

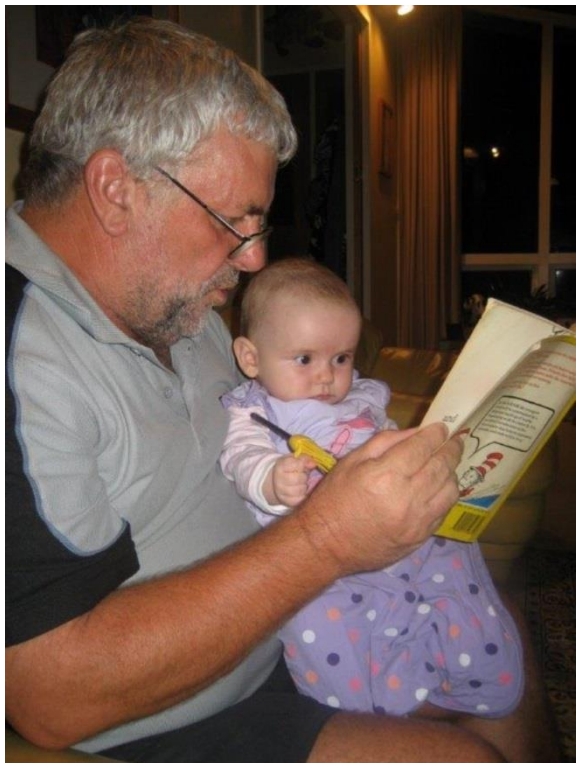


A potential strategy to grow the potential of tamariki
Tamaki Makaurau Education Forum
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Talking Matters

Children are not born smart.
They are made smart by parents talking with them
Talk is nourishment for the brain



Do parents & whānau know that talk builds baby's brain and gives them a platform for school?

My child is too young to learn- she can't talk

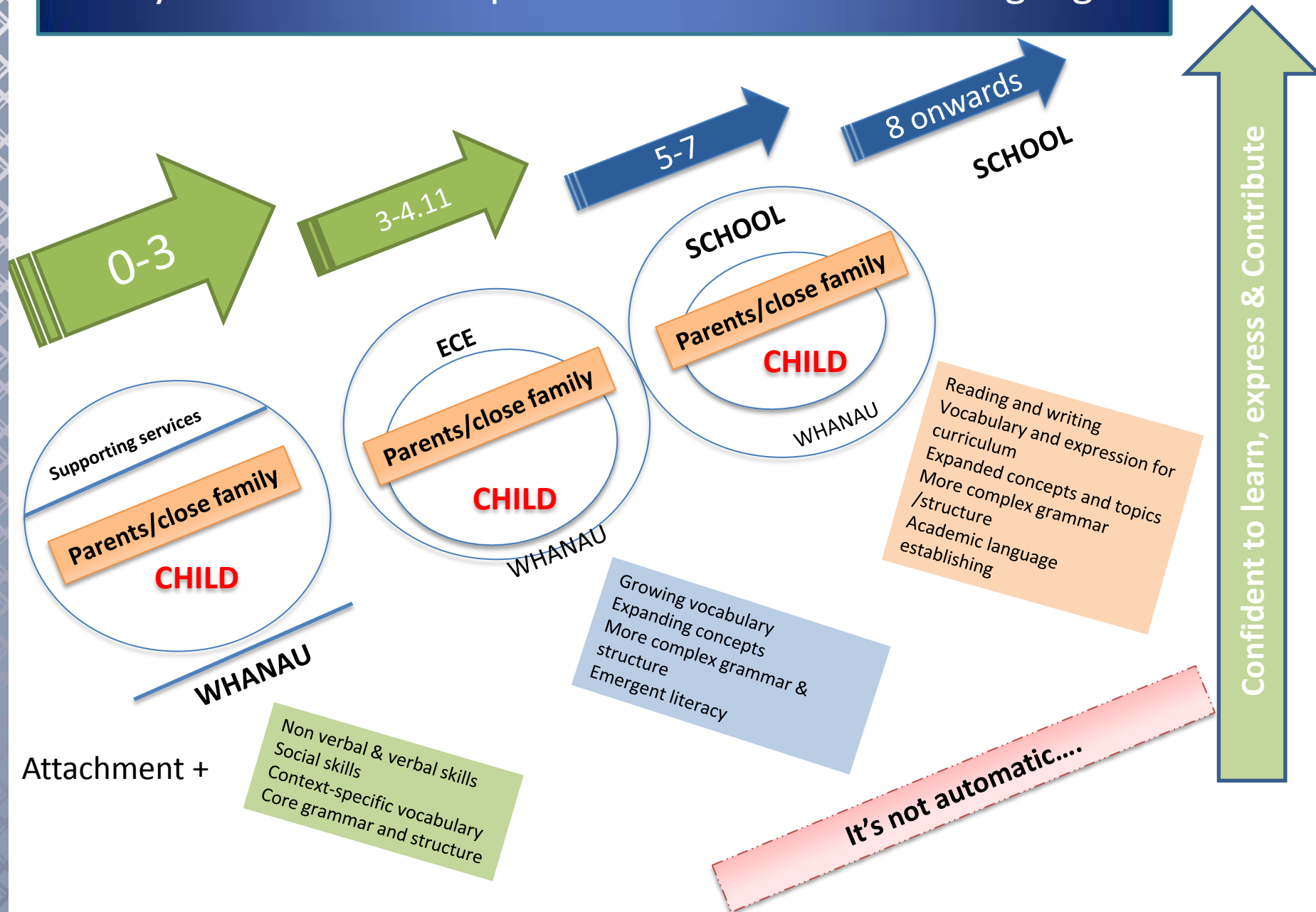
*There's no point in reading to them, they wouldn't get it.
(Father of a 7 month old)*

Parent My kid's dumb, never says anything.

Coach "What do you talk to her about?"

Parent "You think we should talk with them?"

Family and whānau are pivotal to success in oral language



The challenge starts early

- Vocab gap evident by age 2
- 14% of toddlers are read to weekly or less
(Growing up In NZ study)
- Children are starting school with oral skills of 3 year olds (Principals & Children's Commissioner)
- Children from high income families start school with 6,000 + words in English
- Low income children start with 3,000 words: have difficulty communicating ideas and needs & understanding (van Hees)

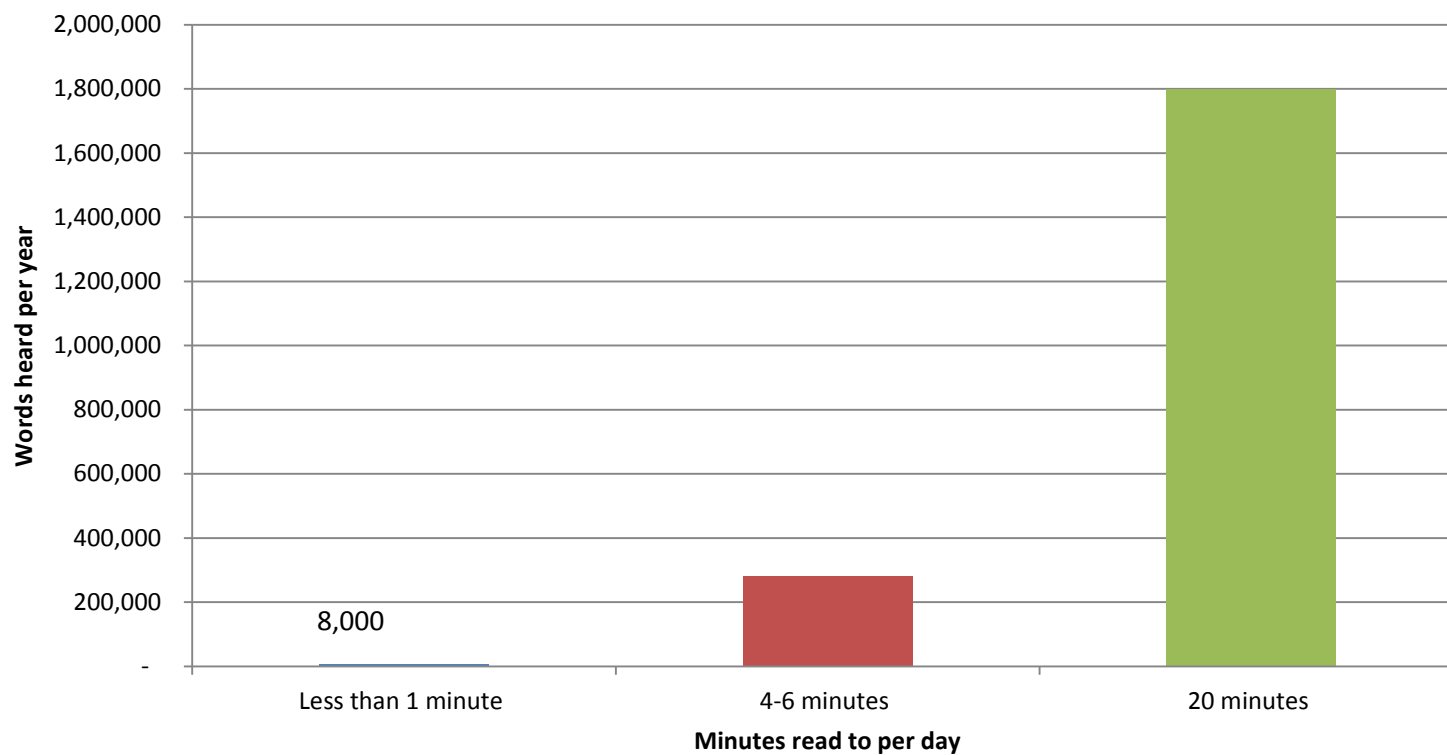
30 Million word gap by age of 5

| Families | A | B | C |
|----------------------|-----|-------|-------|
| Words heard per hour | 616 | 1,251 | 2,153 |

Child C starts school a long way ahead

Hart & Risley, USA

Reading to children gives them a real word advantage



When talking doesn't happen - long term impact

Behaviour problems

Many Maori boys struggle with reading & disengage early

Poor school achievement

- 2/3rds of students with low literacy at age 8 will have low literacy at 16
- 67% Ak Māori students at or above national standard for reading
- 56% Ak Māori students at or above expected korero levels, 2014 (320 students)
- 74% Māori achieve NCEA L1 literacy and numeracy c/f 90% Year 11, 2013
- 54% Māori achieve NCEA 2 or above

Passed onto the next generation

-87% of students most at risk of not passing NCEA 2 have parents with no qualifications (a proxy for low literacy)

- 46,000 adult Māori in Auckland have low literacy /56,000 have low numeracy

Many young people in youth justice system have undiagnosed oral language issues

Why talking matters for Māori

- Based on tradition & culture
- Whānau and tamariki focused
- Opportunity & aspiration
- Align to te Reo Revitalisation
- Fits mainstream and immersion settings
- Responds to real challenge



Messages for whānau

- Children are not born smart, they are **made smart** through talking
- **Talking is food for children's brains. They need it to reach their potential**
- Children want to communicate; it's how they make sense of the world; **they learn before they talk**
- **Talking is teaching.** Talking, singing, storytelling and reading build and strengthen the connections in baby's brain – which gives them a great start
 - Talking **more** makes a difference - regardless of who you are, what you earn, where you come from
 - **Tune in** to kids – start with what they are interested in
 - **Talk more often, talk with them for longer & take turns** - the back and forth, serve and return in conversations makes a big difference
 - **Talk differently** – praise their efforts/ relate to their interests; expand and gift new words
 - **Talk everywhere** – every moment is potentially a talking moment
- **This is simple, free and easy. You have the power to make a real difference**

From

Talking is Teaching: Talk Read Sing Community Campaign Guide (2015)

Addressing the Word Gap as a public health crisis (2015)

The Thirty Million Word Initiative

DEVELOPMENT TRACK 2016-2020

CURRENT STATE

- 1/3 Auckland children start school without enough oral language to thrive and learn to read fluently by age 8
- Link between oral language and literacy is not recognised
- Families don't know importance of talk or how to build oral language
- Vulnerable children in language-poor, bookless homes
- Limited professional development and variable practice

SHORT TERM

First 18 months

- Strategies developed & trialled in 2 communities
- 100 families, 200 children impacted
- 'Trusted messenger' organisations grow capacity
- Proof of concept established
- Extended trial planned
- Promising findings publicised
- Trial communities see benefits, continue participation
- TM recognised as a thought leader

MEDIUM TERM

36 months

- Trial expands to 4-8 additional communities
- 500+ families impacted
- Child development and family change noted by 'trusted messenger' organisations
- More organisations focus on oral language
- TM conference disseminates early findings

LONG TERM

5 years

- Proven model expands to additional sites
- Methodology ready for national roll out
- Oral language recognised in govt contracts
- Organisations and communities increase focus on early oral language
- Major increase in numbers of children and families benefitting

DESIRED STATE

Families provide language rich homes

Children start school with oral language appropriate for age

More children at literacy standard by age 8

talking matters
Success through oral language

www.cometauckland.org.nz

If you are interested

How might we ensure all tamariki get the oral language they need to thrive?