

Using the Parent Workbook in a Parent-Child Playgroup



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This is what Tracy had to say about using the parent workbook in a small parent-child playgroup that she ran:

At our agency we had been waiting patiently to receive the new *It Takes Two to Talk* (ITTT) Parent Workbook from the Hanen Centre. We have been offering Hanen programs and using our Hanen resources in clinical work for years, and the workbook looked like it was going to be a great addition to our toolbox! Around the time the workbook came out, we were scheduled to run an ITTT program, but we only had two families who were able to participate. We knew that these two moms and their sons (early communicators who had both already been diagnosed with a developmental delay that was impacting their communication skills) would really benefit from learning the content of ITTT in a group setting. Undaunted, we thought this would be a great opportunity to offer a parent-child group intervention that suited the needs of these two families - while giving the new workbook a try.

We planned an intervention of nine sessions spread over a 12 week block of service.

Our intervention consisted of:

- A.** An initial family consultation conducted individually with each child and parent.
- B.** 6 in-clinic mini-group sessions in which the moms and their sons attended. These sessions were run by the Hanen SLP (me). Group sessions were 1 ½ hours in length and topics for each session followed the content of the parent workbook. Parents were asked to read content from the ITTT guidebook before each session and then group time was spent demonstrating strategies in play (with people games, songs, books and toys) and daily routines (during snack time and getting dressed to go home). Parents got to watch clips from the ITTT companion DVD of the strategies being used with children similar to their own and there were lots of opportunities for the moms to practice and get feedback from the Hanen SLP.
- C.** 2 individual consultation sessions with each family using video feedback.

The *It Takes Two to Talk* Parent Workbook turned out to be an invaluable way for these two mothers to personalize the information they were learning at our mini-group sessions. We discussed the strategies as they were practising them in the clinic and talked about how they

would use them at home. The Home Plan pages provided a perfect place for the parents (or the Hanen SLP, when parents had their hands full!) to record plans for a home activity. Each mom also used the “Report from Home” page to report back on how home activities turned out. In addition, during video feedback sessions, the mothers used the Wrap-Up pages in the workbook to track changes they were seeing in themselves and their sons as well as to plan next steps.

As a Hanen SLP, I liked the organization that the workbook provided for my group sessions as well as the flexibility I had in choosing the strategies best suited to these particular clients. Parents really liked having one place where strategies, suggestions and plans were kept, especially after coming home from a busy parent-child group. Both mothers reported that the workbook gave them the chance to review the information at their own pace and check back on how they were planning on using the strategies at home. I am looking forward to using the ITTT parent workbook in my next parent-child group intervention!