

TULSA FAITH COMMUNITY ORIENTATION HANDBOOK



PREFACE

Welcome to the "Talking Is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing" Faith Community Orientation Handbook, developed by the George Kaiser Family Foundation (GKFF). For the Tulsa community, the George Kaiser Family Foundation (GKFF) piloted engagement events at eight churches. Through the engagement events, parents with their children learn about positive parenting techniques, engage in dialogic reading with their children, and receive developmental screenings. Initially facilitated with significant flexibility and light guidance, GKFF in partnership with Tulsa Educare developed standard protocols for conducting these events. With this handbook, we'll be able to realistically anticipate that desired outcomes are achieved. Though there are valuable lessons that any interested community can learn from this document, the content is specific to the programmatic aims of GKFF's faith-based strategy.



TALKING IS TEACHING ORIENTATION GUIDE



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- Roles & Responsibilities
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- Event Preparation
- Event Implementation
- Post-Event Tasks
- Ongoing Tasks
- Recruitment

Welcome to the Talking is Teaching Faith Initiative!

The George Kaiser Family Foundation (GKFF) and Tulsa Educare welcome you.

The purpose of this initiative is to convene parents and young children for intentional, learning experiences focused primarily on literacy development.

The church will provide families with learning opportunities centered on the development of early literacy, GKFF will serve as the funding entity, and Educare will serve as the implementation hub and immediate contact for matters of implementation.

**GEORGE KAISER
FAMILY FOUNDATION**
A supporting organization of Tulsa Community Foundation


EDUCARE
Beyond The Walls



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Roles & Responsibilities

Church:

- Actively recruit families with birth-5 year olds
- Prepare for the event
- Follow preparation and implementation protocols
- Complete post-event tasks
- Complete ongoing tasks

GKFF:

- Serve as the funding entity and the key stakeholder
- Perform initial outreach to all participating clergy members
- Identify potential research partners to perform implementation studies and impact evaluations
- Coordinate quarterly review meetings with all parties

Educare:

- Serve as the implementation hub
- Serve as the immediate contact for implementation
- Host on-boarding sessions/trainings and schedule observations
- Enter and assure the quality of participant data
- Use participant data to inform inventory and delivery processes
- Maintain the community based organization online hub
- Maintain the calendar of engagements
- Conduct quarterly, unannounced quality assurance checks
- Regularly update GKFF of operational and logistical inefficiencies
- Troubleshoot minor issues and alert GKFF staff of major issues



Closing the Word Gap!

Children in low-income households hear 30 million fewer words spoken to them by the age of four than children in high-income households.

Additional research has shown that this word gap persists over time and can contribute to an achievement gap later in life.

There's evidence that the words a parent or caregiver *speaks, reads, or sings* with a child, as well as the relationship that develops during this back and forth communication, contribute heavily to the child's vocabulary and early brain development.

Orientation

Talking is Teaching

- History
- Talk, Read, Sing
- Toolkits

Our Message

- Curriculum
- Dialogic Reading
- Supplemental Resources/Activities

Volunteers

- Appoint a Volunteer Coordinator
- Need to shadow an event
- Sign up for an upcoming event today

Recruitment

- Importance of ongoing recruitment
- Create a recruitment plan

Online Hub

- Food orders
- Books orders
- Sign-in sheets
- Programming Tools



Event Preparation

Checklist

- Use your Event Checklist to quickly reference important quarterly, pre-event, day of event, and post-event items (attached)

Space

- Identify an appropriate space for the event
 - Free of distractions
 - Floor space for children and parents
 - Designate different spaces by age group (birth-2, 3-5)
 - Mats, rugs, and blankets provide a clear, comfortable area for reading
- Table for sign-in
- Area for food service and eating (reading area can also be used for eating)

Materials

- Computer, internet, CD player, speakers, projector, wall space, etc.
- Books
- Curriculum
- Parent Handout
- Sign-In Sheets

Timing

- Consider other site events that could compete or coordinate with this event
- Schedule event at a time that is appropriate for children

Event Reminder

- Call or text eligible families to remind them of the event time and place
- Emphasize that this is a parent-child engagement activity, not story time

Food

- Order food using online hub
- Make sure you have materials needed for food service/eating

Volunteers

- Appoint a Volunteer Coordinator
- Attend orientation
- Shadow an event
- Prepare for upcoming events
- Have an appropriate number of volunteers scheduled (at least 5)
 - Readers/group leaders
 - Food prep/service
 - Sign-in table/greeters

Event Implementation

Checklist

- Use your Event Checklist to quickly reference important quarterly, pre-event, day of event, and post-event items (attached)

Time

- Volunteers should arrive 30 minutes early
 - Discuss game plan with volunteers and delegate responsibilities
- Begin on time
- Event should take an hour to an hour and a half

Introductions (5 minutes)

- Can start with an activity (dance party, cheer, etc.)
 - An activity can also be done at the end of the event (think of creative ways to tie in the message and reiterate themes/ideas from the book)
- Invite all parents and children to sit on the floor (some parents will not be able to sit on the floor – have an option for them)
- Introduce yourself, talk about any messages you have, and talk about the Talking is Teaching campaign

Curriculum or Toolkit (10 minutes)

- Be sure to focus on the main talking points (sample attached)
- Direct the message to parents
- **If doing the Toolkit, please reference the Toolkit Overview (attached)**
- Direct parents to the room/area that will be age appropriate for their child (birth-2, 3-5) for the parent-child engagement activity

Parent-Child Engagement Activity/Dialogic Reading (20 minutes)

- Pass out the books to PARENTS based on age of child
 - One book per age-group, per family
 - If a family has a 1 year old and a 4 year old they can get a board book and a paperback book because of the children's age difference
- **Model dialogic reading**
 - This should be a fun activity
 - Parents will flip through the book with their own child (hopefully sitting in their lap) while a volunteer reads
 - Readers should involve children by asking open ended questions, filling in the blanks, etc., while reading the book
 - We want to model for parents that they do not have to read word for word and they can make things up (let parents know that don't have to be literate or great teachers)
 - Remind parents to TALK, READ, and SING to their baby; encourage everyday interactions

Meal Time (20 minutes)

- Eating should take place after reading
- Encourage and model mealtime as an opportunity to talk to children about food, colors, shapes, likes, dislikes, textures, etc.

Closing (5 minutes)

- Thank parents for coming
- Remind parents about date and time of next event
- Encourage parents to bring other friends who have young children
- Remind parents about supplemental resources (Text4Baby, ReadyRosie, and other)

Post-Event Tasks

Online Hub

- Upload sign-in sheets
- Upload food receipts

Volunteer Coordinators

- Debrief with your team – discuss successes and challenges
 - What went well?
 - Did you feel prepared to host the event?
 - What was supposed to happen; what actually happened?
 - What can we do differently next time? How can we identify more families?
- Target additional families to recruit for the next event

Ongoing Tasks

Volunteer Coordinators

- Comply with and/or facilitate research and evaluation partners
- Provide families with photo release forms
- Keep consistent correspondence with Educare and GKFF staff
- Quarterly - Attend volunteer development
- Quarterly - Upload the Pre-Event Family Sign-Up spreadsheet to the online hub (sample attached)

Recruitment

Identify and Target

- Families with children birth to 5 years of age
- Appoint at least two recruitment leads

Strategies

- Announce the event at weekly faith service, bible study, and other gatherings
- Incorporate the importance of early literacy into weekly sermons/messages and baby dedications
- Advertise the event in the church newsletter/bulletin
- Collect contact information and/or have them sign up for events
- Provide flyers and stickers to distribute to parents
 - Utilize provided posters and flyers to remind parents about time and location of the event
 - Distribute reminder stickers to parents of infants and toddlers



Create Recruitment Plan

- Please write 5-10 sentences about how you plan to recruit families to your event.

Event Rescheduling/ Cancellation Instructions

1. If an event needs to be rescheduled, please use the online hub to submit a new date. This is important for food and book order delivery.
2. In the instance of inclement or hazardous weather, an event can be cancelled or rescheduled. Please keep Educare Community Educators updated.
3. If two events are cancelled (not weather-related), you may be subject to program termination.

EVENT CHECKLIST

This checklist includes important quarterly, pre-event, day of event, and post-event items:

Pre-Event:

Timeline: Quarterly

- Submit Pre-Event Family Sign-Up list

Timeline: Two weeks before event

- Place food vendor order and book order
- Advertise: Distribute flyers (at pre-k programs), announce in bulletin/newsletters, speech during church service/meeting, canvass neighborhood
- Volunteers are contacted, confirmed, and assigned roles
- Contact participants and submit pre-event sign-up list
- Review curriculum and create agenda for event
- Watch dialogic reading video and practice reading
- Identify/reserve space for event (use mats and rugs to provide a clear, comfortable reading area)

Day of Event:

Timeline: Day of Event

- Volunteers should read book before event and brainstorm questions for dialogic reading
- Volunteers understand assignments
- Volunteer reviews printed curriculum and prepares to discuss curriculum with parents
- Print sign-in sheets
- Print parent handouts (optional)
- Set up room (create small group settings with mats or tiles)
- Set up food

Post-Event:

Timeline: Immediately after event

- Complete engagement night reporting online
- Upload sign-in sheet to online hub



Volunteer Debrief Questions

What went well?

Did you feel prepared to host the event?

What was supposed to happen; what actually happened?

What can we do differently next time?

How can we identify more families?

TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

Your Goal: Using the toolkit, show parents how easy it is to engage with their children. Below are the items in the toolkit. With each item, encourage parent and child to remove the item from the bag and look at the prompts together.

1. **T-Shirt:** The t-shirt has prompts that suggest to parents “talk about their hands and feet.” Encourage the parent to playfully grab and look at the child’s hands and feet.
2. **CD:** Because the tagline of the campaign is to “Talk, Read, and Sing,” take out the CD and encourage the parents to listen while in the car or at home. But most importantly, encourage the parent to sing along with the child when playing the CD.
3. **Bath Towel/Blanket:** The use and demonstration of the bath towel or blanket should be similar to the t-shirt. Emphasize to parents that **“this isn’t a disruption or an added activity in their already busy schedules—instead it’s a great way to engage parents and children in daily, common interactions.”**
4. **Family Resource Guide:** The Sesame Street Family Resource Guide is the centerpiece of the toolkit. It provides a wealth of easy-to-understand information that parents can use to improve their daily interactions. While you should not review this document, go through the first two pages to demonstrate how easy and useful it is.
5. **Text4Baby:** In Oklahoma we have a wonderful resource called “Text4Baby” which will send health and literacy tips to parents on their cell phones. This does not cost any money nor does signing up deduct from the amount of messages allotted to a parent by their cellular provider. There is a card in each tote bag. Instruct the parent and child to dig through the tote bag and encourage the parent to sign up right there.
6. **Word of the Day Cards:** Another element of the toolkit is the set of word of the day cards. This has been provided by Sesame to give parents a series of words to use. Instruct parents (as well as demonstrate) to take out two cards and go over them with their children.
7. **Story Book:** Each parent should then take out their story book. During the training, we will discuss dialogical reading. Also, on the internal site, there is a video that explains dialogical reading.

CURRICULUM: TALKING POINTS

Every Activity Is a Teaching Moment!

May 2015 Talking Points – Dr. Amy Emerson

“HIGHLIGHTS”

Raise your hand if life is busy! PAUSE FOR A MOMENT.

Think about some of your daily or weekly activities that seem boring or seem to pull you away from time with your children.

Can anyone name some activities?

ALLOW PARENTS TO COME UP WITH IDEAS. PROMPT IF NEEDED:
(Any housecleaning activity, preparing meals, going to the grocery store, getting dressed or dressing children, driving in the car, bathing kids, etc.).

How could we make a game or interact with our child while doing that same activity?

ALLOW PARENTS TO COME UP WITH IDEAS.

What about laundry?

Did you know that if you let your child help sort the laundry as you are folding it, you can help them begin to “think like a detective” because he is using his senses, like touch and vision, to put things into categories?

These are magical opportunities to help our children’s brains grow!

Who can think of other ideas that can turn the boring activities into games?

ALLOW PARENTS TO COME UP WITH IDEAS.

What about grocery shopping?

As you go down each aisle, try to give your child something to look for... “I spy something red” or “can you help me find the corn?”

There’s no wrong way to do this!

Throughout the day ask your child questions as you go about your activities. This is one of the most important things you can do to help your baby’s brain grow during the most important time in his life.

Tomorrow when we are focused on a task, let’s think about ways to make every activity a teaching moment.

CURRICULUM: TALKING POINTS

Every Activity Is a Teaching Moment!

May 2015 Talking Points – Dr. Amy Emerson

“FULL SCRIPT”

Raise your hand if life is busy! PAUSE FOR A MOMENT.

Think about some of your daily or weekly activities that seem boring or seem to pull you away from time with your children.

Can anyone name some activities?

I know for me, washing dishes or emptying the dishwasher seems to be a chore that never ends! What about you?

ALLOW PARENTS TO COME UP WITH IDEAS. PROMPT IF NEEDED:

(Any housecleaning activity, preparing meals, going to the grocery store, getting dressed or dressing children, driving in the car, bathing kids, etc.).

How could we make a game or interact with our child while doing that same activity?

ALLOW PARENTS TO COME UP WITH IDEAS.

Many times, we can get so focused on finishing the many jobs we need to get done, and we don't even think about how to make those moments into magical opportunities to help our children's brains grow. Did you know that if you let your child help sort the laundry as you are folding it, you can help them begin to "think like a detective" because he is using his senses, like touch and vision, to put things into categories. Talk about what the pieces of laundry feel like, which socks match, which shirt is bigger, which is smaller, what colors are the same. If your child feels a soft towel, ask them to think about something else that feels soft. If you have a 6 month old baby, gently put a washcloth over her face, and watch as she pulls it down! It's a perfect game of peek-a-boo! Your baby is already learning that objects and people still exist even when they are out of sight. She won't fully understand this until about 2 years of age, but she's already starting to experiment with the concept!

Who can think of other ideas that can turn the boring activities into games?

ALLOW PARENTS TO COME UP WITH IDEAS.

(Positively restate, reinforce or elaborate on each idea that is given).

CURRICULUM: TALKING POINTS

Every Activity Is a Teaching Moment!

May 2015 Talking Points – Dr. Amy Emerson

“FULL SCRIPT”

Some other ideas to think about are...

The next time you grocery shop, start in the produce section and allow your child to pick out a vegetable or fruit. Allow them to touch it, and name the color or ask them to name the color. Ask your child to name some other things in that category (for instance, if they are looking at a banana, see how many other fruits you can name together—make it a game, or ask what banana starts with if you have a preschooler learning letters). If you have a preschooler, allow them to weigh an item, and count with them as you point to the numbers on the scale.

As you go down each aisle, try to give your child something to look for...“I spy something red” or “can you help me find the corn?” As you are choosing items, ask your child why you are buying them... you could say, “we are buying cereal so that we can have breakfast for the week.” Ask her what her favorite vegetable is and talk about yours as well. She will learn that we each have different likes and dislikes.

The best thing is that there are no wrong ways to do this!

Just explaining your activities throughout the day and asking your child questions as you go about your activities is one of the most important things you can do to help your baby’s brain grow during the most important time in his life, so tomorrow when we are focused on a task, let’s think about ways to make every activity a teaching moment!

Pre-Event Family Sign-Up

SAMPLE

Timeline: Quarterly

The pre-event report will assist with the quarterly estimation of food and book orders. The columns for the number of Adults and the number of Children will automatically calculate the estimated attendance according to each column.



Date: _____

Location: _____

Parent or Caregiver's Name	# of Adults	# of Children	Ages of Children	Total # of Attendees
Total:	0	0		0

Please estimate the number of people who will actually attend this event.