyright © 2007 Capital Health and Calgary Health Region.

Permission is given by the copyright owners to reproduce this document, or any part thereof, for educational purposes and on a nonprofit basis.
# Notes to Facilitator

This section includes workshop objectives and considerations for planning.

## A. Introductory activities
(if needed, choose one of the following)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time/Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1. Name Cards</td>
<td>10 to 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants introduce themselves to the group by making a name tag that shares information about their children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time/Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2. Match Up!</td>
<td>10 to 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants use playing cards to find partners to discuss questions they hope to have answered during the workshop.

## B. Information-sharing activity (recommended)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time/Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1. Snapshots</td>
<td>20 to 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants review how young children communicate at different ages and share examples of how their own children are learning language.

## C. Application of strategies activities
(choose one or more of the following)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time/Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1. Talking about Toys</td>
<td>20 to 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants explore and apply strategies for creating language-rich opportunities through playing with everyday toys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time/Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C2. Making the Most of Everyday Activities</td>
<td>20 to 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants explore strategies for turning everyday activities into opportunities for developing language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time/Minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C3. Community Connections</td>
<td>20 to 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants identify community opportunities and apply strategies for language development.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D. Exploration activities</th>
<th>Approx. time/page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(choose one or more of the following)</td>
<td>20 to 30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D1. Beginning with Books</strong></td>
<td>Pages 43–48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants learn how to use books to create language-rich opportunities for their children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D2. Singing to Speak</strong></td>
<td>Pages 49–52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants use familiar tunes to make up special songs to sing with their children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D3. Crafts and Conversations</strong></td>
<td>Pages 53–56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants make bubbles and explore how doing simple crafts together can inspire language play.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>D4. Games Galore</strong></td>
<td>Pages 57–62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants explore and apply strategies for creating language-rich opportunities through playing games.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Wrap-up activities</td>
<td>Approx. time/page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(choose one of the following)</td>
<td>10 to 20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E1. Where Do I Go From Here?</strong></td>
<td>Pages 63–66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants summarize what they’ve learned in the workshop and reflect on the importance of their role in creating language-rich environments for their children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>E2. Remember When?</strong></td>
<td>Pages 67–69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants use personal memories to reflect on the importance of their role in creating language-rich environments for their children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

These workshop activities provide a framework for parents of children birth to five years to explore strategies for creating language-rich environments. The activities create hands-on opportunities for discussion, exploration and application of strategies.

This workshop is designed to be presented to parents of children birth to five years. With modifications, it can also be presented to other adults who work with young children such as early childhood service providers. (Please note: Although workshop participants may vary, for ease of communication, the terms parents and participants will be used interchangeably throughout this guide.) Workshop facilitators may include service providers or agency or school staff who work with young children and their families.

This workshop will provide participants with the opportunity to:

- learn basic information about the language development of children ages birth through five years
- learn key strategies that enhance language skills during everyday activities
- identify and discuss everyday situations and activities that are opportunities to use these strategies.

Why is speech and language development important?

Speech and language development is important because it allows infants, toddlers and young children to communicate effectively and with confidence in all of their environments. It enables and enhances their social, emotional, cognitive (thinking skills) and academic development within the context of the home and the community.

What is a language-rich environment?

Language-rich environments include the home and the places families visit. The people children spend time with, and the activities they do, contribute to language-rich environments. To make experiences language-rich, parents create opportunities for talking and listening with their children. The activity could be anything—the key is how it’s done. Language-rich activities rely on adults nurturing and responding positively to children’s communication.

How do parents create language-rich environments?

Parents play an important role in their children’s speech and language development. Children learn language everyday. Parents provide their children with a variety of opportunities to communicate at home and in the community. Parents help children learn language by talking about what their children are doing, touching, tasting, seeing and hearing. They help by playing and doing everyday activities together. If parents speak a language other than English, they can do all of these activities in the language of the home.
Considerations for planning

Presentation content and length
This workshop offers basic information about speech and language development, activities to do, and tips and strategies for facilitators. Presenting all of the workshop activities could take four to five hours, depending on the discussion that takes place.

This workshop can be presented a number of ways, including:
- one long workshop with some or all of the activities
- one short workshop with a few targeted activities
- a series of short workshops with a focus on different topics each time, such as toys in one and books in another
- a series of short workshops organized around ages of children.

These workshop activities are designed to be flexible. Depending on the needs of the participants and the time available, as much or as little information as necessary can be presented. If the workshop is less than one hour, facilitators may choose to share some information about development, followed by one of the activities. If the workshop is two to three hours, facilitators may want to include more information about development and three or four of the activities.

The ages of the children of the workshop participants may also influence the selection of activities and how much information is covered. If the participants have children that cover a wide age range, then facilitators may choose to share more of the developmental information and do a variety of activities for a range of ages.

Know your audience
It is helpful to have a clear idea of who the workshop participants will be. Workshop activities are organized under five headings:
- Introductory activities
- Information-sharing activity
- Application of strategies activities
- Exploration activities
- Wrap-up activities.
Depending on the needs of the group, facilitators may choose activities from each of these categories. A sample planning sheet is on page 6.

The number of participants will affect how the workshop is organized. If there is a small number of participants, then a whole group discussion might work well. If there is a larger number, then it may be better to organize participants into smaller groups of two to four people for discussions.

It is also important to consider childcare. Think about the following type of questions:
- Will parents come by themselves or bring their children?
Notes to Facilitator

- Is there someone to supervise the children during the presentation or will the children be with their parents?
- Is there a separate room for the presentation or will the children and parents be in different parts of the same room?
- Can some workshop activities be done with parents and children?

The cultural differences and language needs of individual participants also need to be considered. Think about the activities and whether they will be relevant and accessible for participants with varying backgrounds. Some activities may need to be adapted. If there are participants whose first language is not English, facilitators may need to consider the services of an interpreter or see if another participant can translate the information. When one or more non-native English speakers are participating in the workshop, it may be helpful to limit the amount of information presented at one time, use more examples and check for understanding throughout the workshops. Through the activities, tips for working with families who speak languages other than English are included in the Facilitator Tips.

Workshop components
Each activity description contains the following components:
- time needed (most activities run 20 to 30 minutes)
- purpose (a one-sentence summary)
- grouping (including whole group, small groups, partners, individuals)
- materials needed
- introduction (a sample introductory statement facilitators might adapt)
- process (step-by-step instructions for the activity)
- facilitator tips (ideas for grouping, further discussion or extending activities)
- for additional information (if participants have concerns about their child’s language development)
- take home (ideas for encouraging participants to take key ideas home and try them out over the next week).

Most activities include a Participant Handout to organize and record ideas. Several activities have a second Participant Handout that can be used as a take-home to reinforce new ideas explored through the workshop activity. Four of the activities also have Facilitator Backgrounders. These completed samples provide additional information for the workshop facilitator.

For more information
Sometimes, a participant may ask a question about speech and language development, and the answer is not within the workshop information. Depending on the question, it may be necessary to refer the person to a speech-language pathologist.

To find a speech-language pathologist in your area, call Health Link Alberta at:

Provincial toll-free: 1–866–408–LINK (5465)  http://www.healthlinkalberta.ca
Calgary area: 403–943–LINK (5465)  Edmonton area: 780–408–LINK (5465)
Workshop Planner

Facilitator ____________________________________________________________
Group/Agency _______________________________________________________
Number of participants __________________ Location ________________________
Workshop duration ______________ Date ________________________________
Number of sessions ______________ Time ________________________________

A. Introductory activity
   □ Not needed
   
   or
   □ A1: Name Cards
   
   or
   □ A2: Match Up!

B. Information-sharing activity (recommended)
   □ B1: Snapshots

C. Application of strategies activities
   □ C1: Talking about Toys
   
   and/or
   □ C2: Making the Most of Everyday Activities
   
   and/or
   □ C3: Community Connections

D. Exploration activities
   □ D1: Beginning with Books
   
   and/or
   □ D2: Singing to Speak
   
   and/or
   □ D3: Crafts and Conversations
   
   and/or
   □ D4: Games Galore

E. Wrap-up activity
   □ E1: Where Do I Go From Here?
   
   or
   □ E2: Remember When?

Approx. time

Total time

– 6 –
Introductory Activity #A1
Name Cards

**Time**
10 to 20 minutes

**Purpose**
To have participants introduce themselves and share the names and ages of their children

**Grouping**
individual, whole group

**Materials**
- markers
- blank paper or copies of template for name card
- large sketch of sample name tag on chart paper (if using blank paper)

**Introduction**
“We’re going to take the first five minutes of the workshop to make name cards to introduce ourselves to the group.”

**Process**
1. Distribute paper (or template) and markers.

2. Use the template or an enlarged version on chart paper to quickly walk through the parts of the name tag. For example,
   - “Since this workshop is all about your children, please write your children’s names in the centre of the card, with their ages below.
   - Next, write your name in the top left hand corner and your title, as in ‘mother of …, father of …’
   - Next, write some of your children’s favourite words or sounds in the top right hand corner of the name card.
   - In the bottom left hand corner, write the name of one of your children’s favourite stories.
   - In the opposite corner, write the name of one of their favourite songs.”

3. Give participants about five minutes to complete their name cards.

4. Ask participants to use the name card to introduce themselves to the group.

**Facilitator tips**
After participants have introduced themselves, post the name cards on the wall, arranged by age of child. This way, you can personalize the workshop by referring to the participants’ children by name and age throughout the activities.
Relationship

Favourite Words or Sounds

Child’s Name

Age

Favourite Story

Favourite Song
**Introductory Activity #A2**  
**Match Up!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Time</strong></th>
<th>10 to 20 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>To have participants informally introduce themselves and begin discussing language-rich environments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Grouping**   | - less than 13 people – 4 cards each  
- 14–39 people – 3 cards each  
- more than 40 people – 2 cards each |
| **Materials**   | - deck of playing cards (stack each suit separately ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣)  
- copies of participant handout Match Up! Discussion Guide  
- chart paper and marker |
| **Introduction** | As people arrive, ask them to pick up one card from each suit, and hold onto them.  
After welcoming participants, introduce the Match Up! activity. “You are probably wondering what the cards are for.” Ask them what card games they played as a child. Start off the discussion with familiar card games such as Crazy Eights, War, Go Fish or Crib. If participants did not play cards, invite them to talk about the kinds of games they did play.  
Discuss the learning opportunities games provide for children such as learning about turn taking, numbers, colours and how to ask questions. |
| **Process**    | 1. Distribute the participant handout Match Up! Discussion Guide and review the guidelines.  
2. Participants stack their four cards, one on top of the other. Participants find another person who has the same suit they are holding on the top of their stack.  
   - When they find that person, they share their thoughts on the corresponding question from the discussion guide. They may also record their ideas on the discussion guide.  
   - When both people have answered the question, they move to the second card in their stack (e.g., ♦). Participants should try to find a different person for each card.  
   - **Note:** The number of cards each person takes and the questions they answer depends upon the number of people attending the workshop (see notes for “Grouping” above). |
3. Conclude the activity by inviting participants to share what they hope to learn in the workshop. Record ideas and questions on chart paper and post for the duration of the workshop.

4. Thank everyone for sharing their ideas. Encourage participants to share their ideas and questions throughout the workshop.
Directions:
1. Find a person who has the same suit you have (♣ ♥ ♠ ♦) on your top card.
2. Find the suit and the related discussion question on the list below.
3. Discuss your thoughts about the question.
4. Allow a few minutes for discussion, then move on to the next card in your stack.
5. Match up with a different person and discuss the next question until you have matched up all of your cards and answered the questions with different people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♣ What do you hope to learn today?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♥ What’s one way that you have been helping your child’s language development at home?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♠ What’s an activity that you and your child like to do together?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ What’s your child’s favourite thing to play with? Why?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Snapshots

## Information-sharing Activity #B1

### Purpose
To provide parents with a ‘snapshot’ of how children communicate at different ages and to create an opportunity for them to reflect on how their own children are communicating.

### Grouping
small groups (organized by ages of children)

### Materials
- copies of participant handout *Snapshots: How Children Communicate*
- pens
- six signs posted around the room with following ages identified:
  - birth to 12 months
  - 1 year old
  - 2 years old
  - 3 years old
  - 4 years old
  - 5 years old
- copies of *Talking and Listening Checklist* from *Talk Box* (can be directly downloaded from [http://www.parentlinkalberta.ca/publish/docs/03_-_Talking_and_Listening_Checklist.pdf](http://www.parentlinkalberta.ca/publish/docs/03_-_Talking_and_Listening_Checklist.pdf))

### Introduction
“This activity will look at how children communicate at different ages. It is important to know how your children communicate and what you can expect as they get older. Knowing this will help you make the most of opportunities to support and enhance your children’s language learning.”

### Process

1. Ask participants to find the posted sign around the room that corresponds to the age of their child.

2. Working in small groups corresponding to the age of their children, participants read and discuss the *Snapshots* handout description of how children of that age communicate.

3. Participants then use the questions in the right hand column to think about how their own child communicates. Provide time for discussion and to record examples.

4. Starting with the birth-to-12-months group, ask each small group to share two or three examples of how their children are communicating.
Facilitator tips

- If participants have more than one child, ask them to focus on the age group of one child and work with that small group.
- If there is only one participant in an age group, have that participant join another group and combine the two ages.
- Groups may choose to have one person read aloud the snapshot, or individuals may prefer to read the material on their own and then discuss the information as a group.
- As groups share their examples, look for opportunities to point out how language development varies from child to child.

For additional information

If participants have concerns about their children’s language development, encourage them to contact a speech-language pathologist in their area.

Take home

Let participants know they will be receiving a *Talking and Listening Checklist* at the end of the session. The checklist will also include the Web address for the *Talk Box* site ([www.parentlinkalberta.ca/publish/920.htm](http://www.parentlinkalberta.ca/publish/920.htm)), where they will find more detailed information on age-specific speech and language development.
Do babies talk? Maybe not, but they tell you so much!

- Babies may not say their first words until about a year, but they have lots to tell you.
- Parents learn early how to tell what their baby wants or needs. When they are quiet and alert, babies are telling you they are happy and it’s a good time to play.
- At 1 month old, babies generally begin to smile! They get excited when they like what you are doing.
- Babies this age let you know when they don’t like something. They cry when they are hungry, tired, hurt or need to be changed.
- By 3 months, babies start making those cooing and gooing sounds.
- Next, they make blowing sounds with their lips (sometimes called raspberries).
- Around 6–8 months, they start to babble their first sounds, like “bababa” or “mamama.” This sound play is very important in learning to talk. Before you know it, they are saying their first word. You may also notice that they use gestures and noises to get your attention and ask for things.
- Babies are born with the ability to hear. They recognize and are calmed by your voice. As they grow, they start to recognize words for people and common objects. They understand new words everyday.

Think about your baby …

1. What kinds of sounds does your baby make?
2. How does your baby get your attention?
3. What words does your baby seem to understand?
1-year-old children say their first words!

- By the time children are a year old, they have learned a lot about talking.
- They have been practise by making lots of sounds and babbling.
- Children learn how to get attention and to ask for things without using words.
- Then, at last, they say their first words! It is exciting to hear children say the word “up” instead of just a few sounds and raising their arms up.
- Before you know it, they will be copying you and saying many new words.
- Children’s first words may be hard to understand. Sometimes a word like “ba” may mean “ball,” “bottle,” “bus” or “bye.” Often you are the only one who understands what your children are saying.

Think about your 1-year-old …

1. What are your 1-year-old’s favourite sounds to make?

2. How does your 1-year-old get your attention?

3. What words (or sounds that seem almost like words) can your 1-year-old say?
2-year-old children start to build sentences!

- 2-year-olds are quite the talkers—they say words all the time and don’t have to rely on gestures to tell you something.
- They understand and say new words everyday. They combine two or more words together to ask for something. Example: “More milk.”
- They use words to get you to do something. Example: “Ball down.” They tell you about something. Example: “Puppy eat food.”
- Children at this age are great copiers. Whether you like it or not, they repeat everything they hear.
- They understand more than they can actually say right now.
- They follow simple directions. Example: “Get your shoes and give them to daddy.”
- They often say, “NO!”

Think about your 2-year-old …

1. What new words did your 2-year-old say this month?

2. What are some of your 2-year-old’s word combinations?

3. How often does your 2-year-old say “No” in a typical day?
3-year-old children have an explosion of language!

- 3-year-olds can say three to four words together.
- They know so many words that you can’t count them anymore!
- They have conversations and are able to tell you what they did yesterday and what they will do tomorrow.
- They are constantly asking why! They ask and answer lots of ‘Wh-questions,’ like who, what and where.

Think about your 3-year-old …

1. What kinds of interesting word combinations does your 3-year-old use?

2. What are some questions your 3-year-old asked you this week?

3. What kinds of things does your 3-year-old like to have conversations about?
4-year-old children sure can talk and talk and talk!

- They ask you lots of questions.
- They have conversations with you.
- They tell you about what happened when you weren’t around.
- They tell you stories and are very imaginative.
- Four-year-olds talk about the past and wonder about what will happen tomorrow. They have a very good memory and seem to be always saying, “Remember when we …”

**Think about your 4-year-old …**

1. What was one interesting question your 4-year-old asked you this past month?

2. What kinds of things does your 4-year-old like to talk about?

3. Give an example of a memory that your 4-year-old shared with you recently.
Your 5-year-old is your mini-me!

- By five years of age, you will notice that your children sound like a miniature version of you. They have learned basic sentences and say most speech sounds.
- They will still make some mistakes when talking—that’s okay! They have lots to learn, like some speech sounds, new words and more complex sentences.

Think about your 5-year-old …

1. What is something your 5-year-old said that sounded just like something you might say?

2. Give an example of the type of mistake that your 5-year-old might make in saying or using new words.

3. What did your 5-year-old say this week that really surprised you?
Talking and Listening

Your child learns about talking and listening by being with you and other people. She learns the words in your language, how to put words together, how to have conversations, and how to play with others. She also learns how to follow directions and understand questions. Your child learns about talking and listening right from the day she is born. This learning continues until she is an adult.

Check off all of the things your child is doing.

What to Expect

Under 12 months...

☐ By 3 months your baby startles to sudden, loud noises.
☐ Your baby seems to know your voice.
☐ Your baby seems to comfort to your voice when she is upset and crying.
☐ Your baby coos, grunts, gurgles, cries, and makes sounds like “ahh”.
☐ By 6 months your baby turns toward a sound.
☐ Your baby is interested in sounds, voices, and music.
☐ Your baby smiles when you smile.
☐ Your baby’s babbles sound like “mama” and “gaga”.

Your 1 year old...

☐ Turns and looks in the direction of sounds.
☐ Responds to familiar sounds like a dog barking or when you call her name.
☐ Recognizes words for everyday objects like cup, shoe, and car.
☐ Copies actions and sounds that you make.
☐ Communicates by crying, laughing, looking, showing, reaching, grunting, and making sounds.
☐ Babbles a variety of sounds and says her first words.
☐ By 1½ years understands and says at least 10 words.
☐ Points to people and body parts like eyes or nose.
☐ Points to pictures in a book.

☐ Starts to pretend – going to sleep, talking on the phone, and so on.

Your 2 year old...

☐ Uses 2 words together, like more milk and Mammy eat.
☐ Says at least 50 words.
☐ Starts to use ing (eating), plurals (boats), and possessives (baby’s bottle).
☐ Understands 2-part sentences, like Get your ball and put it in the box.
☐ By 2½ years uses words that name objects (ball, shoe), describe (big, hot), and talk about actions (kick, eat).
☐ Points to more body parts and clothes and points to many pictures in a book.
☐ Uses common objects in pretend play. For example, he pretends to fill up a toy car with gas and drive away.
☐ Says more words every week.
Your 3 year old...

☐ Says 3 to 4 words together, like I want more juice and Mommy is at work.
☐ Uses more of the little words like is, a, the.
☐ Follows 3-part directions, like Go to your room, get your socks, and bring them to me.
☐ Understands and asks questions, like Where is your coat?, Who's that?, and What is soap for?
☐ Describes activities, feelings and problems, and tells simple stories.

Your 4 year old...

☐ Uses sentences that are longer and more complete, such as "I want to go out and play on the swing.*
☐ Uses more grammar, like pronouns (I, you, me, she, he, we), past tense (walked), and some question words (what, who, where, why). There are still some errors.

☐ Understands most concept words like colours, shapes, locations, texture, time.

Your 5 year old...

☐ Uses sentences that can be more than 5 to 6 words long.
☐ Asks more difficult questions, like why and how.
☐ Understands most questions and adult conversation.
☐ Uses the present, future, and past tenses like walks, walked, and will walk.
☐ Retells a story by naming the characters and by talking about what happened.

⚠️ When to get help
You should get help if...

• Your child is frustrated or difficult to understand.
• You did not check off all of the things listed for your child's age.

☎️ Where to get help
Are you concerned about your child's speech and language development? Speech-language pathologists can help.
To find one in your area...

• Contact your local health unit
• Call Health Link Alberta at:
  • Calgary Area 403-943-LINK (5465)
  • Edmonton Area 780-408-LINK (5465)
  • Toll Free 1-866-408-LINK (5465)
• Go to www.healthlinkalberta.ca

Go to www.parentlinkalberta.ca for more Talk Box ideas.
## Application of Strategies Activity #C1
### Talking about Toys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>20 to 30 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To introduce and explore language-enrichment strategies parents can use with their children when playing with everyday toys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouping</td>
<td>whole group, small groups of three or four</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Materials     | • copies of participant handout *Strategies for Communicating with Young Children*
                • four toys or toy picture cards per small group
                • pens |
| Introduction  | “When your children are playing with toys, it’s a perfect time to explore language. Let’s talk about some specific strategies you can use for promoting language when your children are playing with their favourite toys at home.” |
| Process       | 1. Distribute participant handout *Strategies for Communicating with Young Children*. (Refer to *Facilitator Backgrounder* on pages 25–28 for a rationale for each type of strategy.)
                2. Introduce the strategies by reviewing the handout information. Using a toy ball, demonstrate one strategy for each age group.

   **Example for baby:**
   “One strategy is to copy your child’s sounds or actions. If your baby pats the ball, you can pat the ball.”

   **Example for toddler:**
   “For your toddler, you might try to use short and simple sentences. For example, if your child says, ‘ball,’ you could say, ‘big ball.’”

   **Example for preschooer:**
   “A strategy you might try with your preschooer is repeating what your child says using the correct words or pronunciation. For example, if your child says, ‘Me bounce the ball,’ you could say, ‘I like to bounce the ball, too.’”

   **Example for kindergarteners:**
   “One strategy to use with your kindergartener is playing with sounds. You can talk about all the words that rhyme with ‘ball,’ like fall, hall, mall, call, tall.”
3. Organize participants into small groups of three or four people.

4. Provide each group with four toys (or toy picture cards). Give them ten minutes to try out the sample language strategies for their children’s ages with one or more of the toys (or toy cards).

5. Ask each group to choose one of the toys (or toy cards) and share one or two examples of how to use a sample language-development strategy while playing with that toy.

- Sample toys could include typical playthings that young children enjoy such as blocks, sorters, stacking cups, plastic tea sets, wheeled toys, stuffed animals, puppets, wooden puzzles, etc.

- Remind parents many everyday objects such as plastic containers, pots or towels can become toys for young children. Consider using everyday objects for this workshop activity in place of actual toys or toy cards.

- *For families who speak more than one language at home:* Take opportunities to talk about toys in your family’s first language. Special toys can also communicate important aspects of a family’s heritage and cultural traditions.

For additional information

If participants have concerns about their children’s language development, encourage them to contact a speech-language pathologist in their area.

Take home

Encourage participants to think about two or three of their children’s favourite toys and how they can use them to create language-rich opportunities over the next week.
### Application of Strategies Activities #C1, C2 and C3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies for communicating with babies</th>
<th>Why these strategies are important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Wait and watch for your baby to communicate.**  
This could be with an action, a sound or a word. | Waiting and watching helps parents tune in to their babies. Babies know what they say or do is important when their parents pay attention to them by waiting and watching for them to communicate. |
| **Copy your baby’s sounds and actions.**  
When you imitate your baby, he or she will likely make the same sound or action again. This becomes a fun turn-taking game. | When parents copy their babies, they show them that they are interested in what they are doing. Copying babies’ sounds and actions will encourage babies to copy what parents do and say. This builds the foundation for future turn-taking and conversations. |
| **Talk to your baby about anything.**  
Talk about your day, what you are doing and what you see. Use lots of expression in your voice. | Any time parents put their thoughts and actions into words, they are teaching their babies language. It doesn’t matter what they talk about. The most important thing is to provide babies with opportunities to learn language by listening to parents talk. |
### Application of Strategies Activities #C1, C2 and C3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies for communicating with toddlers</th>
<th>Why these strategies are important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Let your toddler be the leader.**  
Join in and play with your toddler. Play with the toys that your child is playing with. Follow along with what your child is doing. Talk about it. Show your toddler a new way to play with a toy. | When parents let their children be the leaders, they give children opportunities to explore and learn, and they get to know their children better. |
| **Use short and simple sentences.**  
If your toddler is using one word at a time to talk, use two or three words when talking to him or her. Likewise, if your toddler is using two or three words to talk, use three to five words in sentences responding to him or her. | Children can easily hear new words and sentences, and it’s easier for them to copy what parents say. |
| **Wait for your toddler to talk.**  
Sometimes a toddler will need up to five seconds before answering you. Five seconds may seem like a long time, but at this age, a child needs time to figure out and find the words he or she wants to say. | When parents wait for their children to talk, they create opportunities for their children to express interests, feelings and ideas in their own way. |
### Application of Strategies Activities #C1, C2 and C3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies for communicating with preschoolers</th>
<th>Why these strategies are important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>• REPEAT what your child says using the correct words or pronunciation and complete sentences.</strong>  It is important that your child have opportunities to hear the correct way of saying words and sentences. It is not necessary to ask your child to repeat them after you.</td>
<td>This strategy gives children a correct model without having them repeat or correct mistakes. Gradually, with good models, they will learn how to say things the way they hear parents model them. It shows children that parents are listening and paying attention to what they have to say.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• ADD new words to what your child says.</strong>  You might add describing words, little words that your child left out or a whole new sentence. For example, if your child says, “Truck go fast,” you could expand the conversation by saying, “The fire truck is going really fast. It’s going to put the fire out!”</td>
<td>This lets children know that parents are interested in what they say. It gives them a positive model of good language using new words and longer sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>• ASK more open-ended questions in conversation and when reading books together.</strong>  This helps your child answer with more than one or two words. Ask, “What’s she going to do?” instead of “Is she going to bed?” Ask “Why?” “How?” or “What do you think will happen next?” questions.</td>
<td>This encourages children to express their ideas using more than one or two word answers. It gives them confidence and practice in telling what they want, feel and think, using more words and complete sentences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Applications of Strategies Activities #C1, C2 and C3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies for communicating with kindergarteners</th>
<th>Why these strategies are important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Use colour</strong> (e.g., red, green), <strong>number</strong> (e.g., one, four) and <strong>location</strong> (e.g., in, under) <strong>words in directions</strong>. For example, you might say, “Can you put one red apple in the basket?”</td>
<td>Parents and teachers use these types of words all the time in the directions they give. It is important that children understand these words so that they can follow along and understand what is going on around them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Play with sounds.</strong> Read books, sing songs and play games that have rhyme (e.g., car, star, far) and alliteration (words that share the same starting sound, such as: seal, sing, sand). Talk about how words can end with the same sounds or begin with the same sounds. For example, when reading a story aloud, draw attention to rhyming words. “Jam and ham sound the same at the end of the word. They rhyme.”</td>
<td>Sound play builds a strong foundation for listening and learning to read and write. It helps children understand that words are made of sounds and that these sounds are represented by letters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Use lots of describing words when you are talking to your child.</strong> Talk about the size, shape, colour and use of things. For example, “Let’s go pick some round, red, sweet apples off the tree” or “I like to eat crisp and crunchy apples.” Using lots of describing words when talking to children helps them learn new words and express themselves more clearly. This will also make what they have to say more interesting to their listeners.</td>
<td>These strategies can be used in any language. Encourage parents to talk to their children in the language they know best!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Baby

- **Wait and watch for your baby to communicate.** This could be with an action, a sound or a word.

- **Copy your baby's sounds and actions.** When you imitate your baby, he or she will likely make the same sound or action again. This becomes a fun turn-taking game.

- **Talk to your baby about anything.** Talk about your day, what you are doing and what you see. Use lots of expression in your voice.

Toddler

- **Let your toddler be the leader.** Join in and play with your child. Play with the toys that he or she is playing with. Follow along with what he or she is doing. Talk about what he or she is doing. Show your toddler a new way to play with a toy.

- **Use short and simple sentences.** If your toddler is using one word at a time to talk, use two or three words when you respond back. Likewise, if your toddler is using two or three words to talk, use three to five words in your sentences.

- **Wait for your toddler to talk.** Sometimes a toddler will need up to five seconds before answering you. Five seconds may seem like a long time, but at this age, a child needs time to figure out and find the words he or she wants to say.
Preschooler

- **REPEAT** what your child says using the correct words or pronunciation and complete sentences. It is important that your child have opportunities to hear the correct way of saying words and sentences. It is not necessary to ask your child to repeat them after you.

- **ADD new words to what your child says.** You might add describing words, little words that your child left out or a whole new sentence. For example, if your child says, “Truck go fast,” you could expand the conversation by saying, “The fire truck is going really fast. It’s going to put the fire out!”

- **ASK more open-ended questions in conversation and when reading books together.** This helps your child answer with more than one or two words. Ask, “What’s she going to do?” instead of “Is she going to bed?” Ask “Why?” “How?” or “What do you think will happen next?” questions.

Kindergartener

- **Use colour** (e.g., red, green), **number** (e.g., one, four) and **location** (e.g., in, under) **words in directions.** For example, you might say, “Can you put one red apple in the basket?”

- **Play with sounds.** Read books, sing songs and play games that use rhyme (e.g., car, star, far) and alliteration (words that share the same starting sound, such as: seal, sing, sand). Talk about how words can end with the same sounds or begin with the same sounds. For example, when reading a story aloud, draw attention to rhyming words. “Jam and ham sound the same at the end of the word. They rhyme.”

- **Use lots of describing words when you are talking to your child.** Talk about the size, shape, colour and use of things. For example, “Let’s go pick some round, red, sweet apples off of the tree” or “I like to eat crisp and crunchy apples.”

These strategies can be used in any language. Talk to your child in the language you know best.
Application of Strategies Activity #C2
Making the Most of Everyday Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>20 to 30 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To identify everyday activities that parents can use to create language-learning opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouping</td>
<td>large group, small groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Materials  | • chart paper and marker  
              • copies of participant handout *Making the Most of Everyday Activities*  
              • pens |
| Introduction| “Language learning happens everyday in your home and in almost everything that you do. Consider the types of everyday activities that your family does such as getting dressed, taking a bath or setting the table for a meal. Everyday activities are wonderful opportunities to enrich your children’s language experience.” |
| Process    | 1. Ask participants to brainstorm everyday activities they do at home that could encourage language. Record these ideas on posted chart paper.  
              2. Give each participant a copy of the participant handout *Making the Most of Everyday Activities*. Point out the list of sample strategies at the top of the chart. For more information on the rationale for each type of strategy, see the *Facilitator Backgrounder* on pages 25–28.  
              3. Choose one activity, such as getting dressed, to work through as a whole group. Work through one strategy for each age group. Encourage the group to think of specific examples of words, phrases and questions that will help their children learn new words and ideas as they get dressed. Record these ideas on posted chart paper. Draw an enlarged version of the following chart: |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age _____________</th>
<th><strong>Getting Dressed</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategy __________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Phrases/Sentences</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See the *Facilitator Backgrounder* on pages 35–36 for ideas on what these examples might look like.)
4. Ask participants to find a partner. Each set of partners chooses two everyday activities from the brainstormed list. Partners can also add new activities to the list. Using the participant handout *Making the Most of Everyday Activities*, partners have five minutes to discuss how each of these activities could create opportunities for language and record these ideas.

5. In the large group, return to the brainstormed list and ask partners to share one or two ideas of things they could say for the everyday activities on the list.

- If a set of partners have children at different ages, the partners can still work together by each choosing a strategy that matches their child’s age.

- *For families who speak more than one language at home:* Remind participants to speak to their children in the language they know best.

Facilitator tips

For additional information

If participants have concerns about their children’s language development, encourage them to contact a speech-language pathologist in their area.

Take home

Encourage parents to identify one activity they will use as an opportunity for encouraging language development with their children over the next week.
Application of Strategies Activity #C2

**Everyday Activity:** Getting dressed

**Baby**

*Strategy:* Talk to your baby about anything.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample words</th>
<th>Sample phrases, sentences and questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dressed</td>
<td>Time to get dressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shorts</td>
<td>What should we wear today?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diaper</td>
<td>Let’s see. I think it’s going to be hot today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dry</td>
<td>Let’s get some shorts for you. I know you like to be cool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clean</td>
<td>Here’s a nice short set.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tickle</td>
<td>Okay, time to change your diaper. You are all wet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Let’s get you nice and dry. We’ll clean you up and you’ll feel so good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Now you are all clean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’m going to tickle you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, I am.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tickle, tickle, tickle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ha, ha, ha!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You like that tickle stuff.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Toddler**

*Strategy:* Use short and simple sentences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample words</th>
<th>Sample phrases and sentences</th>
<th>Sample questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>underwear, socks, shirt, pants, dress, tights, skirt, blouse, sweater, sweatshirt, shorts, pyjamas, diaper</td>
<td>Let’s take your pyjamas off. Now—diaper off. Time for a clean diaper. Next, underwear on. Time to put your shirt on. Here are your pants. Put on one leg, two legs. Sock time! One sock, two socks. This is a pretty dress. What a nice striped shirt. Here’s your dinosaur shirt.</td>
<td>What’s next? What else do we need? Which shirt? Where are your shoes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>on, off</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one, two</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colour words (e.g., red, green, yellow)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>words describing patterns (e.g., stripes, polka dot)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Application of Strategies Activity #C2**

**Preschooler**

*Strategy:* Ask more open-ended questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample words</th>
<th>Sample phrases and sentences</th>
<th>Sample questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time to get dressed. You still have your pjs on. It’s cold today so you need to wear long pants. You don’t have anything on your feet.</td>
<td>What are you going to do first? Which ones will you wear? What shirt goes with those pants? What else do you need to wear? What do you think you should do about that?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Kindergartener**

*Strategy:* Use lots of describing words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample describing words</th>
<th>Sample phrases and sentences</th>
<th>Sample questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>long, short small, big tight, loose polka dot, striped ruffled boxer track pant fleece sweater zipper, button running shoe sandal, flip flop hoody, jeans clean, dirty hangers, hooks dresser, drawer</td>
<td>This shirt is very long. It looks warm and cozy. Those flip-flops make funny noises. Here’s your woolly red sweater with the star buttons.</td>
<td>What are you going to wear today? We’re going to the park; what do you need to wear? We’re going swimming; what do we need to bring? How about you pick out a shirt to go with the red polka dot skirt. Will the white one with ruffles go? Tell me about who’s on your shirt—what’s Spiderman doing?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Everyday activity ____________________________

*Check one strategy:*

**Baby**
- [ ] Wait and watch for your baby to communicate
- [ ] Copy your baby’s sounds and actions
- [ ] Talk about anything

**Preschooler**
- [ ] Repeat your child’s words, using correct words, pronunciation and complete sentences
- [ ] Add new words to what your child says
- [ ] Ask open-ended questions

**Toddler**
- [ ] Let your child be the leader
- [ ] Use short, simple sentences
- [ ] Wait for your child to talk

**Kindergartener**
- [ ] Use colour, number and location words in directions
- [ ] Play with sounds
- [ ] Use lots of describing words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample words</th>
<th>Sample phrases and sentences</th>
<th>Sample questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One everyday activity that I will turn into a language-learning opportunity for my child over the next week is ____________________________.
### Application of Strategies Activity #C3

## Community Connections

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>20 to 30 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To brainstorm community places and events that are opportunities for children and their families to use, explore and learn new words and ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouping</td>
<td>three small groups (or six small groups if there are more than 15 participants)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Materials    | • three pieces of chart paper with the brainstorm topic written at the top:  
                          – Places to visit in your community  
                          – Special events in your community  
                          – Free activities in your community  
                          • three colours of felt pens  
                          • copies of participant handout Community Connections |
| Introduction | “Children learn language through the things they do everyday. As parents, you can introduce your children to new experiences, new ideas and new words through special places, events and activities in your communities.” |
| Process      | 1. Introduce the brainstorming process. For example, “Brainstorming is an opportunity for us to work together to create a list of ideas on a certain topic. We’re going to use this activity to make a list of places, activities and special events in the community that families can use to create language-rich experiences for their young children.”  
                          2. Organize the whole group into three smaller groups. Give each group a different colour of felt pen so it is clear where each group’s list begins and ends.  
                          3. Ask each group to choose individual group members to take on the following roles:  
                              • record-keeper (to record group’s ideas on the chart paper)  
                              • timekeeper (to keep track of the time and let people know when there is one minute left)  
                              • transporter (to carry the chart paper to the next group)  
                              • presenter (to act as spokesman and share the ideas from the brainstormed list with the whole group).  
                          4. Read the topics aloud as you distribute one sheet of chart paper to each group. |
5. Let participants know they will have five minutes to make each brainstormed list and then give the start signal. Each group begins its brainstorm and records the ideas on the chart paper.

6. At the end of the five-minute time limit, sound the signal for finishing work on the current sheet.

7. Each “transporter” then carries the chart paper to the next group and the group begins work on the new sheet by reading over the ideas already recorded by the other group. They then use their coloured marker to add new ideas.

8. Do this one more time, until all three groups have written on all three topics.

9. Distribute copies of participant handout Community Connections. Each group reviews the list of ideas on the last chart they worked on and chooses one place, event or activity. The group then chooses a strategy for their child’s age and brainstorms sample words, phrases, sentences and questions they could say to create a language-rich experience for their children. (For more information on sample strategies and their rationale, see the Facilitator Backgrounder on pages 25–28.)

Facilitator tips

- Focus on free or affordable options. Parents can be excellent resources for each other.
- Post completed charts on the wall for participants to view during break times or after the session.
- For families who speak more than one language at home: Encourage families to look for community events and places that will help their children learn about and explore their cultural heritage. Remind participants to speak to their children in the language they know best.

Take home

Encourage participants to identify one new place they would like to visit with their child over the next month.
Community event or place ________________________________

Check one strategy:

**Baby**
- [ ] Wait and watch for your baby to communicate
- [ ] Copy your baby’s sounds and actions
- [ ] Talk about anything

**Toddler**
- [ ] Let your child be the leader
- [ ] Use short, simple sentences
- [ ] Wait for your child to talk

**Preschooler**
- [ ] Repeat your child’s words, using correct words, pronunciation and complete sentences
- [ ] Add new words to what your child says
- [ ] Ask open-ended questions

**Kindergartener**
- [ ] Use colour, number and location words in directions
- [ ] Play with sounds
- [ ] Use lots of describing words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Words</th>
<th>Sample Phrases and Sentences</th>
<th>Sample Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A new place I’d like to visit with my child is ____________________________________________.

- 41 -
### Exploration Activity #D1

**Beginning with Books**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>20 to 30 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To explore ideas for how parents can use books to create language-rich opportunities for their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouping</td>
<td>whole group, partners or small groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Materials    | • examples of different types of books, including:  
  – pattern books (e.g., *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* by Bill Martin, Jr.)  
  – counting and alphabet books  
  – ‘touch and feel’ books  
  – action books (e.g., pop-ups, flaps or sounds)  
  – simple picture books  
  – simple story books  
  – wordless books  
  – information books  
  • copies of participant handout *Using Books with Young Children*  
  • copies of participant handout *Tips for Reading Books with Your Child* |
| Introduction | “There is a wide range of good books for young children. Books are a wonderful way for children to learn about experiences that many people have. How a parent reads a book with his or her child is important—it should be fun and entertaining for both you and your children. It is never too early to read with your children.” |
| Process      | 1. Introduce the different types of books for young children by showing a sample book that illustrates each of the following categories:  
  – pattern books (e.g., *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* by Bill Martin, Jr.)  
  – counting and alphabet books  
  – ‘touch and feel’ books  
  – action books (e.g., pop-ups, flaps or sounds)  
  – simple picture books  
  – simple story books  
  – wordless books  
  – information books.  
  2. Organize participants into partners or small groups. Have each group pick one of the sample books that they think their children might enjoy. |
3. In partners or small groups, read or skim the book and discuss:
   – Why would your child like this book?
   – What are some things your child might learn from this book?
   – What are some tips to make reading this book a fun learning experience?
   – What are some other books you could recommend to other parents?

4. Record ideas on participant handout *Using Books with Young Children*.

5. Ask each set of partners or small groups to share their comments about their book with the larger group.

   **Facilitator tips**
   
   • For suggested titles for books for young children in each of the categories, visit your local library.
   
   • *For families who speak more than one language at home:*
     It’s important for families to share books in their home language as well as in English. Good quality children’s books reflect a family’s culture and language. Many Alberta libraries have books available in a number of different languages. Wordless picture books also provide wonderful opportunities for talking about the pictures in both a family’s home language and in English.

   **For additional information**

   If participants have concerns about their children’s language development, encourage them to contact a speech-language pathologist in their area.

   • Invite parents to share ideas for affordable ways to find good quality children’s books. Suggestions might include: the local library, garage sales or used book sales.

   • Distribute handout *Tips for Reading Books with Your Child* and encourage parents to try out some of the tips over the next week.

   **Take home**
Exploration Activity #D1

Participant Handout

Using Books with Young Children

Title of book

Type of book
- predictable (or pattern)
- tactile (‘touch and feel’)
- information
- simple picture
- counting or alphabet
- action (e.g., pop-ups, flaps, sounds)
- wordless
- simple story

A. Why would your child like this book? (Or why not?)

B. What are some things your child might learn from this book?

C. What are some ways to make reading this book a fun, learning experience?

D. What are other similar books that you and your child have read that you would recommend?

Visit your local library and talk to the children’s librarian about choosing books for young children.
Books for babies
It’s never too early to start reading to your baby. At first, you can read anything: the newspaper, parenting books, cook books or magazines. Your baby likes to hear your voice. Later, your baby can look at the pictures and hold the book. Of course, your baby will put books in his or her mouth!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to look for:</th>
<th>Tips to try:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• books with only one or two pictures on a page</td>
<td>• use a higher pitch and exaggerated tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• books with photographs of people and other babies</td>
<td>• make up a story for the book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• durable books like board, soft cloth or plastic books</td>
<td>• talk about the pictures you see</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Books for toddlers
Your toddler is very active. Read as much of the book as possible. Sometimes you will only have your toddler’s attention to read a few pages at a time. Talk about the pictures. Look for those opportunities when your toddler shows an interest in being read to—when your toddler brings you a book, you know it’s a good time to read.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to look for:</th>
<th>Tips to try:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• durable books like board, soft cloth or plastic</td>
<td>• keep books in an easy-to-reach place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• books with bright, colourful pictures</td>
<td>• let toddlers hold the book and turn the pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• books with actions they can do (e.g., lift-up flaps, sound makers)</td>
<td>• talk about the pictures in the book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• books with few words on each page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• books about their favourite things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• first word books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• pattern books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• books that use fun sounds (e.g., “bumpity, bump, bump”)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Books for preschoolers and kindergarteners
Your preschooler can sit for a longer time and listen to a whole story. Your child may like to hear the same story over and over. Let your child “read” the story to you. Ask your child to tell you what is going to happen next. Pretend to be the characters in the story and act it out together.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to look for:</th>
<th>Tips to try:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>books with bright, coloured pictures</td>
<td>let your child choose books to share</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alphabet and counting books</td>
<td>sit close together as you read so both your child and you can see the words and pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>books about their favourite characters or interests</td>
<td>use expression in your voice to bring the story alive and hold your child’s attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stories with 1, 2 or 3 sentences on each page</td>
<td>encourage your child to finish a sentence in a favourite story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>books that are predictable and have repeated words and patterns to help children guess what comes next</td>
<td>take turns “reading” one page at a time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>books with many rhyming words and fun sounds (e.g., “Whoosh!”)</td>
<td>talk about the story with your child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>encourage your child to interact throughout the story by pointing to the pictures and by asking questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>help your child connect actions, themes or characters with other books you have read together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>point out the letters in the words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>point to letters that are also in your child’s name</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visit your local library
- Talk to your librarian about good books for young children.
- Let your child choose books to take home.
### Exploration Activity #D2
#### Singing to Speak

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>20 to 30 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To identify favourite songs to share with children and to show participants how to make up songs at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouping</td>
<td>whole group, small groups of three or four</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Materials  | • chart paper and marker  
• copies of participant handout *Singing to Speak*  
• pens |
| Introduction | “Singing songs is a great way to learn language. Singing songs about what you are doing or playing with can help children learn new words. If there isn’t a song about what you are doing, you and your children can even make up your own songs.” |
| Process    | 1. Invite participants to share the names of their children’s favourite songs. Record the list on posted chart paper.  
2. Discuss how songs can be used everyday as an opportunity for families to use language in a different way.  
3. Invite participants to share their tips for helping young children learn a song. Tips could include:  
   - **Sing slowly.** This makes it easier for children to learn the words.  
   - **Add actions to your song.** This will help them learn the words and it makes singing even more fun.  
   - **Sing the same songs over and over again.** Children like to hear the same songs over and over. Repetition is an important way to learn new words.  
   - **Pause and give your child a chance to fill in a missing word.** Pausing at the end of a phrase before the last word or two gives children an opportunity to sing some of the words. For example, parent sings “Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little . . . . . . .” and then pauses for child to sing “lamb.”  
   - **Play with the rhyme in songs.** Change the words in the song slightly to make new rhymes. For example, “Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream, if you see a crocodile, don’t forget to scream.”  
   - **Make up a song about what you are doing.** Take a familiar tune and make up new words that describe what you are doing. |
4. Ask for a show of hands for how many participants have made up their own little songs with their children. Invite volunteers to share the words for the songs and tell a little bit about how their family uses the song. (Before asking for volunteers, be sure and let participants know that they will not be asked to sing the songs for the group unless they choose to do so!)

5. Divide participants into small groups of three or four and challenge them to use the well-known tune for “Happy Birthday” to compose a short song based on an everyday activity. Groups can record the words for their new songs on the participant handout *Singing to Speak*.

6. Ask each small group to share their song with the whole group—either by singing the song as a group or one member reading the words.

**Facilitator tips**

*For families who speak more than one language at home:*
It’s important for families to share songs in their home language as well as in English. Music and songs reflect a family’s culture and language, and provide wonderful opportunities for exploring both the family’s home language and English.

**For additional information**
If participants have concerns about their children’s language development, encourage them to contact a speech-language pathologist in their area.

**Take home**
Encourage participants to choose one favourite song from the brainstormed list to share with their children and one favourite activity for creating a new song with their children over the next week.
Tips for singing with your child

- **Sing slowly.** This makes it easier for your child to learn the words.

- **Add actions to your song.** This will help your child learn the words and it makes singing even more fun.

- **Sing the same songs over and over again.** Children like to hear the same songs over and over. Repetition is an important way to learn new words.

- **Pause and give your child a chance to fill in a missing word.** Pausing at the end of a phrase before the last word or two gives your child an opportunity to sing some of the words. For example, you sing “Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little . . . . . . . ,” then pause to let your child sing “lamb.”

- **Play with the rhyme in songs.** Change the words in the song slightly to make new rhymes. For example, “Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream, if you see a crocodile, don’t forget to scream.”

- **Make up a song about what you are doing.** Take a familiar tune and make up new words that go with something you are doing.

Favourite family songs

____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
____________________________________________________
Think about something that you and your child will do together this week. Using the tune ‘Happy Birthday’ (or another familiar tune), make up words to create your own song.

**Example:**
Mom and Kriti walk home
We had fun at the playground
It’s time to walk home!

**Song:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample activities for singing about</th>
<th>Sample familiar tunes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>making dinner</td>
<td>Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>driving together</td>
<td>Old MacDonald</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>going for a walk</td>
<td>Hush Little Baby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buying groceries</td>
<td>Frère Jacques/Are You Sleeping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>getting dressed</td>
<td>I’m a Little Teapot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>planting the garden</td>
<td>Baa, Baa, Black Sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doing laundry</td>
<td>Farmer in the Dell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more songs, try out Baby Karaoke, from the Raising Children Network, an Australian parenting Web site, at [http://www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au) or the Banff Library’s online CD of children’s songs at [http://www.banfflibrary.ab.ca/babytime_cd.htm](http://www.banfflibrary.ab.ca/babytime_cd.htm).
# Exploration Activity #D3
## Crafts and Conversations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Time</strong></th>
<th>20 to 30 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>To make bubbles and explore how doing simple crafts together can inspire language play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grouping</strong></td>
<td>large group, small groups of three or four</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Materials** | - 2-litre bottles (such as pop bottles)  
- dish soap  
- corn syrup  
- warm water  
- copies of participant handout *Crafts and Conversations*  
- copies of participant handout *Recipes for Fun*  
- wire pipe cleaners (or bubble wands) |

### Introduction
“Doing simple crafts together can create opportunities to have fun with your children and talk about new things in new ways.”

### Process
1. Organize participants into small groups of three to four people and give each group a bottle to put their homemade bubble solution in, several pipe cleaners, and copies of participant handouts *Crafts and Conversations* and *Recipes for Fun*.

2. Groups have ten minutes to make and experiment with the bubble solution and discuss ideas for how this craft activity could create opportunities for conversations with young children. Use participant handout to record ideas for:  
   - words to use when playing with bubbles  
   - phrases, sentences and questions to use when playing with bubbles.

3. Ask each small group to share one idea from each of the columns of their handout with the large group.

4. Invite participants to share ideas about other craft activities young children enjoy. These ideas can also be recorded on the participant handout.
• As the small groups are sharing their ideas, you may want to add from the following sample responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways to play with bubbles</th>
<th>Words to use</th>
<th>Phrases, sentences and questions to use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>making the bubble solution</td>
<td>fill, mix, shake</td>
<td>Fill it up. What do we need to do next? Mix, mix, mix! Shake it gently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opening the container</td>
<td>open, bubble more</td>
<td>More bubbles? Open bubbles. What do we need to do first?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dipping the wand</td>
<td>in, out, wet</td>
<td>Put the wand in. Pull the wand out. Wet bubbles. Your hand is wet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blowing the bubbles</td>
<td>blow, bubbles</td>
<td>Blow the bubbles. Lots of bubbles. My turn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chasing the bubbles</td>
<td>pop, catch, high</td>
<td>Try to pop them. How many can you catch? Oh, it’s too high.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Remind the parents that how the craft looks when it is done is not as important as the fun they have making it with their children.

• *For families who speak more than one language at home:* Crafts can be wonderful opportunities to share and explore your family’s cultural heritage. When doing crafts with your children, use the language you know the best.

For additional information

If participants have concerns about their children’s language development, encourage them to contact a speech-language pathologist in their area.

Take home

Encourage participants to try out the *Recipes for Fun* at home over the next week.
In your small group, make some bubbles and discuss how this type of activity could create opportunities for your child’s language development. Record your ideas on the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways to play with bubbles</th>
<th>Words to use as you make and play with bubbles</th>
<th>Phrases, sentences and questions to use when you make and play with bubbles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making the bubble solution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening the container</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dipping the wand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blowing the bubbles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chasing the bubbles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other craft activities that your child enjoys:

- 
- 
- 
- 
Exploration Activity #D3

Participant Handout

Recipes for Fun

Bubbles

*Materials*
- large bottle (2 litre)
- warm water
- 1 cup of dish soap
- 2 tablespoons corn syrup
- pipe cleaners (for wands)

*Directions*
1. Fill a large bottle with warm water, leaving room for the soap and corn syrup. (Be sure to start with the water first or you will end up with a bottle full of suds!)
2. Add the dish soap and corn syrup. Stir a bit and then put the lid tightly on the bottle.
3. Gently shake the bottle to mix.
4. Let the bubbles stand for a bit to let the air settle.
5. Twist a pipe cleaner into a circle for a wand.
6. Dip wand into bubble mixture and gently blow on wand.

Playdough recipe

*Materials*
- 1 cup water
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- flour as needed
- ½ cup salt
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar
- food colouring

*Directions*
1. Mix all ingredients in a saucepan and heat, stirring until mixture is thick.
2. Allow to cool.
3. Knead until the dough is not sticky (add flour as needed).
4. Keep dough in a covered container or resealable bag.

For more craft ideas, go to http://www.wondertime.go.com.
## Exploration Activity #D4
### Games Galore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>20 to 30 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To discover and demonstrate how to use favourite family games to enrich language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouping</td>
<td>whole group, partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Materials | • chart paper and marker  
• copies of participant handout *Games Galore*  
• pens |

### Introduction
“Children love to play games. From the time they are babies, games help children learn the basics of communication. Games also help young children:

- ask and answer questions (e.g., Mother, May I?)
- give and follow directions (e.g., Simon Says)
- tell stories (e.g., Neverending Story)
- take turns and play fair (e.g., card games)
- remember things (e.g., “I’m going on a trip and I’m taking …”)
- learn new words (e.g., I Spy)
- describe things (e.g., 20 Questions).

Let’s share some favourite family games.”

### Process
1. Ask participants to turn to a partner and take turns describing a favourite game that they play with their children.

2. Distribute participant handout *Games Galore*. Next, introduce an old game with a “new twist.” For example, “Many of our favourite games are opportunities for language development. But, with a little twist, some of these games can offer even richer language opportunities. Consider the old favourite ‘Hide and Go Seek.’ Your handout has directions for a new version of this game. Please try it out with your partner and talk about how to add language as you play this game.”

3. Give partners five minutes to try out the game, each taking turns as both the “hider” and the “seeker.” Encourage the participants to try out as many different language cues as possible.

4. In large group, invite participants to share some of the language cues they used while playing “Hide and Go Seek with a Twist.”
5. In whole group, share names of favourite games and record list on posted chart paper. Participants may wish to record some of the game ideas on their handout. (See Facilitator Backgrounder on pages 59–60 for sample games that might be discussed.)

6. Ask participants if there is an unfamiliar game on the list that they would like to learn more about. If a particular game is identified, ask the contributor to briefly explain the new game to the group.

7. Discuss how some of the game examples from the brainstormed list might be played with a language-rich “twist.” Participants can jot down these ideas on their handout.

Facilitator tips

- Remind parents that many kinds of games can be created with a little imagination and home-made materials. It is not necessary to rely on expensive store-bought games.

- **For families who speak more than one language at home:**
  Take opportunities to play games in your family’s first language. Special games can also communicate important aspects of a family’s heritage and cultural traditions.

For additional information

If participants have concerns about their children’s language development, encourage them to contact a speech-language pathologist in their area.

Take home

Ask participants to think of a favourite family game that they could play with their children over the next week. Challenge them to think of one way to create a “twist” to this game by adding new actions, sounds, words or sentences as they play.
Refer to the *Facilitator Backgrounder: Strategies for Communicating with Young Children* on pages 25–28 for additional information on the following strategies.

**Baby**
- Wait and watch for your baby to communicate.
- Copy your baby’s sounds and actions.
- Talk to your baby about anything.

**Preschooler**
- Repeat what your child says using the correct words or pronunciation and complete sentences.
- Add new words to what your child says.
- Ask more open-ended questions in conversation and when reading books together.

**Toddler**
- Let your toddler be the leader.
- Use short and simple sentences.
- Wait for your toddler to talk.

**Kindergartener**
- Use colour, number and location words in directions.
- Play with sounds.
- Use lots of describing words when you are talking to your child.

As participants brainstorm favourite family games, the following examples may be helpful for generating more discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of favourite family games</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Communication you could add (e.g., actions, sounds, words, phrases, sentences)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Peek-a-Boo!</em></td>
<td>Baby</td>
<td>- Cover your eyes—“Where’s baby?”&lt;br&gt;- Turn head, eyes wide open&lt;br&gt;- “Peek-a-boo! I see you!”&lt;br&gt;- “Here’s Marenika! Under the blanket!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ring Around the Rosy</em></td>
<td>Toddler/Preschooler</td>
<td>- Chant rhyme slowly with lots of expression.&lt;br&gt;- Change the ending to “We all jump up” or “We all clap hands” or “We all stamp feet” to reinforce different actions and body part names.&lt;br&gt;- Let your child change the action at the end.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Examples of favourite family games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Communication you could add (e.g., actions, sounds, words, phrases, sentences)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **What’s Missing?**              | Preschooler/Kindergartener | • Together with your child, name all of the objects.  
• If child guesses what’s missing correctly, say, “Yay! The cow! … Now it’s your turn to take one away.”  
• If child says a single word, “Cow?”, model the complete question, “Is it the cow?”  
• If child guesses incorrectly, say, “No, it’s not the brush.” |

**Kindergartener**

- Together with your child, name all of the objects.
- If child guesses what’s missing correctly, say, “Yay! The cow! … Now it’s your turn to take one away.”
- If child says a single word, “Cow?”, model the complete question, “Is it the cow?”
- If child guesses incorrectly, say, “No, it’s not the brush.”

**Red Light, Green Light**

The leader stands at one end of the area and the other players go to the opposite end. The leader says, “Green light” and closes his or her eyes while all players run forward. When the leader yells “Red light,” all players stop moving and freeze on the spot. The leader opens his or her eyes and any player spotted moving has to sit down. The leader then calls “Green light” and all players move forward. This continues until one player reaches the leader—that person then becomes the new leader.

**Kindergartener**

- “Red light”—pair with action by holding up hand to indicate stop or by using a red object to reinforce colour
- “Green light”—use green object to reinforce colour
- “Freeze”—means stand still
- “Start line/finish line”
- Use skipping, hopping, baby steps or giant steps to get to the finish line.
- Use toy cards, trucks, farm animals or any toy to move from start line to finish line.
Hide and Seek with a Twist—Add more language!

1. Hide a small toy in the room.

2. Ask your child to look for the item as you give clues along the way. For example, hide a teddy bear behind a sofa cushion. Give your child clues, starting with general ones and then moving to more specific ones:
   e.g., a. “Teddy’s hiding someplace you sit.”
   c. “Teddy’s behind a soft, blue square.”
   d. “You found her behind the blue pillow!”

3. Now let your child hide the toy and give you clues to find it. Prompt your child to give broad clues such as:
   e.g., a. “Is it high (gesture ‘high’ with your hands) or low (gesture)?”
   b. “Is it next to the door (point), or far away from the door (point to side of room opposite the door).”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Toys or objects to hide</th>
<th>Where</th>
<th>Sample clues (Think: actions, sounds, words, sentences)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Favorite family games

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions, words, phrases that could be added</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more fun activities to do with your child, see
- Toy cards in the *Preschool Talk Box* at [http://www.parentlinkalberta.ca](http://www.parentlinkalberta.ca)
- [http://www.showkidsthefun.com](http://www.showkidsthefun.com).
Wrap-up Activity #E1
Where Do I Go From Here?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>5 to 10 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To provide participants with an opportunity to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• summarize what they have learned from the workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• reflect on the importance of their role in creating language-rich environments for their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouping</td>
<td>individual, whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>• copies of participant handout <em>Where Do I Go From Here?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• pens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• copies of take-home quote (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>“This last activity will give you an opportunity to think about what you learned today and choose one idea to use this week.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>1. Distribute copies of the participant handout <em>Where Do I Go From Here?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Provide three or four minutes for participants to jot down their answers to the following questions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are 3 things you have learned today?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are 2 activities that you enjoy doing with your child?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What is 1 new idea you can do with your child to encourage language?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. When individuals have finished writing, ask for three or four volunteers to share their responses to each question with the whole group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitator tips</td>
<td>Write take-home quote on chart paper and post at the end of the workshop or distribute a copy of the quote to each participant (see page 65).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For additional information</td>
<td>If participants have concerns about their children’s language development, encourage them to contact a speech-language pathologist in their area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take home</td>
<td>Share the following quote with participants.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in."

~ Rachel Carson
Please answer the following questions:

1. What are **3** things you have learned from the workshop today?
   - 
   - 
   - 

2. What are **2** activities you enjoy doing with your child?
   - 
   - 

3. What is **1** new idea you can do with your child to encourage language?
   - 

“If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in.”

~ Rachel Carson
### Wrap-up Activity #E2

**Remember When?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>5 to 10 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>To provide participants with an opportunity to reflect on the importance of their role in creating language-rich environments for their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouping</td>
<td>whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>• copies of take-home quote (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>“Today we explored strategies and activities for how to create language-rich experiences for your children. We’ll wrap up today by thinking about a time in your childhood when you felt listened to and understood by a caring adult.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Process       | 1. Ask participants to take a few moments, close their eyes and think back to their own childhood and to a happy time when they felt connected and really listened to by an important adult in their life.  
2. Use guiding questions, such as the following, to help participants recreate the memory.  
   • Who was there? Was it a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, teacher or neighbour?  
   • Where were you? Were you at home, outside, at the store or somewhere special?  
   • What were you doing? Were you helping wash the car, playing a game, reading, driving somewhere or building a fort in the snow?  
   • What was said?  
   • How did you know you were being listened to?  
   • How did that make you feel?  
3. Invite a few volunteers to share some of these memories with the whole group.  
4. Summarize the activity by discussing the following points.  
   • There are many memories that we have doing different things with the important adults in our lives such as driving in a car, reading a special book, playing in the snow, playing a game, going somewhere special or doing everyday chores like dishes or laundry.  
   • Our memories may involve different people: our parents, our grandparents, aunts, uncles, teachers, coaches—any person who took a special interest in us. |
- It doesn’t matter **what** we did with that special adult, what mattered was that we were doing something **together**!
- Children learn language everyday. They learn about their world by seeing, touching, listening, tasting and doing. Any activity you do with your child is a chance to learn language.
- It makes a difference how you talk with and respond to your child during those times.

### Facilitator tips

Write take-home quote on chart paper and post at the end of the workshop or distribute a copy of the quote to each participant (see page 69).

### For additional information

If participants have concerns about their children’s language development, encourage them to contact a speech-language pathologist in their area.

### Take home

Share the following quote with participants.

> “Once a human being has arrived on this earth, communication is the largest single factor determining what kinds of relationships he makes with others and what happens to him in the world about him.”

~ Virginia Satir
“Once a human being has arrived on this earth, communication is the largest single factor determining what kinds of relationships he makes with others and what happens to him in the world about him.”

~ Virginia Satir