









## Adult-child interaction training to enhance the communication environment

### An Early Language and Communication Improvement Story Board from Forth Valley HSCP

 <b>The issue</b>	 <b>The team</b>	 <b>Our idea</b>
<p>High level of children starting school with inadequate language skills to access the curriculum.</p> <p>There is a significant body of evidence linking communication needs with poor life outcomes relating to attainment, employability, behaviour, offending, mental health and inequality. We know that vocabulary difficulties at the age of 5 are significantly associated with poor literacy and unemployment at age 34 (Law, 2009)</p>	<p>All link therapists across Forth Valley work in collaboration with their early years settings to support children at Universal, Targeted and Individualised levels across the 5 strands below*. <b>Adult Child Interaction</b> strategies are promoted as part of developing the <b>spoken language environment</b>.</p> <p>*This can include support across the 5 strands below:</p> <p><b>Identification</b></p> <p><b>Environment</b></p> <p><b>Workforce Development</b></p> <p><b>Interventions</b></p> <p><b>Family Support</b></p>	<p>Following on from a successful impact study in Clackmannanshire nurseries-as part of the LIFT project, (Language is Fun Together) it was decided that the <b>Adult Child Interaction (ACI)</b> approach would be promoted across all early years settings in Forth Valley. This supports and enhances Early Years Educator's skills and confidence around developing the spoken language environment for the children in their settings.</p>
 <b>Tools &amp; resources we used.</b>	 <b>What we did</b>	 <b>The impact</b>
<p>Use of <b>Adult Child Interaction (ACI)</b> strategies which are known to support language development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Getting face-to-face during interactions</li> <li>➤ Observing and listening to the child</li> <li>➤ Waiting for the child to</li> </ul>	<p>Early Year Educators (EYEs) receive a series of training modules.</p> <p><b>Video reflection tool</b> supports educators to reflect on their use of the strategies and set themselves development goals.</p> <p><b>Modelling and coaching methodology</b> is used to support</p>	<p>Supporting strands of <b>Workforce development</b>: educators have nurturing interactions with children and families supporting early language development</p> <p>Children and families experience <b>environments</b> that are communication friendly and</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ include you in their play</li> <li>➤ Following the child's lead during play together</li> <li>➤ Using language at the right level for the child</li> <li>➤ Giving the child enough time to listen and make sense of what is being said to them.</li> <li>➤ Some methods of interaction are known to have a negative impact on language learning the use of adult-led questions the use of directions and suggestions These should be reduced to provide a language-enriching spoken language environment.</li> </ul>	<p>educators' confidence using the strategies on the nursery floor.</p> <p>When team feel ready, an <b>audit of the spoken environment</b> is arranged:</p> <p><b>Part A</b> : number of ECEs actively engaging with children</p> <p><b>Part B</b>: each member of the team is given opportunity to demonstrate use of ACI strategies within their interactions with children</p> <p>If criteria met by majority of team, <b>Diamond certificate is awarded</b> in recognition of <b>developing an excellent spoken language environment.</b></p>	<p>language rich</p> <p>The nurseries are providing children with access to a rolling programme of evidence based targeted interventions including ACI. Nursery staff are confident in their role as facilitators of communication.</p> <p>Educators provide a language-enriching experience for the child: using descriptive language to comment on what the child is doing, using techniques such as imitating the child's actions and words, repeat and extend the child's language by adding in a word.</p>
 <p><b>Our learning &amp; next steps</b></p>	<p>The demand placed on the SLT service continues to rise at a times of no additional human resource. This approach goes some way towards increasing our capacity and reach by moving our service delivery model upstream, i.e. children are supported by skilled educators who are more proximal to the child.</p> <p>As educators become confident using the ACI strategies in their everyday interactions, they can in turn promote them with families e.g. during Stay and Play sessions.</p>	
 <p><b>Find out more</b></p>	<p><i>Claire MacLean, Speech and Language Therapist, NHS Forth Valley</i>  <i>claire.maclea@nhs.scot</i></p>	