

# PARENT-CHILD ENGAGEMENT: GETTING YOUNG CHILDREN READY FOR SCHOOL

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CHERYL FEHRINGER, M.A., CCC-SLP

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT AND DISABILITY

# WHAT IS SCHOOL READINESS?

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- Is it knowing how to sort colors and shapes?
- Is it knowing letters and numbers?
- Is it knowing how to read?

# WHAT IF SCHOOL READINESS MEANT SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT?

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Social engagement involves the ability to maintain interactions by responding to and initiating social bids with others (Ingersoll & Dvortcsak, 2019) through verbal or non-verbal means.

# FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

(Taylor, Laurel 2016)

- ❖ Self-Regulation
- ❖ Tolerant of Shared Space
- ❖ Shared Focus
- ❖ Shared Pleasure



## NEXT STEPS

(Taylor, Laurel 2016)

❖ Proximity to a Partner

❖ Parallel Play

❖ Joint Attention

❖ Reciprocal Exchange



# KEY COMPONENTS TO BUILDING SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

(INGERSOLL & DVORTCSAK, 2019)

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- Follow Your Child's Lead



- Imitate Your Child

- Model and Expand Communication



# KEY COMPONENTS TO BUILDING SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT - CONTINUED

(INGERSOLL & DVORTCSAK, 2019)

- Playful Obstruction



- Balanced Turns



- Communicative Temptations





# WHEN CAN WE PRACTICE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT?

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## ❖ Set up structured playtime

- aim for 20 minutes per day
- can be broken up into 5 minute chunks.

## ❖ Build it into easy home routines

- washing hands
- mealtime
- brushing teeth
- night time routine

# SCREEN USE GUIDELINES

(AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS)



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- Until 18 months of age: limit screen use to video chatting along with an adult only (e.g., with grandparents or when parent is out of town)
  - Between 18 and 24 months screen time should be limited to one hour a day of watching educational programming with a caregiver.
  - For children 2-5, limit non-educational screen time to about 1 hour per weekday and 3 hours cumulative over the weekend.
  - For ages 6 and older, encourage healthy habits and limit activities that include screens.

# TURN OFF SCREENS

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## ❖ During Family Meals

- Placemat Photos
- Ask open-ended questions
- Model conversation

## ❖ Driving in the Car

- Label places you see
- Ask open-ended questions
- Narrate directions

## ❖ Waiting for Appointments or Meals - Carry a backpack with activities

- Pipe cleaners
- Crayons and paper
- Book
- Small puzzle

## ❖ Bedtime

- Read a book
- Listen to soft music
- Retell the day

# REFERENCES

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- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. (2020, February – Updated in 2022, Number 54). *Facts for Families Guide, Screen Time and Children*. aacap.org
- Ingersoll, B., Dvortcsak, A. *Teaching Social Communication to Children with Autism & Other Development Delays – Second Edition* (2019)
- Taylor, K., Laurel, M. *Social Engagement & the Steps to Being Social: A Practical Guide for Teaching Social Skills to Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder* (2016)
- Website: <https://aussiechildcarenetwork.com.au/articles/teaching-children/using-open-ended-questions-with-children>