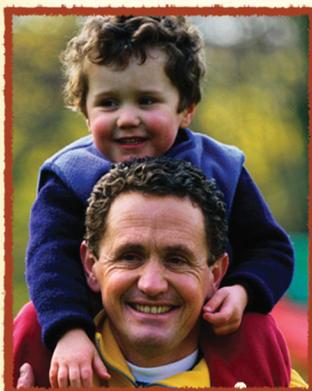


# Helping Children Express Their Wants and Needs



Project funded by the Child Care and Head Start Bureaus in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



## What Works Brief Training Kit #19

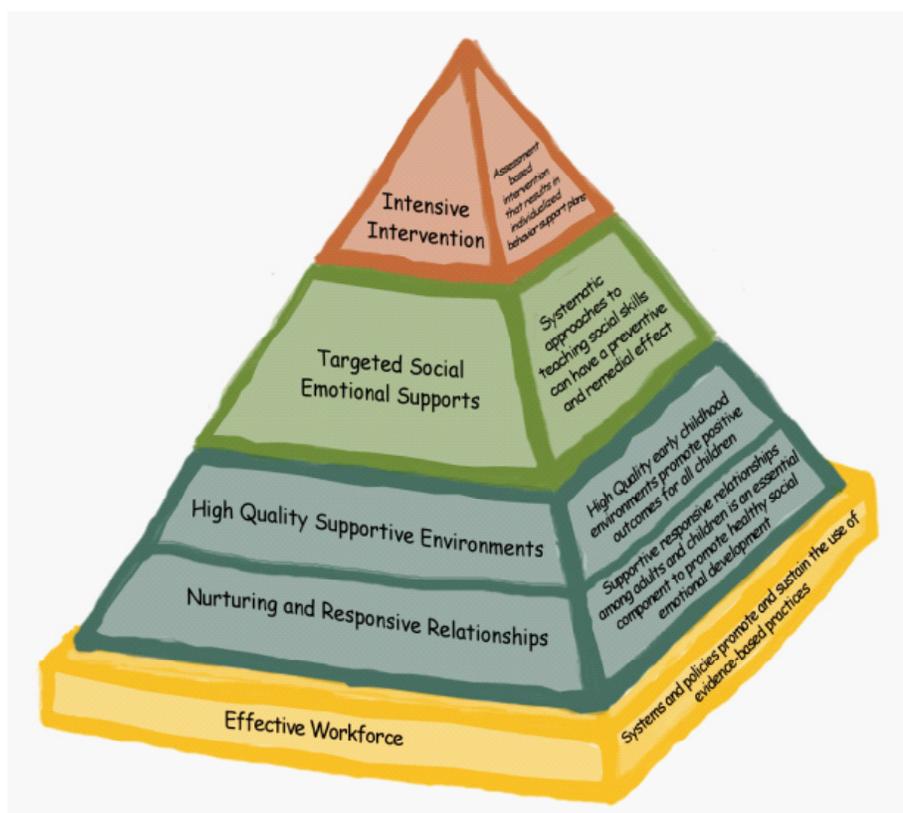


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[www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/)

June 2009

The **What Works Brief Training Kits** were developed to help in-service and pre-service providers conduct staff development activities. Each kit is based on one What Works Brief and contains the following items: presenter's PowerPoint note pages, participant handouts, activity ideas, pre-training survey, demographic form, training evaluation, and training certificate.

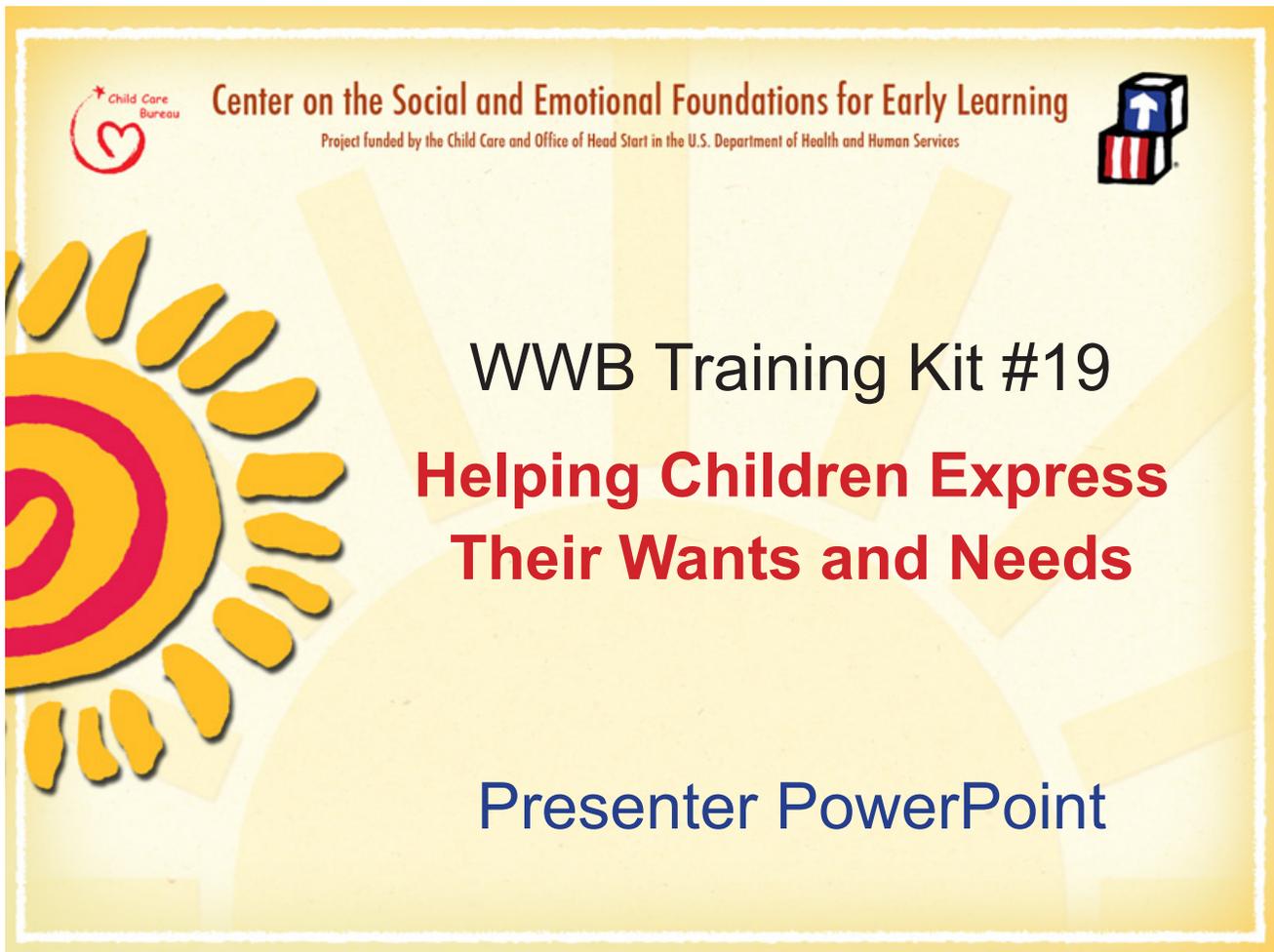
The What Works Brief Training Kits are grounded in the Pyramid model depicted below which provides a framework for describing the four interrelated levels of practice that address the social and emotional development of all children. The Pyramid is designed to guide practitioners in understanding the importance of children's social-emotional competence in terms of school readiness and the prevention of challenging behavior. This What Works Brief Training Kit relates to the "Targeted Social Emotional Supports" level of the Pyramid.



We welcome your feedback as you provide professional development activities with these materials.

Special thanks to the Meginnis Endowment at UIUC for funding to help support this effort and to the following individuals who developed the What Works Brief Training Kits materials: Micki Ostrosky, Hedda Meadan, Greg Cheatham, Monique Mills, Sallee Beneke, Nancy Gaumer, Amy Hayden, Elenor Rentschler, and Angel Fettig.

## Presenter Notes



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Presenter should be familiar with the content in *What Works Brief #19* (available at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel>).
- Welcome participants.
- Take care of any logistics (e.g., length of time for session, break, handouts, etc.).
- Consider using the *What Works Brief #19* handout as a supplemental resource.
- Pass out the pre-training survey for all participants to complete and turn in.
- As you present the workshop, remind participants to take the culture and background of children into consideration and to work hand-in-hand with parents when they select target behaviors, since some behaviors may be part of the child's culture.

# Activity 1

## Pair-Think-Share

- **Pair** with a partner
- **Identify** some ways in which children make their wants and needs known
- **Think** about how communication difficulties could affect this ability
- **Share** your thoughts



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### *Speaker Notes:*

- **Assign** partners.
- Ask participants to **complete the chart** on the Activity 1 handout.
- **Share thoughts** with the large group by having some pairs share their ideas.

Participants may share things like:

- Crying to request a toy to play with
- Hitting to take a conversational turn
- Throwing a temper tantrum to end an activity
- Grabbing to comment that s/he wants someone/something

## Activity 1

| <b>Want/Need</b> | <b>How child meets want/<br/>need</b> | <b>Possible<br/>challenging<br/>behavior</b> |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Snack            | Point, ask                            | Hit, cry, grab,<br>scream                    |
|                  |                                       |  |
|                  |                                       |  |
|                  |                                       |  |
|                  |                                       |  |

### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Ask participants to think of and record three additional examples.

# Communication and Behavior

- Communication—the process of exchanging meaning between individuals
- Children communicate in order to get their wants and needs met
- If communication skills are impaired, children fail to get their wants and needs met
- When wants and needs are not met, problem behavior increases



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## *Speaker Notes:*

- One can communicate by
  - Talking
  - Using body language (e.g., stance, distance from others), using gestures (e.g., pointing, reaching, or giving), making facial expressions
  - Establishing and/or engaging in joint attention (e.g., sharing attention, directing the attention of another person, or following the attention of another person)
  - Making vocalizations (e.g., grunts, cries)
- Shyness and extreme aggression may impair children's ability to get their wants and needs met.
- Children may have expressive (what they can express/articulate) or receptive (what they can understand) communication disorders or delays. Children with communication disorders or delays often exhibit challenging behaviors when their needs are not met. Additionally, communicative attempts are often misinterpreted by adults.

## Activity 2

- Write down some various ways in which one or two children whom you have served communicate. This will include things they say, gestures, body language, etc.
- Have you noticed any cultural differences in communication style? Note those as well!



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### *Speaker Notes:*

- Provide paper for participants to brainstorm the communication abilities of the children they serve.
- Children from some cultures (e.g., African American, Hawaiian) may communicate using language varieties that can be misinterpreted by people who do not speak this language variety (e.g., “She been here” (“She has been playing with me for a long time and is still playing with me”) vs. “She been here” (“She was here but she’s gone now”).
- Children from some cultures may be from homes where multiple conversations are taking place at one time. Therefore they may carry on a conversation while others “have the floor.”
- The English of bilingual students may be influenced by their first language (e.g., “The girl no can read” follows Spanish syntax: “La nina no pueda leer”).
- Students from cultures where it is inappropriate to look an authority figure in the eye may not make direct eye contact with their teachers.

# Communication Characteristics of Children with Disabilities

Children with communication disorders may display the following characteristics in multiple environments:

- Use of limited number of words
- Difficulty understanding concepts
- Problems following directions
- Displaying frustration when trying to communicate



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## *Speaker Notes:*

- It is necessary to collaborate with family members to see if the child's communication is impaired at home as well as school. If not, then the child may simply be displaying language differences related to his/her culture, or language differences due to acquiring a second language or second dialect.

# Strategies That Facilitate Improved Communication Skills

- Reading a child's body language
- Providing a child with choices
- Providing picture schedules to help a child move easily between activities
- Segmenting multiple-step directions
- Providing cues to help a child better understand expectations
- Modeling target communication skills



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## *Speaker Notes:*

- Check with family members or members of a child's speech community to determine what is culturally appropriate for the child.
- Be sure that strategies can easily be implemented in multiple settings (e.g., home, church, school, grocery store, etc).
- Example strategies:
  - Reading a child's body language.
  - Providing choices: What would the child like to do first?
  - Providing picture schedules.
  - Simplifying complex or vague commands: Instead of "It's time to go home, get your things," a teacher could say "Go get your backpack. Put this newsletter in your backpack for Mom and Dad. Now get your coat."
  - Providing cues: verbal (e.g., "Turn on the water first"), pictorial/visual (e.g., showing a picture of a child turning on the water), nonverbal (e.g., demonstrating how to wash hands, pointing to the faucet when telling the child to turn on the water), or tactile (e.g., taking a child's hand and helping him/her turn on the faucet).
  - Modeling: Use words that the child needs to know (e.g., "more," "help," "toy," "play," and "juice") as frequently as possible throughout the day. Repetition across communicative contexts is key!

## Activity 3

### Pair-Think-Share

- **Pair** with a partner
- **Identify** one specific example of how you would implement each of the strategies listed in the lefthand column
- **Think** about the impact it might have on a child's ability to make his/her wants and needs known.
- **Share** your thoughts



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### *Speaker Notes:*

- Assign partners.
- Pairs should write a specific example of how they would implement each of the strategies listed on the lefthand column of the Activity 3 handout.
- Share thoughts with the large group by having some pairs share their ideas.

### Example ideas to share:

- Reading a child's body language: "Jesse turned to face the snack table whenever she was hungry. After a snack, she was able to focus on story time or whatever activity we were engaged in."
- After completing the activity, thank the participants for participating and have them complete the evaluation form, if appropriate.
- Distribute the certificate of attendance if appropriate.

# Pre-training Survey

WWBTK #19: Helping Children Express Their Wants and Needs

☀️ What are two behaviors associated with children's difficulty expressing their wants and needs (both verbally and non-verbally)?

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☀️ What are two strategies to facilitate children's expression of their wants and needs?

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☀️ In what ways can children's culture impact their verbal and non-verbal expression of wants and needs?

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☀️ What are the three most pressing issues you face as an early childhood professional?

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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# Pre-training Survey

WWBTK #19: Helping Children Express Their Wants and Needs

## Demographic Information

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Describe yourself (check the boxes that best describe you):

Your gender:  Female  Male

Your age:  under 30  31 to 40  41 to 50  
 51-60  61 and above

Your ethnicity:  European American  Asian-Pacific  Hispanic  
 African-American  American Indian  Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Check your current teaching certificates:

- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary Education
- Special Education
- Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Check the one that best describes your education:

- High school or GED
- Some college
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Your teaching experience:

How many year(s) have you taught preschoolers? \_\_\_\_\_

How many year(s) have you taught preschoolers with IEPs? \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for completing this survey.

# Participant Notes



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## WWB Training Kit #19

### Helping Children Express Their Wants and Needs

#### Participant PowerPoint

## Notes

### Communication & Behavior

- Communication-
- Children communicate in order to get their \_\_\_\_\_  
If communication skills are impaired, the child fails to get their wants and needs met
- When wants and needs are not met, \_\_\_\_\_



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### Communication Disorder Characteristics

- Children with communication disorders may display the following characteristics in multiple environments:

- 
- 
- 
- 



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## Strategies that Facilitate Improved Communication Skills

- Reading a child's \_\_\_\_\_
- Providing a child with \_\_\_\_\_
- Providing \_\_\_\_\_ to help the child move easily between activities
- \_\_\_\_\_ multiple-step directions
- Providing \_\_\_\_\_ to help child better understand expectations
- \_\_\_\_\_ target communication skills



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## Notes

# Activity 1

## Pair-Think-Share

WWBTK #19: Helping Children Express Their Wants and Needs

Directions: Pair with a partner. Identify some ways in which children make their wants and needs known. Think about how communication difficulties could affect this ability. Share your thoughts.

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| Want/Need | How child meets want/need | Possible challenging behavior |
|-----------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Snack     | Point<br>Ask              | Hit<br>Cry<br>Grab            |
|           |                           |                               |
|           |                           |                               |
|           |                           |                               |

# Activity 2

WWBTK #19: Helping Children Express Their Wants and Needs

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Directions: Write down some various ways in which one or two children who you have served communicate. This will include things they say, gestures, body language, etc.

Have you noticed any cultural differences in communication style? Note those as well!

CSEFEL



# Activity 3

## Pair-Think-Share

WWBTK #19: Helping Children Express Their Wants and Needs

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Directions: Pair with a partner. Identify one example of how you would/ have implemented each of the strategies listed on the previous slide. Think about the impact it had on the child's ability to make his/her wants and needs known. Share your thoughts.

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# CSEFEL Training Workshop Evaluation

WWBTK #19: Helping Children Express Their Wants and Needs

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Your position: \_\_\_\_\_

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☀ Circle the number that best expresses your reaction to each of the following items:

- |  |                       |   |   |   |   |                        |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|------------------------|
| 1. This topic is important to me.            | (Extremely Important) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not Important at All) |
| 2. The amount of information covered was     | (Just Right)          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Inadequate)           |
| 3. The information covered was clear.        | (Very Clear)          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Vague)                |
| 4. The activities conducted were beneficial. | (Very)                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not at All)           |
| 5. The handouts provided were useful.        | (Very)                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not at All)           |
| 6. Overall, this presentation was            | (Very Useful)         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not Useful)           |

☀ Things I liked about this presentation:

☀ Things I would change about this presentation:

☀ Additional information I would like on this topic:

☀ New things I am going to try as a result of this workshop:

☀ Additional comments:

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## *Certificate of Training* Helping Children Express Their Wants and Needs

This is to certify that

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successfully completed the above training

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*Trainer*

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*Trainer*



**Center on the Social and Emotional  
Foundations for Early Learning**

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*Participant*

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*Date and Location*

*Additional training resources are available at: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>*