


Be Your Child's Play Coach
Fern Sussman, SLP reg. CASLPO
Autism Society of America - July 12, 2008- Orlando FL

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 The Hanen Centre
 (Toronto)
 ASA
 July 12, 2008

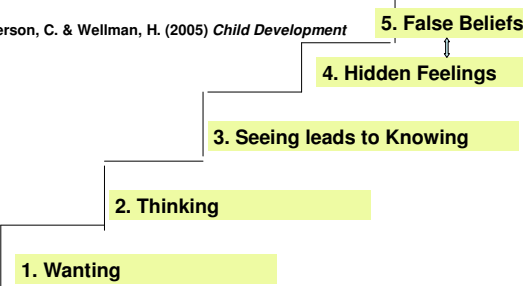


Agenda

- **The Foundation:**
Parent/Child Interaction
 - Developing Perspective Taking and Empathy
 - Pretend play as a Context for Making Friends
- **The Play Date**
 - Social Play Skills Continuum
 - The Parent as Play Coach


Steps in TOM Development Understanding for Child with ASD

Peterson, C. & Wellman, H. (2005) *Child Development*







What Helps a Child Learn "Tuning In" (TOM) Skills?

- Parent talk (input)
- Having the words to talk about what's on someone's mind
 - E.g. "same/different," "think," "says," "pretend"



Parents Use The 4 S's to highlight what they say & what they don't say

THE FOUR S's

 Say less	 And stress
 Go slow	 And show

Repeat often!

Parents learn to involve their child in tuning-in conversations using the "I-Cues"

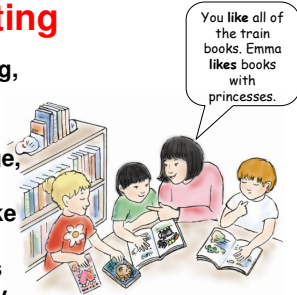
<p>The I's...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include the child's interests, ideas and words • Interpret his message • Introduce your own ideas <p>...help parent take his turn</p>	<p>The Cues...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment... and wait • Ask a question... and wait • Hint... and wait • Make a suggestion... and wait • Visuals <p>...tell the child it's his turn</p>
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Stage 1: Understanding Wanting

Looking at something, often means you want it.

Around 2 years of age, children know others want and like things that might not be the same as the things that they want and like.



Stage 2: Understanding thinking (around 4 years in TC)

Children figure out that what someone believes (e.g., "He thinks," "He knows") affects what that person will do and feel



Stage 3: Understanding that seeing leads to knowing



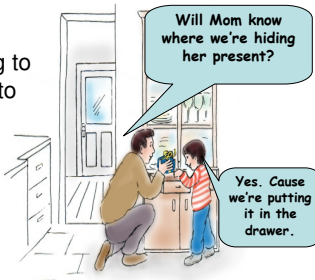
Stage 4: Understanding hidden feelings (around 5 years in TC)

Child understands:
 People don't always feel the way they appear to.
 People don't always feel the way they say they do
 Sometimes people hide what they really feel (tease, lie, joke)



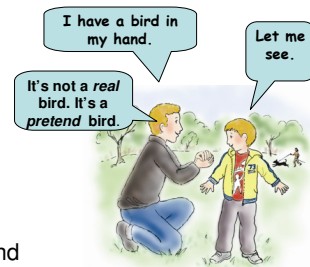
Stage 5: Understanding False Beliefs (5 years in TC)

People act according to what they believe to be true, not what really is



The Power of Pretending on TOM

- Beginning of understanding false beliefs
- Fosters flexible thinking
- Social-dramatic play requires **teamwork** (build on the ideas of your playmate and consider his feelings)



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Social-dramatic Play

- Always involves playing with others
- Involves a special language to plan and create the make-believe
- Involves language to tune in to child's play partner



Parents Learn to...



- **Join in**
- **Model the next step** (depends on child's stage)
First:
Help the child understand when you're pretending by your tone of voice, facial expression
Then:
Help the child understand that people can play with something they create with their mind
Finally:
Help the child tune in to his play partner

Parents learn to model...

- Problem solving and negotiating with play partner
- Agreeing or disagreeing with his play partner's suggestions
- Building on the ideas of play partner
- Asking play partner his opinion

Best to start...

In the safest environment
With adults at home before trying it out with other children



p 151 TalkAbility

Tips for Parent/Child Play

- Plan ahead to avoid problems later
- Use problem-solving words
- Focus on the positive
- Talk about how people are feeling
- Talk about consequences
- Teach your child something different to do or say to replace inappropriate behaviours
- Help your child figure out what else he can do
- Use a visual helper to work out the problem
- Choose your battles



The Play Date



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No Social Play Skills

- **No social play skills**
 - Not interested
 - Interested but doesn't know what to do
- **Goals**
 - Stay
 - Stay and play beside



Some Social Play Skills

- **Enjoys physical play with other children**
 - Physical activities
 - Activities done in unison
 - Shares some material
- **Goals**
 - Initiate
 - Stay, Play & Talk



Many Social Play Skills

- Plays turn-taking games
 - Teams up to make things
 - Pretends with other children
 - Gets stuck and can't problem-solve
- Goals:**
- Tune in:
- Build on friend's ideas
 - Agree or disagree with friend
 - Problem-solve



The Parent as Play Coach

- Set Up
- Step In
- Step Out



Find a Friend

- Do the children like one another?
- Do the children have similar interests?
- Is the other child friendly?
- How many?
- Siblings?
- Age?
- Girl or boy?



Boys as Friends


- Don't focus much on tuning in to the feelings of others
- Spend a lot of time in physical play
- A lot of one-upmanship
- Like to impress by saying a rude word or doing something naughty
- A friend who's feelings might not get easily hurt if child tells it like it is.



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Girls as Friends

- More interested in sharing their thoughts and feelings
- A good friend for a boy who needs direction




Set Up

- Place and time
- Include structured and unstructured playtime
- Create teamwork



Set Up

- Discuss and rehearse before the play date and before activities
 - With child alone
 - With child and his friend



Choose the right toys and activities

- Large play equipment
- Plan an activity that children can do in unison (singing), especially if the goal is to stay and play
- Not too many toys
- Have duplicates
- Things to share



Rehearse



Do you want a turn?

ASK YOUR FRIEND A QUESTION

Step In

- When?
 - Children aren't staying together
 - Children aren't playing together
 - The children aren't talking to each other
 - The children get stuck

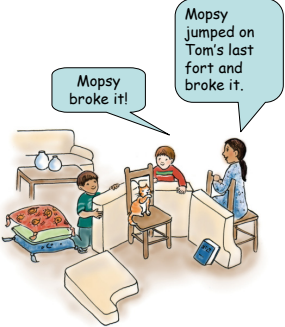


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Step In


How?

- Coach from the sidelines
- or
- Join in

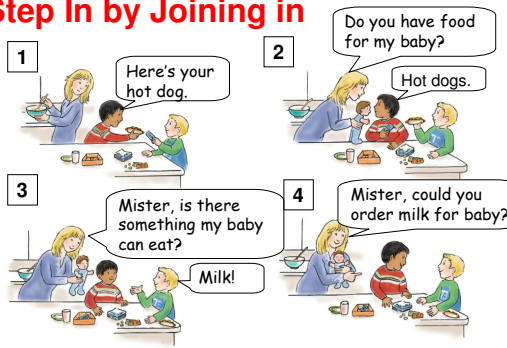


Cues from the Coach's Corner

- Visual cues
- Questions
- Hints
- Suggestions (comes in handy when child directs conversation to adult)
- Tell
- Coach both children




Step In by Joining in



And then Step Out



Visuals Can Help



Video Can Help

