grow your kids
TREE

Brief Overview

Ken Tellerman M.D.
Maryland American Academy of Pediatrics
grow your kids

Talk
Read
Engage
Encourage

MARYLAND AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS
WWW.MDAAP.ORG
grow your kids

Grant funding to develop and study the program received from:

Abell Foundation
American Academy of Pediatrics
Bloomberg Johns Hopkins School of Public Health
Johns Hopkins Children’s Center
National Institute for Children’s Health Quality (NICHQ)
• Adverse childhood experiences and poverty are risk factors for developmental delay

• A consistent caring adult in a child’s life can help offset the adverse effects of toxic stress and poverty
Can a brief intervention during well child visits lead to more positive parent infant interactions?
grow your kids

**TREE**

- Pediatric practitioners may be the first and only professional voice that parents of infants and young children hear.

- TREE program aims to help parents from low income families *explore* ways to *connect* with their children ages 4-24 months.

- TREE program is a brief intervention that can be easily integrated into the well child visit.
Well Child Visit

Examining the well child visit:

• Screening
• Observing
• Asking
• Listening
• Guiding (Teachable moments: nutrition, safety, immunizations, development and behavior)
• Empowering
• Referring
grow your kids

TREEting Patients
What Can Be Seen Beyond The Screen?
TREEting Patients

• Hand out a book or toy starting at age 4 or 6 month well child visit

• Observe Child Development and Parent Infant Interaction

• Ask (during the developmental part of the visit)

  “What kinds of things do you enjoy doing with your child?”
“What kinds of things do you enjoy doing with your child?”

• Open ended
• Non judgmental
• Positive
• Strength based
• Transition from *anticipatory* to *participatory* guidance
• Provides parent with a platform
• Review just a few *selective* TREE concepts per encounter:

  “In addition to what you are doing talking to young children during routine activities such as bathing or shopping helps to stimulate language development”
TREETing Patients

Basic TREE Concepts
(for systematically observing and conveying)

• **TALK**: Bathe your baby in language
• **READ**: Read together regularly and enthusiastically
• **ENGAGE**: Have fun together / Make your child feel safe and loved
• **ENCOURAGE**: Be your baby’s cheerleader
TREETing Patients

Frequently Used TREE Concepts:

TALK- Bathe your baby in language:
- Speak in “parentese”
- Use the radio or sports announcer approach
- Talk during daily routines (meals, driving, bathing, diapering, shopping etc.)
TREETING Patients

Frequently Used TREE Concepts:

READ- Read together regularly and enthusiastically:

• Let children take the lead
• Play “show me” and “tell me” games
TREEming Patients

Frequently Used TREE Concepts:

ENGAGE- Have fun together: “prescription for play”

- Does *with* objects
- Does *to* objects
- Objects have *function*
- *Imaginary* play

(minimize use of electronic toys)
TREEtting Patients

Frequently Used TREE Concepts:

ENCOURAGE-

Be your baby’s cheerleader

“Yeah!” “Good job!”
TREETing Patients

• Next ask:
  “What fun things would you like to do with your child before our next visit?”

• Use the developmental narrative to review what the child will be doing:

  “Over the next few months, your child will transition from doing things with objects to doing things to objects”
CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Developmental Narrative
(for systematically observing and conveying)

• Motor
• Communication
• Cognition: Play and Learning
• Social Emotional
Developmental Narrative

Motor:
Head, neck and arms: reaching
Trunk: rolling, sitting, crawling
Legs: pulling to stand, walking, running
Developmental Narrative

**Communication:**
- **Vocalization:** coos/ babbles
- **Pre-verbal:** non verbal imitation and gestures
- **Verbalization:** receptive/ expressive language
Developmental Narrative

Cognition (Play and Learning):
- Does “with” objects
- Does “to” objects
- Objects have *function*
- Imaginary play
CHILD DEVELOPMENT

ENGAGE: Cognition

Does “with” objects

Imaginary play

Does “to” objects

Objects have function
Developmental Narrative

Social Emotional: first year of life

Attachment:

“You **and** me”: social smile/ laughing

“You and me and **them**”: stranger anxiety

“Us”: shares delight with caretaker/ joint attention
Developmental Narrative

Social Emotional: first year of life

“You and me”

“You and me and them”

“Us” sharing joy
Social Emotional: second year of life

Separation and Exploration

Autonomy
TREETing Patients

And finally...

Give parents a TREET
(Provide positive feedback)

• “You used lots of words with your baby”
• “You were reading to your baby in an excited tone”
• “You held her and cuddled her when she was upset”
• “You said ‘good job!!’ when she completed the puzzle”
TREETing Patients

TREE program is about connection-
Helping parents to connect with their infants through positive interactions
but also
Helping pediatric providers connect with caregivers by listening and empowering
In order to hear parents must first feel heard-

Listen carefully
TREETING PATIENTS

Summary

• Hand out toy/book and observe development and parent-child interaction

• “What kinds of things do you like to do with your child?”

• Review selective TREEE concepts
“What fun do you plan to do with your child between now and the next visit?”

Review what child will be doing (consider having parent video tape a positive interaction and bring to next visit)

Provide positive feedback (give parents a TREET)