

## EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

- It's important for babies to see a person's lips when being held. This is particularly important for children with a hearing impairment. Makes sounds or repeat the sounds babies make to encourage back and forth *communication*.
- Respond to young children's attempts to interact (make eye contact, cry, smile, *coo*, say words, and reach out). Talk to them, pick them up, and imitate their sounds back to them. Show enjoyment in these conversations.
- Practice conversational turn-taking with young children through talking, actions, and playing games like "peek-a-boo" or other communication games from their *culture*. Ask family members to share some of these games.
- Realize that behaviors such as biting, or tantrums may happen because children do not have the words to communicate. Help children relax and give them words or simple sign language that can help them name and describe their feelings and communicate their needs.
- Provide frequent opportunities for children to engage in social conversations and listen to others, such as during meal, circle times, play, or small groups.
- Take children outdoors to listen to sounds. Encourage children to listen intently and describe sounds they hear in their environment.
- Play audio recordings of family members' voices in their *home language* to help children feel more connected to their families.
- Use multiple descriptive words when speaking, labeling objects, and using action words ("Look at that brown bunny jumping over the large puddle of water.>").
- Expand upon children's communication ("You said you saw the big dog outside?" "I also saw the big black dog with the long fluffy tail outside.>").
- When speaking, ensure tone and facial expression match what is being said. For example, use a serious tone when saying "Hitting hurts. Be kind to friends. Let's find a way to use words to tell your friend you want to play the ball."
- Encourage children to try out new sounds and words, including words in different languages (family language, school language, and/or other languages). Give children opportunities to play with sounds. Provide experiences with "stretching out" words by saying them slowly sound-by-sound.
- Talk with children in a positive tone and speak in an encouraging way about what they are hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, and tasting. Talk about printed words they see related to those experiences.
- Teach children simple words and phrases in sign language and use with familiar songs and phrases.
- Introduce new words during the day. *Model* appropriate language by using correct grammar and a variation of different words.
- Show children how to participate in conversations by having many conversations with them and with other children and adults (encourage children not to interrupt, help children to clarify what they are saying when they feel misunderstood).