

FROM
CONCRETE
TO ABSTRACT:
DEVELOPING
SYMBOLISM
WITH
CHILDREN
WHO ARE
DEAFBLIND

Dr. Marina McCormick

Region 4 Regional Day School Program for
the Deaf Coordinator

Region 4 Education Service Center

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What does
it mean?



Our Road Map

- Define early emergent literacy.
- Define symbolism and its importance to literacy.
- Explore instructional strategies that promote symbolism.
- Identify next steps for when you return home.



What is Early Emergent Literacy?

Let's get clear about what we're talking about!

What's happening here?



https://youtu.be/_JmA2CIUvUY?si=FmsIXSuOvOyhBtJK

What's happening here?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbGuHNLEtms>



Early emergent literacy is...




- Doing give-and-take activities
- Developing symbolism
- Developing the groundwork for conventional reading and writing



The Struggle for Symbolism

Why is this key literacy skill
so difficult to develop?

Levels of Symbolism

Icons	Indices	Symbols
		<p>CAT</p> 

To present
symbols or not
to present
symbols?
That is the
question.



An argument
for why we
should provide
symbols for our
students who
deafblind



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rlwA7C-vc8>

Developing Symbolism

How do we help infants and
toddlers with deafblindness gain
symbolism?



Developmental milestones that are predictive of symbolism

- Joint attention to others and objects
- Representation in play
- Vocalizations and gestures
- First words and categories

Developing joint attention

Utilizing physical proximity

Being highly responsive to the child's attempts for attention

Informing the child of the presence of others around them

Using the child's preferred objects

Demonstrating how to explore an object before letting the child experiences it

Enjoying a laugh together



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecMXdHge5Ho>

Representation in play


- Evaluating play
- Modeling appropriate play behaviors



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pseT3EZKa6I>



Promoting vocalizations and gestures

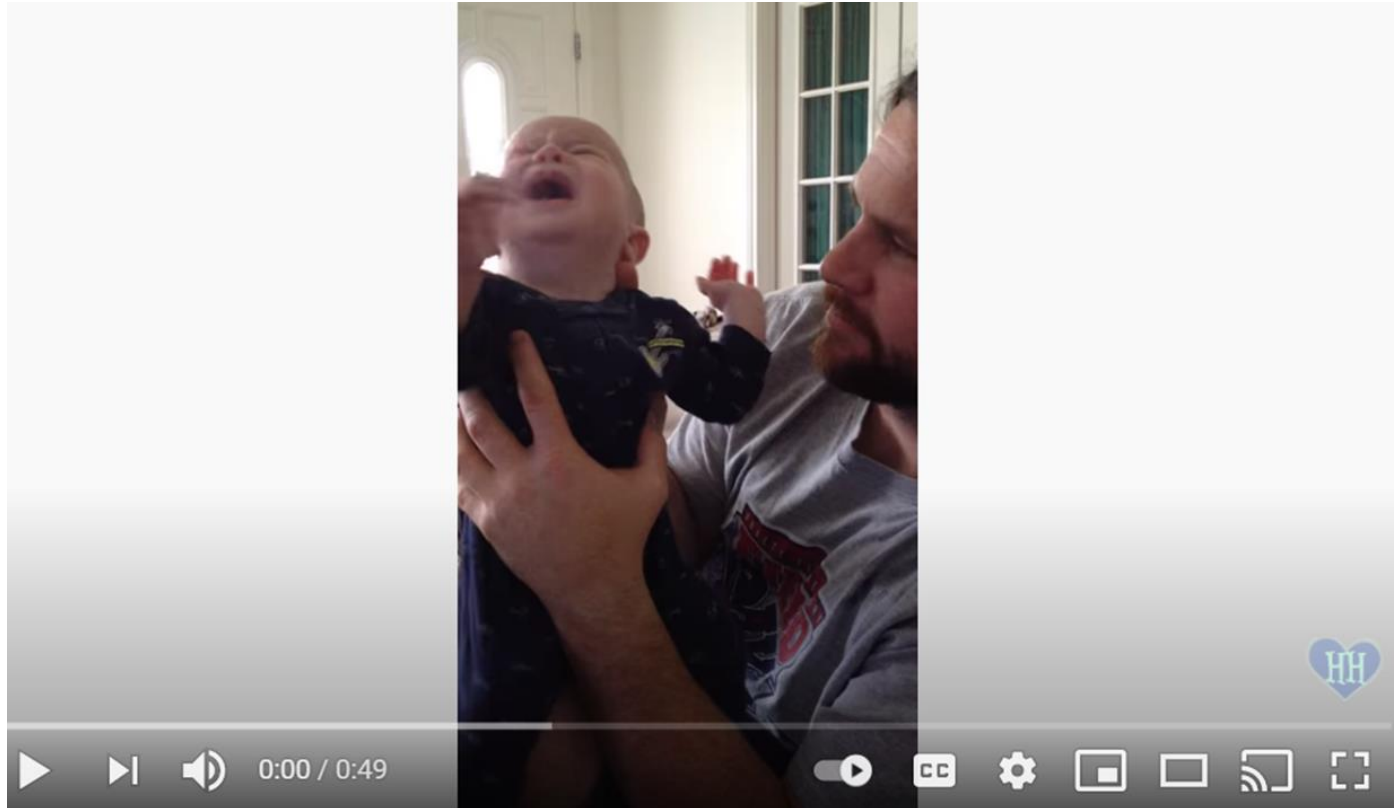
- Maximize the child's auditory access
 - Reinforce babbling, especially consonant-vowel and interactive babbling
 - Conduct functional analysis of vocalizations and reinforce
 - Develop Bodily Emotional Traces (BET) by focusing on what interests and excites the child to develop experiences
 - Engage in mutual tactual exploration with the child
- 

Auditory training for infants



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0GhjsBsmxlc>

Creating BETs

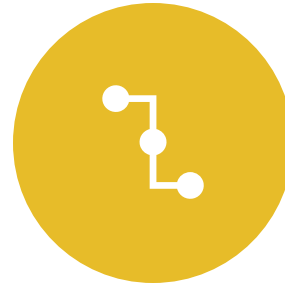


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-G_so9m2OM

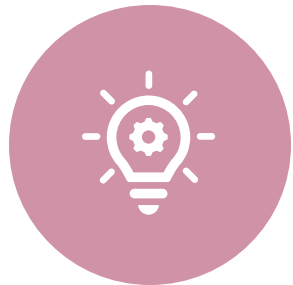
Encouraging first words and categories



- Play action-evoked social games like “Pat-a-Cake” and “Peekaboo”.



- Repetition of experiences with objects in context



- Introduce new objects related to each other after an ample amount of repetition with old objects.



- Capitalize on the context of actions

Context of action in action



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IUV65sV8nu0>

Thoughts to ponder

- Are you currently working on symbolism with parents of infants and toddlers with deafblindness?
- If so, what are you currently doing? How's it going?
- What is one idea you want to try with your parents when you return home?
- Is it possible to use these strategies with older students who are deafblind?





Thank you!

Enjoy the rest of the conference!

References

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