AGENDA

Early Childhood Brain Development

What is Early Literacy?
- Skills
- Practices

Dialogic Reading

Early Literacy Resources

1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

Ready to Read Resource Center
EARLY CHILDHOOD BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

NATURE V. NURTURE

Babies are not “blank slates”
Genes control the sequence of development
Quality of development is shaped by their environment
Genes tolerate a wide range of “normal” environments
Enriched environments stimulate brain growth
BRAIN BASICS & SYNAPSES

Most neurons formed by 4 months gestation

Synapses are the communication points

Connections formed through experiences

Excess of synapses allows for wide variety of learning

Synapses that aren’t repeated enough are pruned

Once synapses pruned, new knowledge difficult

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

Capacity for language is genetic

Babies can discriminate nearly every type of phoneme

Particular language and accent/ dialect are a function of experience

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

Children follow similar pattern
~Age 1: Begin speaking single words (usually nouns)
~Ages 1-3: Begin using two-word phrases (called telegraphic speech)
~Age 3+: Begin using sentences of greater complexity (verb endings, plurals and possessives)

Vocabulary explosion begins around 18 months

At 2½ years, experts can predict reading readiness that will be achieved age 5
QUANTITY & QUALITY

Quantity of language is critical:
- More conversation = larger, faster-growing vocabularies and higher scores on IQ tests

Parenting style is important:
- Negative feedback vs positive feedback

Socioeconomic factors:
- Welfare children: 600 words per hour
- Working class children 1,200 wph
- Professional children: 2,100 wph

“CRITICAL PERIODS” OF DEVELOPMENT
IDEAL CONDITIONS

For optimal brain development, babies need:
- Emotional and physical security
- Sensory stimulation
- Engagement from adults and peers

THE BRAIN & STRESS

Some risk factors:
- Neglect or abuse (sensory deprivation)
- Poverty
- Parental substance abuse
- Maternal depression
**THE BRAIN & STRESS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Worst Case Scenarios</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less exposure to print</td>
<td>Struggle to keep up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fail to develop reading comprehension strategies</td>
<td>Develop negative attitudes about reading and school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encounter reading material that is too high level</td>
<td>Are less likely to graduate</td>
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**ARE THEY DOOMED?**

- Brains remarkably plastic, adaptable, resilient
- Can rewire itself to correct for problems during development
- Positive early experiences > negative experiences
- Interventions must happen early
EARLY LITERACY

WHAT IS EARLY LITERACY?

- Early explorations in reading and writing
- Literacy embedded in everything that we do
- Highly correlated with school achievement
- Literacy skills help children transition into readers
- NOT teaching children to read but getting them ready to read
FIVE SKILLS OF EARLY LITERACY

Vocabulary
- Understanding meaning of words

Print Awareness
- Knowing that print has meaning; the direction of print; how to handle a book

Letter Knowledge*
- Knowing names, shapes, and sounds of letters

Phonological Awareness*
- Understanding that words make sounds / ability to recognize sounds

Background Knowledge
- Thinking skills: what things are, how/when/why things are

* Strongest predictors of reading success at pre-school level

Statewide Developmental Profile: 2011-2012 through 2015-2016

For the Alaska Developmental Profile, teachers use the following ratings to score kindergarten students on 13 goals. Ratings are averaged for each goal to produce statewide results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Does Not Demonstrate</td>
<td>*Student does not demonstrate the indicated skill or behavior (0% or less of the time).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Student should be given this rating if this is generally unlikely to be successfully demonstrated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Progressing</td>
<td>*Student demonstrates the indicated skill or behavior on an inconsistent basis (25% or more, but less than 75% of the time).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Student should be given this rating if they demonstrate the skill or behavior in at least half of the random samples of tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Consistently Demonstrates</td>
<td>*Student demonstrates the indicated skill or behavior on a consistent basis (75% or more of the time).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*Student should be given this rating if they generally demonstrate these skills most of the time. Students are not required to successfully demonstrate each skill in every task in order to warrant this rating.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

Updated 01/08/2016
HOW CAN LIBRARIES HELP?

Understand community needs

Make youth areas welcoming

Model behavior for parents and caregivers

Provide young children with opportunities to:
  - Have interactions with adults as listeners
  - Practice movement, sounds, and rhythms
  - Practice language patterns repeatedly
  - Play imaginatively
  - Read high-quality, age-appropriate material

FIVE PRACTICES OF EARLY LITERACY

Best practices based on Every Child Ready to Read 2nd ed. (ALA)

Best way to support early literacy is by engaging children through daily activities including:

READING  SINGING  PLAYING
TALKING  WRITING
SINGING AND RHYMES

Implements phonological awareness:
- Slower/ more melodic than natural speech
- Rhythm helps children hear syllables

Songs and rhymes are:
- Fun
- Repetitious
- Emotionally satisfying

Learning a new song boosts confidence

OLD MACDONALD
Old Macdonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O
And on his farm he had a cow, E-I-E-I-O
With a "moo-moo" here and a "moo-moo" there
Here a "moo", there a "moo"
Everywhere a "moo-moo"
Old Macdonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O
FINGERPLAYS

THE GARDEN SNAIL
Slowly, slowly, very slowly, creeps the garden snail.
Slowly, slowly, very slowly, up the garden rail.
Quickly, quickly, very quickly, runs the little mouse.
Quickly, quickly, very quickly, right up to his house.

PLAYING

Child's first job

Play inspires imagination and creativity

Play teaches narrative and social skills

Helps children to:
- think symbolically
- learn about new objects
- problem solve
PLAYING

Provide flexible play activities
- Accommodates a range of ages and stages
- Encourages caregiver participation

Avoid rigid or outcome-based play

Choose things like:
- Blocks
- Board books
- Dramatic/pretend play
- Matching games/puzzles
- Puppets

Specific age-based examples:

Birth to 9 months:
- Tactile play
- Sensory toys

6 months to 2 years:
- Gross motor play
- Fine motor play
- Music play

1 year to 4 years:
- Team play
- Win/lose play
- Turns/sharing play

3 years to 6 years:
- Humor/dramatic play
- Language play
- Arts
- Games
TALKING

Children learn how individual words sound – decoding

What words mean – increasing vocabulary

How words can be put together – increasing comprehension

TALKING

Make it interactive:
- Respond to cries and vocalizations;
- Demonstrate that you can hear child and
- Take communication seriously

Babies love the sound of caregiver voices

Point out and name objects throughout the interaction

“Parentese” vs. “baby talk”
**WRITING**

Children need to practice hand-eye coordination and develop hand muscles to begin writing.

Encourage coloring and scribbling – they are the foundations of manual dexterity.

Practicing to write letters helps children learn that each one look different/has different shape.

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**WRITING**

Talk to the child about their drawing.

Make up a story to go with the drawing.

Encourage children to label or sign their drawings.
Reading aloud is the single most important way to get children ready to read in the future.

Demonstrates:
- Printed words tell a spoken story
- How to hold a book
- The direction that words are read

Make the experience enjoyable, interactive

Increases vocabulary and general knowledge
DIALOGIC READING

What is dialogic reading?
- Encouraging active learning during book reading
- Providing feedback modeling more sophisticated language
- Challenging the child’s knowledge and skills

The PEER sequence
- Prompt
- Evaluate
- Expand
- Repeat

NOT a “quiz”!
DIALOGIC READING

CROWD reading prompts
Completion – with rhymes and repetitive phrases
Recall – revisiting a book that you’ve already read
Open-ended – best with books with rich illustrations
Wh- questions – focus on pictures in the book
Distancing – relating the book to real life experiences

DIALOGIC READING

Pick books with:
- Clear, detailed illustrations
- Predictive text
- Emotional impact

Pre-read the story
- Find the appropriate rhythm and pacing
- Get a sense of the page turns

Write down questions on sticky notes
Don’t rush!
EXAMPLE:

Tea Party Rules

by Ame Dyckman
illustrated by K. G. Campbell

Wh- question prompt

What do you think this book is about?

Cub was playing in the woods when he smelled something delicious. He followed his nose through the brush and found...
Completion/Recall prompt

Where is Cub? He is in the __________

cookies!
And another bear.

Open-ended prompt

Why does Cub want a cookie?

"Can I have a cookie?" Cub asked. The bear just smiled.

"Why won't you answer?" Cub cried. He poked the bear.

Cub tried again.
"Can I have a cookie, please?" The bear just smiled.

The bear fell over.
"Oh!" Cub exclaimed. "You can't eat cookies!"
Cub felt sorry for the bear.
“I’ll eat the cookies for you,” he promised.

Cub was about to take a bite when he heard someone coming.
He had no time to hide.

Open-ended prompt
Why would the girl look closely at Cub?
"You're grubby," the girl said.
"You Dirty.Rule you must be clean.
Then we can have cookies."
She carried Cub inside…

and put him in the tub,
Cub hated being grubby.
He did not want to be clean.

What do you think "grubby" means?
Distancing prompt

Cub really wants cookies. Would you be willing to get fancy just to get cookies?

But he did want cookies.

When Cub was next, the girl paused once more.
She looked very, very lovely at Cub.

"Something is still not right," she said.
"The Party Rule: you must be fancy. Then we can have cookies!"
She pulled out her dress-up trunk.
Cub was certain he did not want to be fancy.
He wanted to run away.

[Image of a cozy room with children in costume]

"Now," the girl said, "the most important Tu Furry rule is... you must act fastly!"

[Image of a raccoon and a cub dressed in outfits]

Cub couldn't believe it.
He was ду! He was brave.
He was wearing a dress!
And he had Davies Abbey!
How does Cub feel? Have you ever felt impatient, that you just couldn’t wait?

Distancing prompt

Soon only one cookie was left.

The girl noticed. “I really wanted cookies,” she said. Cub knew how she felt. He gave the girl the last cookie.

But the girl did not eat them. She said…

“We’re not having Tea Party anymore. Now we’re playing…”
“Bear!”

Distancing prompt
Would you rather play bear or tea party? Why?
EARLY LITERACY RESOURCES

ALASKA EARLY LITERACY PARTNERS

Alaska Department of Education and Early Development
https://education.alaska.gov/

Alaska Association for the Education of Young Children
http://www.alaskaaeyc.org/

Alaska Head Start Association
http://www.akheadstart.org/

Alaska Infant Learning Program
http://dhss.alaska.gov/dsds/Pages/infantlearning/default.aspx
ALASKA EARLY LITERACY PARTNERS

Best Beginnings
http://www.bestbeginningsalaska.org/

Imagination Library in Alaska
http://www.bestbeginningsalaska.org/imagination-library

Parents As Teachers

thread
http://threadalaska.org/

NATIONAL EARLY LITERACY RESOURCES

Saroj Ghoting
http://www.earlylit.net/

Every Child Ready to Read
http://www.everychildreadytoread.org/

Family Place Libraries
http://www.familyplacelibraries.org/

Mother Goose Club
http://www.mothergooseclub.com/
1,000 BOOKS BEFORE KINDERGARTEN

Pilot program at APL, sponsored by Alaska Northwest Books and the Friends of the Anchorage Public Library

Children receive logs to track books they read

Goal is to reach 1,000 before starting kindergarten

Books can be read multiple times

Each reading counts towards the 1,000
1,000 Books Before Kindergarten

Personalize logs with your library's name and address

Celebrate your successes!
- Host an annual party for finishers, or
- Hand out a book prize

Logs available online:
http://lam.alaska.gov/EarlyLit/1000B4K

Starter kits at the Ready to Read table:
- Reading logs
- Stickers

Ready to Read Resource Center
READY TO READ RESOURCE CENTER: BACKGROUND

Mission statement:

“To promote early literacy development in Alaska’s youngest children.”

Established in 2008

Funded by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services to the Alaska State Library under the provisions of the Library Services Technology Act.

READY TO READ RESOURCE CENTER: RECIPIENTS

Infants and toddlers
Parents/caregivers
Child care centers and home child care providers
Libraries

Early care & education agencies
Health clinics and pediatricians
READY TO READ RESOURCE CENTER: SERVICES

Lend FREE Reading Kits
- Read with Me Bags
- Lapsit Bags
- Read to Me at Home Tubs
- Ready to Read Tubs

Make presentations

Advocate for early literacy with other statewide agencies

AGENDA

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- Practices

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Ready to Read Resource Center
QUESTIONS?

Contact information:
Samantha Blanquart
Early Literacy Outreach Librarian
BlanquartSR@muni.org

Ready to Read Resource Center
Anchorage Public Library
Alaska State Library
ready@muni.org
907-343-2970