



LUNCH AND LEARN

COMMUNICATION

April 25, 2019

CASA of Terrebonne, Inc.

I. TYPES OF COMMUNICATION

1. **Verbal** - Spoken word
2. **Nonverbal** - Gestures, body movements, tone of voice
3. **Feelings** - What is experienced in the course of an interaction
 - **WHEN THERE IS A DISCREPANCY THE RECEIVER OF THE MESSAGE TENDS TO BELIEVE THE NONVERBAL.**

For example, saying "I'm sorry" in an angry tone of voice.

II. AS A CASA, LISTEN FOR "SILENT MESSAGES"

1. Children do not always have the verbal and developmental skills sufficient to express their needs and wishes.

III. FACT GATHERING BASED ON OBSERVATION – WHAT IS CHILD COMMUNICATING? AS A CASA, BE MINDFUL OF THE FOLLOWING DURING YOUR VISIT

1. What is setting of visit?

- Quiet or noisy
- In home, at DCFS office, at a park, in school or daycare

2. How does child approach setting?

- Comfortable or hesitant
- Body language toward CASA and others
- Interaction with caregiver, siblings, classmates

3. What is child's interest and energy level?

- Engaged, aloof, hyper, detached
- Willing to participate in an activity together...drawing, coloring, etc.

4. How is child communicating?

- Singing, humming....
- Is voice happy or agitated
- Complete sentences or single words

5. What are child's facial expressions?

6. How does child get along with others?

- Plays alone, shares with others

IV. CASA SHOULD USE HELPFUL INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

	HELPFUL	HURTFUL
WORDS	How about we... Have you thought about... Did you consider... How do you think we should...	You should know this... You need to do this... Avoid swearing Avoid negative words Avoid absolutes
TONE OF VOICE	Convey interest, patience, and friendliness Speak clearly Vary pitch	Monotone and mumbling Too fast/slow Condescending, impatient Abrupt
FACIAL EXPRESSIONS	Eye contact Be relaxed Show alertness Turn to them and show that you are all in	Bored/disinterested Yawning No eye contact Expressionless
BODY LANGUAGE	Leaning in and being open Be comfortable with a pause Avoid interrupting Nodding/shaking head	Looking at watch Distracting movements Crowding person's space Shrugging shoulders

V. TYPES OF QUESTIONS CASA CAN ASK

1. Ask **open ended** questions ... (Requires more than YES or NO answer)
 - What did you do for recess today?
 - What was your favorite thing about school today?
 - What does that cloud shape look like to you?
2. Ask **probing follow up** questions or statements
 - Can you describe that more clearly?
 - Tell me more about that.
3. Ask **close ended** questions
 - When specifically looking for facts

VI. HOW WILL CASA EARN A CHILD'S TRUST SO CHILD FEELS SAFE TO COMMUNICATE?

1. Be consistent with your visits
2. Be patient and give them time to adjust to you
3. Give them your full attention...ALL DEVICES OFF
4. Practice mindfulness...Keep your mind and eyes focused on the child
5. Don't leap to respond.... process what was shared before responding
6. Rephrase and repeat what the child has said...this eliminates misunderstanding
7. Practice having an open mind...don't discount a child's ideas just because you don't agree with them.
8. Set boundaries and make sure child knows that you can't hold on to secrets...explain confidentiality
9. Do not speak down to a child.... use age appropriate language

VII. COMMUNICATION AT DIFFERENT AGES AND STAGES

1. INFANTS: BIRTH TO 12 MONTHS

a) Their communication consists of:

- Coos, gurgles and grunts
- Facial expressions
- Crying
- Body movements like cuddling or back arching
- Eye movements and arm/leg movements

b) Recognize these signs and encourage the infant's efforts at communication:

- Respond quickly by comforting and smiling
- Provide meaning to infants' communicative efforts
- Capture infants' attention by:
 - Using a sing-song, high-pitched tone of voice
 - Exaggerated facial expressions and wide-open eyes
- Pay attention to an infant's style of:
 - expressing emotions (quiet/observant or emotional/active)
 - preferred level of activity
 - tendency to be social

2. TODDLERS: 12 TO 36 MONTHS (3 Years)

a) Their communication consists of:

- Gestures and grunts
- One and two word sentences
- Positive/negative emotional expressions
- Body movements

b) Recognize these signs and encourage the toddler's efforts at communication:

- Respond quickly and predictably to toddler's communicative efforts
- Expand on toddler's one- and two-word communications, and build sentences around their words
- Keep a word diary in which you record toddler's new words
- Give toddler one direction at a time, and provide warnings before transitions
- Try to maintain the same routine when visiting
- During play with toddlers, let them have control by following their lead and letting them create the play

3. PRESCHOOLERS: 3 TO 6 YEARS

a) Their communication consists of:

- Full sentences that are grammatically correct
- By age 6, being able to tell events of story in correct order
- Talking about past experiences
- Experimenting with pretend and fantasy play
- Talking about imaginary experiences
- Recognizing connection between spoken and written word
- Recognizing traffic/restaurant signs
- Talking to themselves when playing and working on tasks

b) Recognize these signs and encourage the child's efforts at communication:

- Ask preschoolers questions about past events; probe for details
- Encourage preschoolers to talk about their feelings — both positive and negative
- Create opportunities for preschoolers to engage in fantasy and pretend play
- When preschoolers are talking to themselves, let them be. Self-talk helps preschoolers focus on what they are doing

4. SCHOOL AGE: 6 TO 12 YEARS

a) Their communication consists of:

- Full sentences and asking more questions
- Relating past experiences in vivid detail
- Seeking more information and justification for the way things are
- Understanding and talking about another person's perspective
- Beginning to recognize the influence their behavior can have on others
- Handling more pieces of information at once
- Effectively engaging in goal setting and problem-solving with assistance from adults

b) Recognize these signs and encourage the child's efforts at communication:

- Keep up with school-age children's activities, likes, dislikes and peer relationships
- Help school-age children set goals and solve problems
- Take time to discuss strategies/solutions and have the child talk about possible outcomes
- Help children understand the implications of their behavior toward others
- Encourage children to talk about their feelings and the possible reasons for their emotions
- Help children learn conflict management skills by acting out pretend peer interactions to show how conflicts can be resolved

5. ADOLESCENTS: 12 TO 18 YEARS

a) Their communication consists of:

- Talking in-depth about themselves and their relationships with others
- Trying to understand who they are becoming and what others think and feel about them
- Talking about how they are different from their parents and recognizing that their parents are imperfect people
- Typically acting more negative and having more conflicts with their parents
- Spending more time alone and with their friends and less time with their families

b) Recognize these signs and encourage adolescents' efforts at communication:

- Be sensitive and responsive to the adolescent experience.
- Recognize that each adolescent is going through major social and physical changes; practice putting yourself in their place when you find yourself disagreeing or growing impatient.
- Stay interested, and gently ask questions and seek explanations for their behavior.
- Maintain the relationship by providing a balance between expecting personal responsibility from them and offering consistent support.
- Be flexible.
- Seek to understand the adolescent perspective first before trying to be understood yourself.
- Maintain the adult-child.
- Recognize that they are developing ideas that might differ from your own. Unless these ideas place the adolescent in danger of harm to self or others, accept their beliefs as an example of their developing individuality.