Up to 3 Communication Service Array

Parent Objectives: By participating in communication services, parents learn strategies that are applied to daily routines and activities to enhance their child’s communication development. They also learn to evaluate their child’s progress and adjust strategies to more effectively meet their child’s needs.

Child Objectives: Children participating in communication services acquire the receptive and expressive language skills needed to effectively communicate across daily routines and functionally participate in activities at home and in the community. The acquisition of new language skills closes the gap between the child’s current level of communication and that of children their age who do not have communication delays. Progress is measured through parent observation and report, as well as through observations of daily routines and activities and formal ongoing assessments conducted by the speech-language pathologist (SLP) and/or SPARK Specialist (see definition below).

Parent’s Role: Parents actively participate in assessments, determining eligibility, and developing meaningful goals and appropriate services in the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). They also actively participate in the services, apply the strategies they have learned, and report their children’s progress and any challenges to the SLP or SPARK Specialist and assist in problem solving any challenges that were experienced.

The Up To 3 Program offers tiered options for speech & language services, which includes the It Takes Two to Talk® class, SPARK Communication and Coaching service, Big Talkers class, Articulation services, and Techno Tots.

One services option is having families attend It Takes Two to Talk® (ITTT) Hanen class, which includes eight 2-hour parent education classes and three home visits. The ITTT program is an evidence-based, early language intervention program that’s designed specifically for parents of young children who have been identified as having a language delay. In a small, personalized group setting, parents learn practical strategies to help their children learn language naturally throughout their daily interactions. This program can only be taught by certified SLPs who have been trained and certified by Hanen. SLPs utilize principles of adult education to provide parents with the training, information and support they need to become their child’s primary language facilitator, teach parents to select appropriate communication goals for their children, and provide coaching and effective feedback during one-to-one video feedback consultations with parents. At the end of the class, the families and speech-language pathologist meet to discuss the communication progress and to determine the next appropriate services.

Another service option is the SPARK Communication & Coaching service. SPARK Specialists, who have received training from Hanen, teach parents evidence-based interaction and language-building strategies that accelerate early communication development so that parents play a key role in facilitating their children’s early communication development. SPARK Specialists coach parents to apply these strategies during everyday interactions with their children to make learning language a natural, ongoing process.
For families who feel comfortable with providing the language strategies, but their children need to use their communication skills with less familiar adults and peers in a social setting, we offer the **Big Talkers** class once a week. The Big Talkers class is designed for children who are at least 30 months of age and are in the First Word User or Combiner stages of communication (see definitions below). Their parents drop them off with Up to 3 staff at local licensed child care facilities to engage in cooperative play and active communication with children their age who have typical language development. The Big Talkers class uses strategies supportive of early literacy and language development for every child, including those who are culturally-linguistically-, and ability-diverse. SLPs use the evidence-based practice of Dialogic Reading, which meets the requirements of the DEC Recommended practices and NAEYC Standards (see below).

**Articulation Services** are designed for children who are at least 30 months old and combine words into phrases, but people understand less than half of what they say. SLPs coach parents on strategies that will help the children become more aware of individual sounds, as well as how to speak more clearly, using verbal and visual cues.

For children with significant impairments in the production or comprehension of spoken language, **Techno Tots** may be an appropriate service. Techno Tots is an interdisciplinary service, which generally consists of an occupational therapist and a SLP, to teach families about communication methods that are used to supplement or replace speech so that children can express their wants and needs in a manner that may be understood in their home and community.

**DEC Recommended Practices:**

C15 Recommended practices are used to teach/promote whatever skills are necessary for child to function more completely, competently, adaptively, and independently in the child’s natural environment.

PP 13 Students learn to apply instructional strategies in natural environments.

**NAEYC Standards:**

4b: Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education.

4d: Reflecting on their own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child.

5b: Knowing and using the central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of content areas or academic disciplines.
Communication Service Guidance: Based on ITTT Stages of Communication Development

**Discoverer:** (children who react to how they feel and to what is happening around them, but they do not communicate with a specific purpose in mind.)

A. Children in this stage will likely have a Physical therapist (PT), Occupational Therapist (OT), and/or Developmental Specialist (DS) as a primary provider.
B. Children who are in this stage and are younger than 18 months (adjusted age) will likely have a DS and/or SLP and participation in community activities. They will probably not be referred to ITTT until the child reaches the communicator stage.
C. Children who are in this stage and are older than 18 months will likely have Techno Tots, SLP, DS and participation in community activities. They may also have PT and/or OT.

**Communicator:** (children who send specific messages using primarily sounds & gestures.)

A. Children who are in this stage will likely have an ITTT class with SLP home visits. If the family cannot attend an ITTT class, a likely recommendation would be SLP home visits incorporating ITTT strategies and participation in community activities.
B. After the family has completed an ITTT class:
   1. If the child has made sufficient progress, a likely recommendation is a referral for SPARK Communication and Coaching and participation in community activities.
   2. If the child has not made sufficient progress, a likely recommendation would be to continue SLP services and participation in community activities.

**First Word Users:** (children who uses single words, signs or pictures.)

A. Children who are in this stage will likely have an ITTT class with SLP home visits. If the family cannot attend an ITTT class, SLP home visits incorporating ITTT strategies or SPARK Communication and Coaching services may be recommended, depending on the number of words and age of the child. Another likely recommendation would be participation in community activities.
B. After the family has completed an ITTT class:
   1. If the child has made sufficient progress, a likely recommendation is a referral for SPARK services and participation in community activities.
   2. If the child has not made sufficient progress, a likely recommendation would be to continue SLP services and participation in community activities.
   3. If the child is 30 months or older and is able to separate from his/her parents without significant distress and doesn’t have significant behavior concerns, a likely recommendation is a referral to for Big Talkers

**Combiners** (children who combine words into 2+ word phrases)
A. Dependent on the age of the child, a likely recommendation would be an ITTT class with SLP home visits, SPARK Communication and Coaching, or Big Talkers class.

B. For children who are 30+ months old, articulation services may be recommended if the family understands less than 50% of what the child says.

C. Most likely, participation in communication activities would be recommended.

D. After the family has completed an ITTT class,
   1. If the child is 30+ months old, a likely recommendation to increase vocabulary, sentence length and generalization of language in a social setting with peers is Big Talkers.
   2. For families who can’t attend Big Talkers, a likely recommendation is a referral for SPARK services and participation in community activities.
   3. If the child has articulation error, a likely recommendation would be SLP articulation services and participation in community activities.