

Talking more to your baby may be a key to learning

Media invitation:

Event: Launch of Talk to Your Baby short film

Time: 2pm Tuesday 17 October 2017

Location: The Family Place, 35 North Street, Woodridge

Photo opportunities with families, babies, playground, toys, chickens

Dignitaries attending:

Hon Shannon Fentiman, Minister for Child Safety

The Honourable Shannon Fentiman, Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, will today launch a new short film encouraging families to talk to their babies.

The 30-second Talk to Your Baby clip has been produced by NAPCAN - the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect - with funding from the Queensland Government, as part of a statewide child abuse and neglect prevention program.

NAPCAN Queensland Manager, Sammy Bruderer, explains that NAPCAN is all about looking at ways that we can engage the whole community in helping to nurture children.

“Our Talk to Your Baby clip is a tool for promoting one of the most simple and effective ways of boosting a child’s brain development in the early years, and building strong attachment with trusted adults.” says Ms Bruderer.

“The production of the short film was a great example of a community partnership, with lots of beautiful families giving their time. The Family Place was a wonderful help; they are a great example of an organisation that practices early attachment and keeps children safe and nurtured.”

Science tells us that a baby’s brain triples in size during the first three years of life. So every little thing we do during that time plays an important part in that child’s development.

Research from the United States shows that children from talkative families may have heard 30 million more words directed to them by age 3 than children from less-talkative families. The same research suggests that the more words and concepts the children had heard by age 3, the

better they did on tests of cognitive development. (See Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experiences of Young Children, by the late University of Kansas child psychologists Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley.)

“This is really exciting because it means that anyone, anywhere - regardless of their situation - can make a big difference to a baby’s future.”

Minister Shannon Fentiman highlighted the importance of these findings for Queenslanders.

“Our message for anyone who interacts with babies - especially the parents and primary caregivers - is to look for every opportunity to talk, read and sing with your baby. Be expressive, be loving, and talk about everything around you so that your child is exposed to as many different conversations as possible.

“It’s not just about throwing lots of words at them; it’s about talking to them about the world around them, and introducing different concepts.”

“The message for those of us who work with families is that talking to babies does not come naturally to everyone, and most people will need some encouragement and ideas. Parents and carers may never have been told how important it is to talk with very young children, they may not have been raised that way, or they may have too much else on their minds.”

“We hope that the Talk to Your Baby film will help to bridge that gap.”

“Of course, it’s not only the baby’s brain that will benefit. Lots of talk from loving adults also builds healthy relationships, social skills, and attachment and we know that that can help build resilience in a child,” said Ms Fentiman.

The 30-second Talk to Your Baby clip is available for free use and download at www.napcan.org.au following the launch this afternoon. To view the clip prior to the launch, see <https://vimeo.com/230448417> (Password ttyb).

The clip will be shared widely during Queensland Children’s Week (21 - 29 October). For more information about Children’s Week in Queensland visit www.childrensweek.com.au.

For more information, interviews or images, contact Helen Fogarty at NAPCAN on 0410 541997 or helen.fogarty@napcan.org.au.