A Caregiver-Child Early Intervention Program for children with or at risk for communication problems

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- 2964 beds is the largest acute hospital in the world
- South west of Johannesburg, on the southern border of Soweto.
- It is the only public hospital serving approximately 3.5 million people.
- The hospital has a staff establishment of nearly 5000
- Department of Speech Therapy & Audiology has a staff of 29 therapists and 3 Assistants
- Limited school and community –based services in the area
### Where we were....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>This resulted in:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Deficit approach</td>
<td>• Poor attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Child-only focus</td>
<td>• Limited caregiver participation</td>
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<td>• Goals set by therapist</td>
<td>• Limited progress</td>
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<td>• Individual therapy</td>
<td>• Long waiting lists</td>
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<td>• Once a month attendance</td>
<td>• High default rate</td>
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<td>• Dissatisfied therapists</td>
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Where we moved to...

- Family focused intervention
  - Centrality of the family
  - Family strengths & resources
  - Increased participation
  - Collective empowerment

“Focusing on family interactions, as well as on children’s skills, may have a greater effect on child development than focusing solely on the child”

Kelly & Barnard 2000
Background

• Program started in 1999
• Over 36 series of the program conducted to date
• About 895 families have been through the program thus far
Caregiver child program

Group sessions  Workshops
Orientation session

• Warm-up
• Pre-questionnaire
• Expectations
• Outline of program
• Contract
• Video – “Learning begins at home”
Caregiver concerns

- Communication: 53%
- Speech: 20%
- Motor difficulties: 11%
- Independence: 10%
- Play: 7%
- Behaviour: 5%
Help wanted

• How to help child communicate
• How to communicate with child
• How to understand child better
• How to play with child
• How to make others understand him better (father)
• Improve my patience with my child
Group structure

- 4-5 children per group
- Grouped according to age
- 45min session
- Cycle 12 weeks
- Facilitators: Speech therapist & Speech therapy assistant
Format of the session

- Warm-up
- Introduce facilitation technique
- Demonstrate
- Caregivers implement
- Video caregiver-child interaction
- Discussion (positives, future changes)
- Ideas for home
- Book library

( Balton, 2004)
Content of program

- Allow your child to lead
- Keep the conversation going
- Building your child’s language
- Interaction checklist
- Play
- The senses
- Listening
- Routines
- Review
- Graduation

(Cooke, 1997; Lynch & Kidd, 1999; Manolson, 1992; Williams, 1999)
Workshops

- Communication
- Early literacy
- Self-esteem
- Play
- Having fun with movement & safety in the home
- Healthy eating & Routines
- Graduation
Workshop Format

- Register
- Warm-up
- Definition of terms
- Development
- Facilitation techniques
- Role –play
- Video
- Tea-break
- Practical session
- Ideas for home
- What did I learn from coming here today?
- Hand outs & minutes of previous workshop
Graduation

• Post-questionnaire
• Program review
• Toy/book competition
• Presentations
• Celebrations
Once upon a time there was a girl called Cinderella who lived with her poor father and mother. Cinderella was very sad because she had to do all the work for them. After a few years Cinderella's mom died. She was left with her father, and the road that covered them. After a few months Cinderella's dad had fell in love with a very evil lady called Donna. Donna had two children named Reddy and Reddy. These two women were very evil. Children they hated them all that they saw with Cinderella. My dad doubt about my disability but mum knows one day I will be okay.
Lessons learnt

Child
- Talking more
- Sharing with other children
- Using more words
- Asking questions
- Talking more clearly
- Increased eye contact
- Increased confidence
- Playing well
- Enjoys books
- More independent
- Making choices
- Participating in routines

Caregiver
- Learnt how to communicate with child
- Improved self-esteem (caregiver & child)
- Playing with him
- Improved understanding of child
- More patient
- Accepting child
- Include the child in what I am doing
- Reading to child
- How to make toys & books
- Teaching others what I have learnt
From the literature...

- Parent satisfaction is an important indicator of programme success
-Clearer understanding of child’s needs
- Child’s development
- Knowledge & confidence in using strategies in their own home environment

Harbin, McWilliam & Gallagher 2000
In conclusion

“By enhancing natural parenting skills and providing the conditions for families to become more competent and confident in their unique relationship with their children, conditions for optimal child development may well be created”

Kelly & Barnard, 2000
Caregiver feedback
References


