

# THE CITY SPEAKS

A PARENT NEWSLETTER BY DISTRICT 75 SPEECH-LANGUAGE PROVIDERS

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Issue # 81– Spring 2012

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## *"May is Better Hearing and Speech Month (BHSM)"*

The American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) has declared the month of May to celebrate better hearing and speech. This is a great time to consult with your child's speech and language therapist. For additional information/ideas for "BHSM" go to <http://www.asha.org/bhsm/>

In this edition of, "The City Speaks" we will address Language and Literacy in the Community.

### Language and Literacy in the Community

When you think of literacy you automatically think of reading books, newspapers or magazines. However, literacy goes way beyond that. Literacy includes the ability to use and understand symbols and signs represented in one's community and culture. Recognizing everyday landmarks and signs such as the golden arches of McDonalds, a stop sign on the corner, or the various departments in a supermarket are all forms of literacy, even if your child can not read. Giving your child opportunities to interact in the community can be effective in developing their functional language and literacy skills.

### How to Support the Development of Language and Literacy Skills in the Community

Now that spring is here, take your child outside to experience the community. Here are several tips to help increase your child's language and literacy skills around the neighborhood:

- Whether you are in the car or on a bus or just going for a walk, have your child point to and/or label the common street signs. For example, have your child find and count all the stop signs he sees.
- When crossing the street, point to and/or label the walk/don't walk sign to your child and/or have him/her direct you when it is safe to cross.
- Play an I-Spy game to name and locate places, people, and things in the neighborhood. For example, have your child find community helpers, a yellow taxi, or a mail box on the block.
- Together with your child write a shopping list, using words and/or pictures, and divide the list into categories. Then go to your local supermarket or convenience store and have him/her go on a scavenger hunt to locate the aisle where the item can be found.
- Go to the park and ask you child to identify common objects he/she sees and label items around the playground.
- If your child is learning to travel independently, show him/her how to use a map to design a route to get to school or home.
- Teach your child how to identify train lines and how to read bus and/or train schedules.



### Language, Literacy, and Earth Day!

Earth Day is on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. It is a day to reflect on our planet, our environment and what we can do to help keep them healthy. Plan a special activity with your child to engage him/her in a conversation about ways to take care of the planet.

- Sort cans and bottles to recycle.
- Recycle newspapers and magazines.
- Read *The Carrot Seed* by Ruth Krauss and plant your own seeds!
- Visit your local Botanical Gardens.
- Make a list with your child about ways to "Go Green" at home. Some suggestions are shutting off the water when brushing teeth, turning off the light when you leave a room, unplugging electronic devices and appliances when not in use.

Dear CITY SPEAKS,

My 8 year old son with special needs is constantly asking me to re-read the same book over and over again. I would like him to choose a different book; however when I try to introduce a new book he has a tantrum. Is it appropriate for him to re-read the same book?

Signed,  
Curious

Dear Curious,

Re-reading is the practice of reading a book more than once. Some readers will read a favorite book over and over again because it offers them familiarity and predictability. Is he picking up books that contain repetitive rhymes and simple vocabulary? If so, these types of books are enjoyable and can be helpful for beginning readers. When re-reading a story, pause and give your child an opportunity to recite the repetitive phrase. Repeated readings of the same book can help build his sight word vocabulary. The repetition of reading becomes easier and faster due to the familiarity of characters, plot, and language. Re-reading offers the opportunity to reflect on language and the events the characters have experienced. Repetition allows for your son to relate his experiences with the events that have occurred in the book. Your son is benefiting from re-reading the same book.

### Joke Time



Jokes are a fun way to practice language skills. Jokes provide a script for children with limited language as well as opportunities to interact with their peers, practice figurative language, develop vocabulary, and support language processing, retention, and recall skills. For non-speaking individuals, voice output communication devices can be programmed with jokes.

Q. When do monkeys fall from the sky?



A. During Ape-ril showers!

Q. Why was the nose sad?



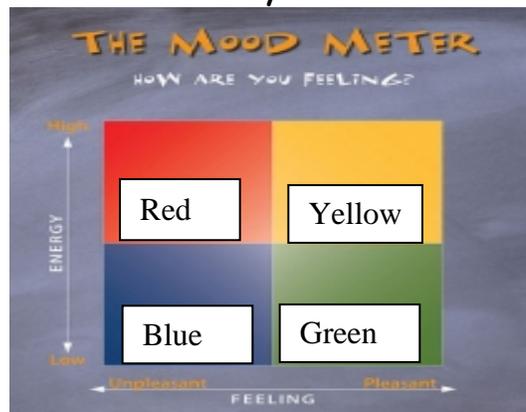
A. Because he didn't get picked!

### Better Hearing and Speech Month Word Search

T J W L X E S S L V  
 L O I H V K P D I O  
 B P N I H L E N S I  
 S T P G Z A E U T C  
 Y A S T U T C O E E  
 S D R O W E H S N L  
 L E A R N S S N U R  
 U P C L X E R X T A  
 C N K V H V X A J E  
 U J H H A Z A V E H

EARS HEAR LEARN LIPS LISTEN SAY SOUNDS  
SPEECH TALK TONGUE VOICE WORDS

## Emotional Literacy and Mood Meter



Learning how to identify and express emotions is learned from a young age that will last a lifetime. Communication about feelings cannot happen if children cannot identify their own feelings and the feelings of others. Emotional literacy is the ability to understand emotions, the ability to listen to others and empathize with their emotions, and the ability to express emotions productively.

The Mood Meter is a tool that helps children understand their feelings. It allows the children to plot their mood on a color-coded diagram (red box is angry, blue box is sad, yellow box is happy, and green box is calm). The Mood Meter corresponds with emotions and moods- feeling (unpleasant to pleasant) and energy (low to high). The Mood Meter helps develop skills in recognizing and labeling feelings. It helps children deal with conflict by figuring out how they are feeling, identifying how the other child is feeling, and identifying healthy solutions together.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotional\\_literacy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotional_literacy)  
<http://therulerapproach.org/index.php/about/what-is-the-ruler-approach/the-anchors/>  
<http://www.examiner.com/early-childhood-education-in-national/emotional-literacy-101-what-classroom-strategies-will-promote-emotional-literacy-young-children>

### PLAN AHEAD FOR SUMMER

There are several options available for your child:

Chapter 683 for D75 programs begins July 5<sup>th</sup> and ends August 14<sup>th</sup>.

There are also a variety of summer camps available for children with special needs. Summer camp programs provide opportunities for socializing and making new friends, increasing self-confidence, engaging in new situations, learning new skills, participating in organized sports and play activities, improving social and emotional development and of course, getting to be outdoors!

Contact your school's parent coordinator and/or guidance counselor for more information on local camps.

To find additional listings for a day or sleep away camp that meets your child's specific needs, refer to:

**Resources for Children with Special Needs**  
[www.resourcesnycdatabase.org](http://www.resourcesnycdatabase.org)  
 (212)-677-4650

If you have any questions or topics that you would like us to address please send an email to: [BMandel6@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:BMandel6@schools.nyc.gov)

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