



Early Intervention for Nonverbal Children with Autism

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Study Objective

- To determine if a joint attention intervention for young children with autism jump starts language development in children who are nonverbal

WHY are we focused on Nonverbal Children with Autism?

- Underserved and under-represented
- Most studies exclude children with developmental ages below 12 months
- Not clear extent to which 'not yet verbal' children with ASD are preverbal or nonverbal
- May be distinct difference in children who begin with IQ below 50 and language age below 12 months



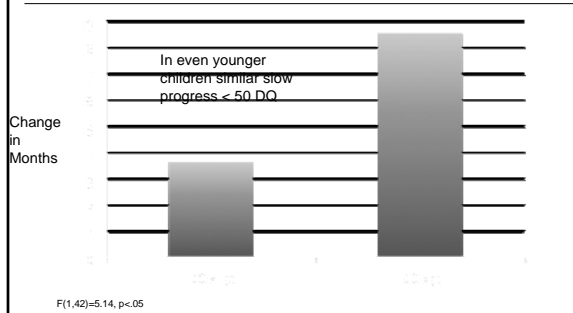
Early Intervention 'Comprehensive' Studies:
Preverbal or Nonverbal?

Different methods, dose, outcome measures

Author	N/CAs	X=IQ/ELA	Treatment	Outcomes-EXP TX
Aldred et al 2004	28 (48 mo)	AA/ELA parent report	Low intensity added in to existing services, monthly	↑ 14 mo Vineland (1 yr)
Dawson, Rogers 2009	48 (23 mo)	61 (13 mo)	25 hrs wkly	↑ 6 mo ↑ ELA in 2 yrs
Drew et al 2002	24 (21-24 mo)	66-88 (11 of words control =)	Low intensity Parent training 12 mo	↑ Words - parent report
Jocelyn et al, 1998	35 (44 mo)	58 (25 mo)	12 wk—low intensity added in to day care services	↑ 5 mo ELA
Sallows et al 2005	23 (33 mo)	51 (48 mo)	DDT 30+ hrs/wk	NS; 5-11 mo ↑ ELA in 4 years
Smith et al, 2000	28 (16 mo)	1 (15 mo)	DDT 25 hrs	↑ 26-33 mo in 2+ yrs

Slower progress for children with DQ < 50

Parent mediated toddler treatment (n=53) Expressive Language Gains over 6 months



Language Outcome in Autism: Randomized Comparison of Joint Attention and Play Interventions

Cornie Kasari, Tanya Paparella, and Stephanie Freeman
University of California, Los Angeles

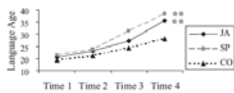
Landon B. Jahnson
Arizona State University

Prediction to Expressive Language over 12 months

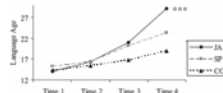
Focus on child characteristics

Focus on intervention content

Children with fewer than 5 words



↑ 15-17 mo over 12 mo Follow up



↑ 13 mo JA group in 12 mo Follow up

Intervention Content and Approach

- Intervention Content:
 - Focus on core aspects of the disorder—joint attention, play skills, engagement, affect



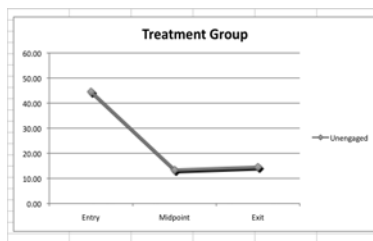
- Intervention Approach:
 - Developmental approach to choosing the goal
 - Developmental approach to teaching the target skills



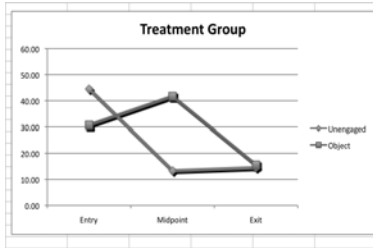
Help Group Study

- Wait list control design
 - All children in program receiving about 25-30 hours of intervention per week
 - Assessments; wait 3 months, re-assess
 - Randomize to treatment or no treatment
- 16 Children so far
 - Children between 3 and 5 years of age
 - Have fewer than 5 functional words
- Treatment
 - 2 times per week, therapist mediated intervention for 3 months

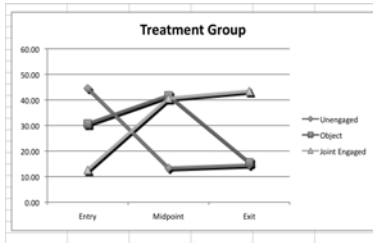
Change in Engagement



Change in Engagement

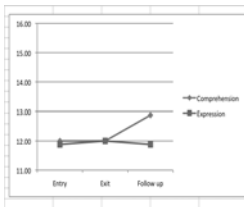


Change in Engagement

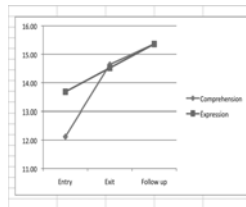


Change in Language

Control Group



Treatment Group



Summary

- A focus on core deficits positively affects outcomes of children with ASD
 - Making change in children who are not making very fast progress

 - What we teach and how we teach matters.....

 - Need to be concerned with developmental abilities of children and focus our interventions at their level
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