

# Building Early Literacy and Language Skills



## Critical First Steps

### Straight Talk Live Chat®

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# Chat Overview

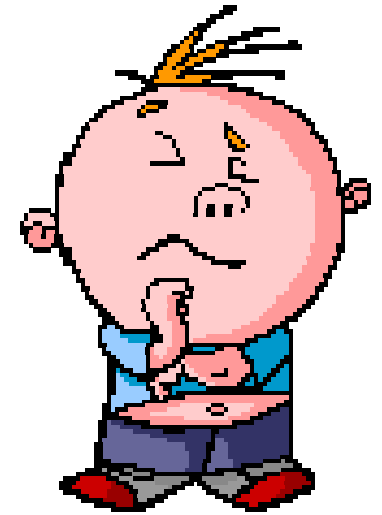
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1. Perception of literacy development
2. Early literacy foundations
3. Assessment issues
4. Trends in early literacy

- **Early literacy** learning is defined as taking place from birth to 6 years of age (Robyak, Masiello, Trivette, Roper and Dunst, 2007).



# Perception of Literacy Development





# What are your feelings about how children develop literacy?

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1. In order to learn to read, a child needs to know letters names and letter sounds.
2. Becoming literate is a continuous, developmental process that begins very early in life.
3. Early reading and writing practices exhibited by children result from direct instruction and guidance.
4. To become literate, young children must have many and varied opportunities to read and write.
5. The teaching of literacy must be systematic and sequential in operation.
6. Reading and writing activities should be provided throughout the day in all areas of curriculum.
7. Reading includes the mechanical skill of turning printed symbols into sounds that are language.
8. Play is one of the ways for young children to learn about written language.



# Evidence - Based Reading Research Perspective

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- Focuses on a core set of knowledge and skills young children must develop to become successful readers and writers along with the strategies that can be used to teach these skills through explicit instruction. (1, 3, 5, 7)

## Emergent Literacy Perspective

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- Places a heavy value on the social and meaning-based aspects of literacy and creating a learning environment for children to explore and learn. (2, 4, 6, 8)



# 8 Principles for a BLENDED Approach to Early Literacy Instruction

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1. Focus on the core skills that are predictive of successful reading.
2. Oral language lays the foundation.
3. Storybook reading is the cornerstone.
4. Create print-rich environments.
5. Provide many opportunities for listening, talking, reading, and writing.
6. Use developmentally appropriate forms of direct instruction.



# 8 Principles for a BLENDED Approach to Early Literacy Instruction

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7. Help parents support their children's language and literacy learning.
8. Early literacy assessment and instruction should be guided by standards that define the knowledge and skills needed to become successful readers and writers.

(Vukelich & Christie, 2004)



# National Early Literacy Panel Results

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- Oral language, phonological processing and print knowledge are strongly predictive of how well children will learn to read and write.
  - **Systematic and sequential**
- Targeted practices are more likely to be effective than non-targeted practices.
  - **Direct instruction**
- When many unrelated skills are targeted simultaneously, the learning outcomes are not as strong as compared to interventions that focus on a one skill or a set of inter-related skills.
  - **Explicit instruction**

Dunst, Trivette, Hamby, 2007



# More Academics in Preschool and Kindergarten?

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- “Play-based, as opposed to “drill and practice’ curricula designed with children’s developmental needs in mind can foster academic and attention skills in ways that are engaging and fun.”

(Duncan, 2007, *Developmental Psychology*)

# Early Literacy Foundations



# Predicting Poor Reading

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We can determine with over 90% accuracy whether or not a child in kindergarten will be in the bottom 10% of readers in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade by looking at:

- phonological awareness
- semantics (vocabulary)
- orthographic knowledge

Wagner, 2001



# What We Need to Teach Young Children

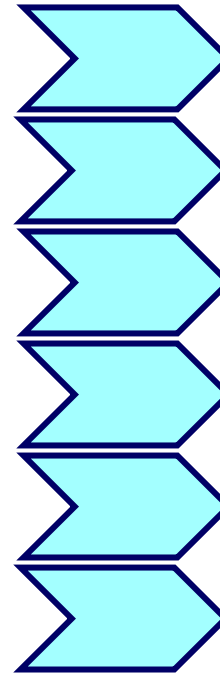
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- Oral Language
  - Speaking and listening
- Phonological Processing
  - Conscious awareness and ability to manipulate sound structures of words
- Print Knowledge
  - Concepts of print
  - Alphabet knowledge
  - Being a writer

# Early Literacy

- Oral Language
- Phonological Processing
- Print Knowledge

Leads to



# Early Reading

(NRP, 2000)

- Phonemic Awareness
- Phonics
- Vocabulary
- Fluency
- Comprehension
- and
- Spelling
- Writing

(Moats, 2006)

## Early Literacy Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment Dates: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

### Oral Language

- \_\_\_ Uses speech that is understandable with only age appropriate errors
- \_\_\_ Understands concepts such as top/bottom, under/over, beginning/middle/end, first/last/next, before/after, one/all/, more/less, same/not same
- \_\_\_ Uses word endings such as plurals, possessives, -ed, -ing
- \_\_\_ Uses sentences with correct word order and appropriate length and includes pronouns, verbs, and question forms
- \_\_\_ Relates a story with three to five events

### Phonological Awareness

#### **Rhyme**

- \_\_\_ Imitates rhythmic patterns in songs, finger plays, and rhymes
- \_\_\_ Fills in missing words to known songs, rhymes, finger plays
- \_\_\_ Identifies words that rhyme
- \_\_\_ Produces a word that rhymes with a given word
- \_\_\_ Produces a string of three words that rhyme

#### **Blending**

- \_\_\_ Blends words into syllables (cow-boy)
- \_\_\_ Blends beginning sound to rest of word (f-ish)
- \_\_\_ Blends words with three sounds (s-u-n)

#### **Segmenting**

- \_\_\_ Segments words into syllables
- \_\_\_ Identifies the number of syllables in words
- \_\_\_ Identifies words that begin with the same sound
- \_\_\_ Segments beginning sound from rest of word (s-un)
- \_\_\_ Segments sounds in words with three sounds (h-a-t)

### Print Knowledge

#### **Print Awareness**

- \_\_\_ Holds book right side up and turns one page at a time
- \_\_\_ Identifies the pictures and the words on a page
- \_\_\_ Recognizes symbols and print seen in environment
- \_\_\_ Follows print using left to right sequencing
- \_\_\_ Points to words using 1:1 word correspondence
- \_\_\_ Recognizes own written name

#### **Alphabet Knowledge**

- \_\_\_ Sings the Alphabet Song
- \_\_\_ Identifies uppercase letters
- \_\_\_ Identifies lowercase letters
- \_\_\_ Identifies the sounds of the letters
- \_\_\_ Produces the sounds of the letters

#### **Print Development**

- \_\_\_ Writes using scribble-like markings
- \_\_\_ Writes using individual letter like characters or mock letters
- \_\_\_ Writes using recognizable, random letter strings
- \_\_\_ Writes using semiphonetic spellings
- \_\_\_ Writes using phonetic spellings

Adapted from © *Building Early Literacy and Language Skills* (Paulson, Noble, Jepson, & van den Pol, 2001). Sopris West

# Building Early Literacy and Language Skills



A Resource and Activity Guide for Preschool and Kindergarten

Lucy Hart Paulson • Linda Attridge Noble • Stacia Jepson • Rick van den Pol



# Oral Language Skills

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Basic concepts and vocabulary

Speech intelligibility

Sentence structure

Narratives

# The Mitten

## by Jan Brett



A snowshoe rabbit came hopping by. He stopped for a moment to admire his winter coat. It was then that he saw the mitten, and he wiggled in, feet first. The mole didn't think there was room for both of them, but when he saw the rabbit's kickers he moved over.

Next a hedgehog came snuffling along. Having spent the day looking under wet leaves for things to eat, he decided to move into the mitten and warm himself. The mole and the rabbit were bumped and jostled, but not being ones to argue with someone covered with prickles, they made room.

As soon as the hedgehog disappeared into the mitten, a big owl, attracted by the commotion, swooped down. When he decided to move in also, the mole, the rabbit, and the hedgehog grumbled. But when they saw the owl's glinty talons, they quickly let him in.

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# In 3 paragraphs of “The Mitten”

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Basic concepts and vocabulary

23 potentially unfamiliar words

Speech intelligibility

Complex word structures

Sentence structure

Longest sentence is 23 words

Narratives

2 events in each paragraph



# Phonological Awareness

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Rhyming

Blending

Segmenting

Manipulation



# Phonological Awareness Skill

# Ages at which Skills Begin to Develop

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## Rhyming

Say words in rhymes, finger plays, and songs	2 - 3 years
Match words that rhyme	3 - 5 years
Produce words that rhyme	5 - 6 years

## Alliteration

Match words with same initial sounds	3 - 5 years
Produce words with same initial sound	6 - 7 years

## Blending

Combine <b>syllables</b> to produce words	3 - 4 years
Combine <b>sounds</b> to produce words	4 - 5 years

## Segmentation

Identify <b>syllables</b> in word	3 - 4 years
Identify <b>sounds</b> in words	5 - 6 years

## Manipulation

change words by deleting, adding, and switching sounds	6 - 7 years and up
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# Hickity Pickity Bumble Bee

Sing the song using a bumble bee puppet:  
*Hickity Pickity Bumble Bee, please say your name for me.*

Have the children tap their knees for each syllable in a child's name.

**Ja - cob**

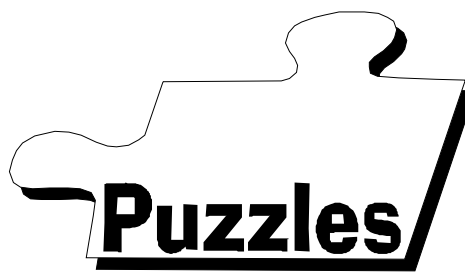
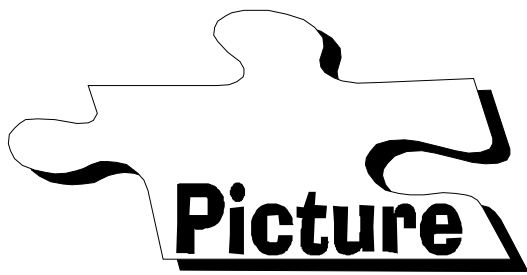
**Ti - ffa - ny**

**Scott**

**Sa - man - tha**



*Hickity Pickity  
Bumble Bee,  
please say  
your name for me.*



(Paulson, et al., 2001)

Cut pictures into pieces that match the number of syllables or the number of sounds in the words. Say the name of the picture in a segmented manner and have the children guess what the picture is. They can put the pieces of the picture together in the puzzle.

For example:

rain - bow

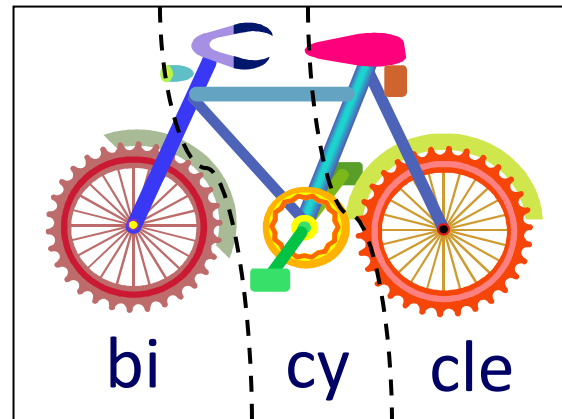
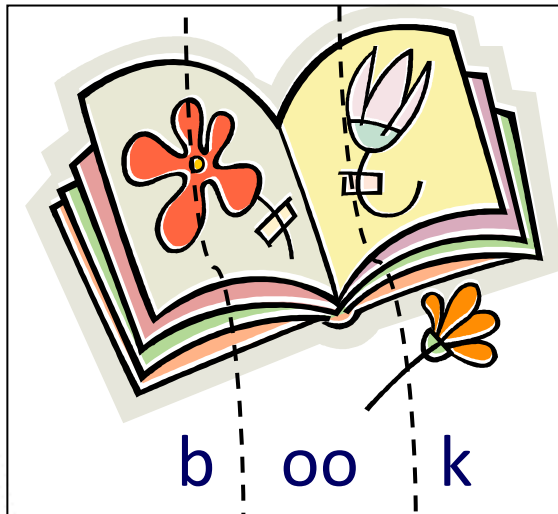
f - i - sh

di - no - saur

c - a - t

am - bu - lance

s - u - n






# Phonological deficits:

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- Separate good readers and poor readers
- Don't go away
- Can be identified early

Problem is at lowest level interfering with decoding, which interferes with identifying the word, which influences meaning

Sally Shaywitz 2003

- 
- The central difficulty in reading disability reflects a deficit within the phonological component of the language system, which has to do with the ability to access the underlying sound structure of words.

Shaywitz, Shaywitz, Blachman, Pugh, Fulbright, Skudlarski, Mencl, Constable, Holahan, Marchione, Fletcher, Lyon, & Gore, 2004



# Print Knowledge

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Concepts of print

–Book and print awareness

Alphabet knowledge leading  
to the alphabetic principle

Becoming a writer



# ABC “EYE Chart

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Make a chart of the alphabet letters that follows the pattern of the ABC song. Use it as a song card or in the housekeeping center as an “eye” chart.

**A B C D**

**E F G**

**H I J K**

**L M N O P**

**Q R S**

**T U V**

**W X**

**Y Z**

**a b c d**

**e f g**

**h i j k**

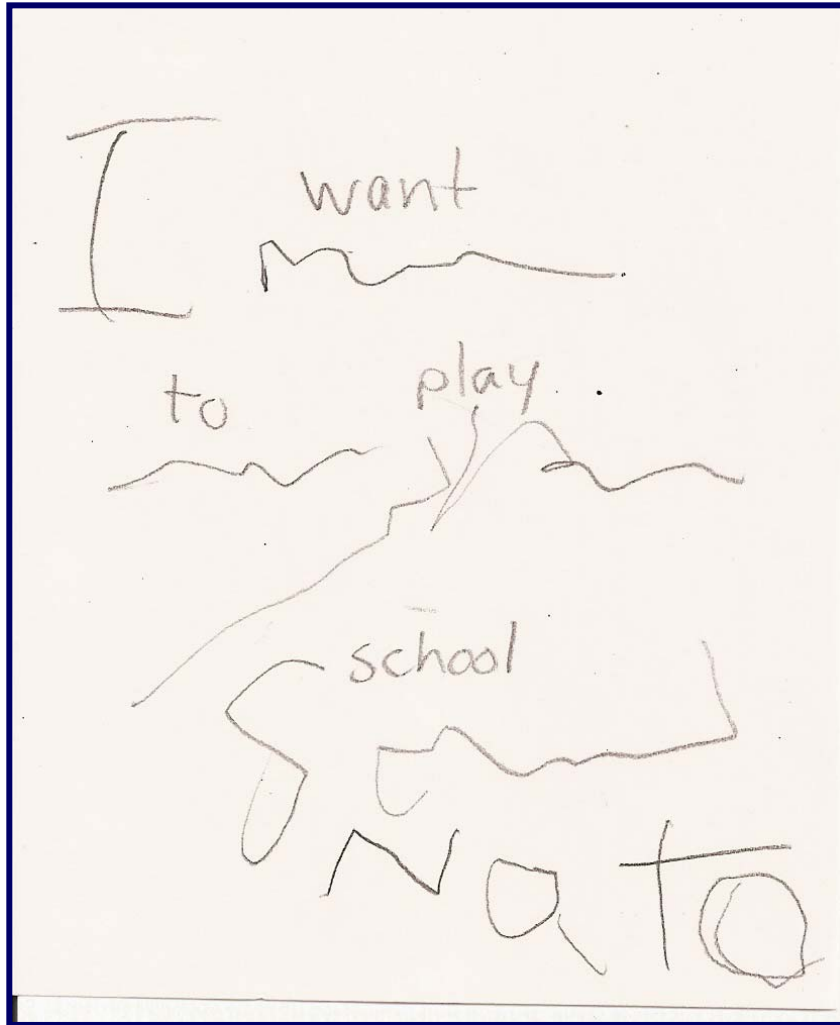
**l m n o p**

**q r s**

**t u v**

**w x**

**y z**



Encourage writing at the child's development al level with lots of functional opportunities to write.

Two best school-entry predictors of how well children will learn to read during the first two years of instruction



**Phonemic Awareness**



**Letter Knowledge**

National Reading Panel, 2000



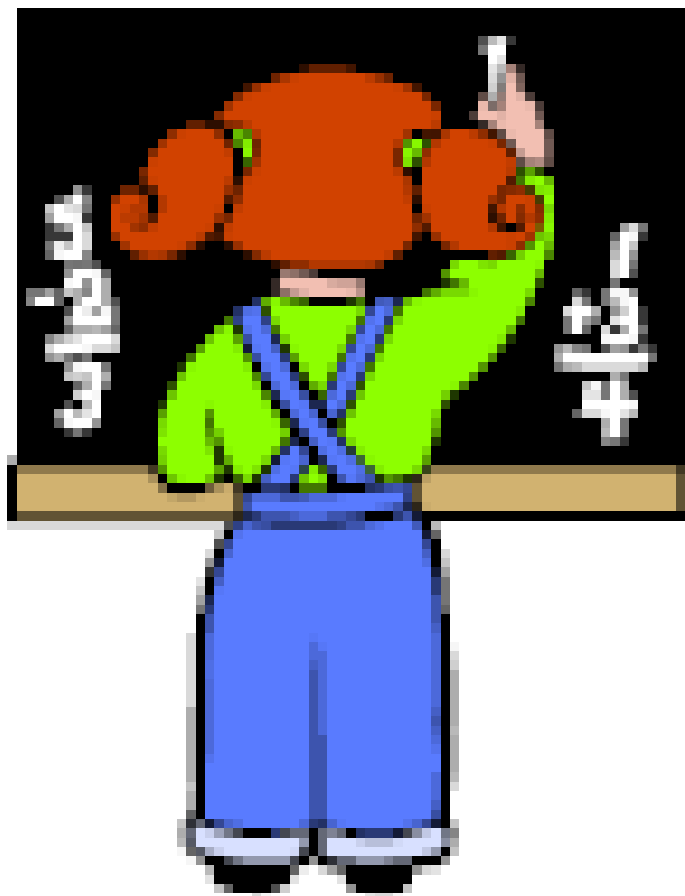
# Important Experiences for Literacy Learning

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- Both formal and informal interactions including:
  - Shared storybook reading
  - Interactive conversations
  - Storytelling and role-playing
  - Rhyming games and finger plays
  - Word play and games
  - Print rich materials
  - Writing opportunities
- Using Developmentally Appropriate Practice



# Trends in Early Literacy



# What about Early Math?

# Early Academic Skills

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- 2007 meta-analysis identified early math skills as an important predictor of later academic success (and discounted the importance of social and behavioral skills) (Duncan et al.).
- 2000 meta-analysis identified that school readiness depends just as much on social and emotional skills as on thinking skills.



# What About Play?

- Play is vital to children's social, emotional and cognitive growth – perhaps the most important tool our children have to work through new experiences, ideas, and feelings.
- American children now spend almost twice as much time in supervised, structured settings as they did two decades ago (Hofferth and Sandburg, 2001).

# What About Play?

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- Children's play has become far less creative, with children mimicking what they have seen in the media, rather than coming up with it by themselves (Carlsson-Paige, 2008).
- Electronic toys often keep children learning at the surface level – telling children what to do – leading to passive learning.
- Toys such as handheld video games can easily become a substitute for social interaction.

# What About Play?

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- Children are absorbing media of all kinds for hours a day.
  - 8 to 18-year-olds spend an average of nearly 6½ hours per day consuming media (Roberts, Foehr, Rideout, 2005).
  - 2 to 7-year-olds average 3 hours of “screen time”
  - 68% of under the age of 2 average just over 2 hours of screen use (Kaiser survey, 2003).

# Impact of “Screen Time”

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- Studies have shown that TV viewing affects early brain growth and the development of social, emotional, and cognitive skills (American Academy of Pediatrics).
- There is an association between media viewing and language development in children under age 2 years (Zimmerman, Christakis, Meltzoff. 2007).

The brain is **activity-dependent**.  
Neural circuits need to be consistently  
activated over time to be strengthened.  
Those that are rarely excited may be  
dropped away.



# What do we do?





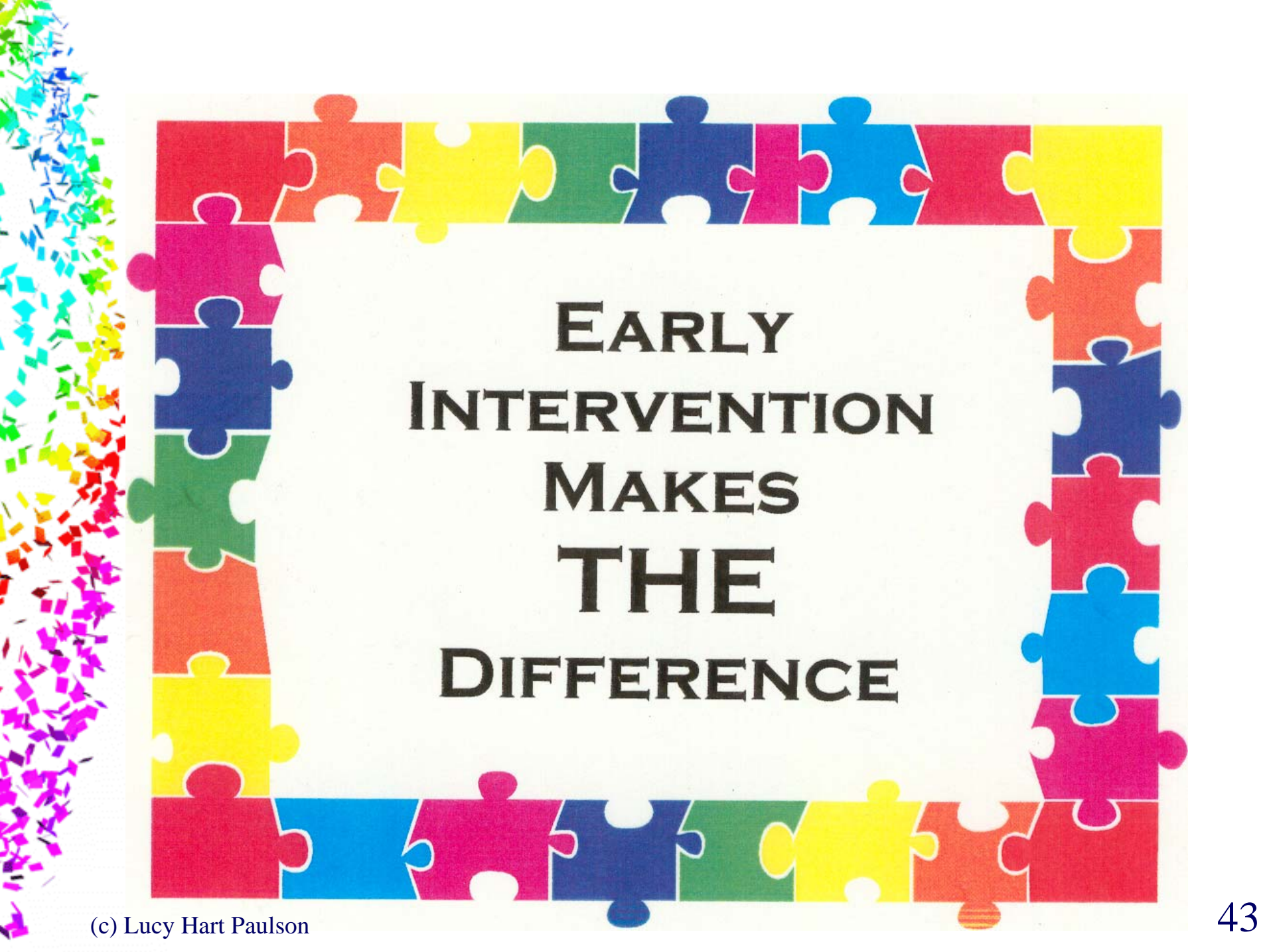
Deepen our own understanding of the processes involved in children's learning, so we can do the best job we know how.



# Chat Overview

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**EARLY  
INTERVENTION  
MAKES  
THE  
DIFFERENCE**