

**TITLE:** Wee Read Club: An Early Intervention Team Model for Early Learners, Parents & Future Pediatricians

**INVESTIGATORS:**

Brittany Hall, MS, CCC-SLP – Assistant Professor, TTUHSC  
Melissa Whitaker, MS, CCC-SLP – Clinical Instructor, TTUHSC  
Wesley Dotson, Ph.D., BCBA – Director of TTU Burkhart Center for Autism Education and Research  
Lindsay Wargo, M.Ed. – Graduate Research Assistant at TTU Burkhart Center for Autism Education and Research  
Support provided by Clinical Research Institute

**AIMS:**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of a 2 hour training provided to pediatric residents by Wee Read Club study personnel. It was our hope that participants were better trained and equipped to identify communication disorders and support families with children with communication difficulties and disorders.

**OBJECTIVES:**

Using the CMEQUAL, evaluate future pediatricians' perception of a continuing medical education (CME) regarding readiness to identify communication disorders.

**INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND / SIGNIFICANCE:**

Language development is a significant achievement in a child's first years of life. Strong language and communication skills are the foundation for successful future learning, social interaction, and academic success. Speech-language delays/disorders and limited communication skills can negatively impact this foundation, as well as parent/child relationships, peer relationships, participation within learning environments, and social-emotional development. Deficits in these areas can also lead to increased frustration, behavioral challenges, and potentially impact school-readiness. Because early language development is so important in building a strong foundation for later achievements, efforts to promote age-appropriate language and communication development should begin in early childhood, as children are likely to benefit most from a supportive environment during these years (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000).

Pediatricians play a significant role in early childhood as they often serve as care coordinators for their patients. They are integral to the overall well-being of children and as such, training in pediatric medicine covers a broad range of topics. Knowledge specific to early speech and language development is just one skill set. Because pediatricians are often the primary referral source when parents or caregivers have a concern about speech, language, or communication, their knowledge of developmental norms, age-appropriate behaviors, and community supports is essential. It was our intent that Wee Read Club function as a community outreach program that provides support to future pediatricians.

**HYPOTHESES:**

Wee Read Club training for pediatric residents will have a positive effect on:

- self-perception of a CME regarding readiness to identify communication disorders

**METHODS:**

Pediatric resident participants within the TTUHSC School of Medicine were provided with training regarding communication disorders provided by Brittany Hall and Melissa Whitaker. These pediatric residents may be at a variety of points within their residency.

**Design:**

All pediatric residents within TTUHSC attend weekly meetings as part of their coursework. The Wee Read Club training took place during this regularly scheduled meeting time. All pediatric residents who attended were provided the 2 hour Wee Read Club training regardless of whether or not they choose to be included in this study. There are a total of 24 pediatric residents at TTUHSC that could have participated in this study. A total of 19 pediatric residents chose to participate.

At the beginning of the Wee Read Club training, study personnel offered all residents who attended the training an opportunity to participate in the study. If the pediatric resident chose to participate, the Continuing Medical Education Quality (CMEQUAL) (pre-test portion) was completed prior to the training and the CMEQUAL (post-test portion) was completed at the conclusion of the training. Each CMEQUAL survey instrument was completed anonymously and no identifying information was collected.

<i>Pediatric Resident Participants – Training Session Outline</i>	
<i>Lecture Topics</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal Speech-Language Development Milestones</li> <li>• Normal Audiological Milestones</li> <li>• Identifying Communication Disorders</li> <li>• Red Flags and When to Refer</li> <li>• Technology Concerns: Laps not Apps</li> <li>• Community Resources</li> <li>• How to Support Families to Improve Speech/Language Outcomes in Children</li> </ul>

**Materials, instruments or measurements:**

CMEQUAL – An adapted version of the CMEQUAL was utilized to evaluate the training provided to pediatric residents through the Wee Read Club program. The CMEQUAL is survey instrument based on the SERVQUAL (Shewchuk, et al). This instrument analyzes expectations and perceptions of continuing medical education (CME) activities. Prior to participating in the CME, participants rate their expectations related the CME activity. At the completion of the CME, participants rate actual perceptions of the activity and complete post-test questions related to the presented CME information.

**Results/Conclusions:**

Pediatric residents who were provided training through Wee Read Club will rated the CME activity as meets or exceeds expectations using the CMEQUAL. Further analyses will be conducted on provided information and pre- and post-test information will be examined for statistical significance.

**References** (APA style is the accepted form for reference listings in the communication disorders field of study. Therefore, this style was utilized.):

Fey, M. E., Warren, S. F., Brady, N., Finestack, L. H., Bredin-Oja, S. L., Fairchild, M., ... Yoder, P. J. (2006). Early Effects of Responsivity Education/Prelinguistic Milieu

Teaching for Children With Developmental Delays and Their Parents. *Journal of Speech Language and Hearing Research*, 49(3), 526. [https://doi.org/10.1044/1092-4388\(2006/039\)](https://doi.org/10.1044/1092-4388(2006/039))

- Kaiser, A. P., University, V., Hemmeter, M. L., Fischer, R., Yoder, P., & Keefer, M. (n.d.). The Effects of Teaching Parents to Use Responsive Interaction Strategies. Retrieved from <https://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/yoder/pdfs/kaiser-a-p-hemmeter-m-l.pdf>
- Medicine, I. of. (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods*. Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/9824>
- Romski, M., Sevcik, R. A., Adamson, L. B., Smith, A., Cheslock, M., & Bakeman, R. (2011). Parent Perceptions of the Language Development of Toddlers With Developmental Delays Before and After Participation in Parent-Coached Language Interventions. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 20(2), 111. [https://doi.org/10.1044/1058-0360\(2011/09-0087\)](https://doi.org/10.1044/1058-0360(2011/09-0087))
- Shewchuk, R. M., Schmidt, H. J., Benarous, A., Bennett, N. L., Abdolrasulnia, M., & Casebeer, L. L. (2007a). A standardized approach to assessing physician expectations and perceptions of continuing medical education. *The Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, 27(3), 173–182. <https://doi.org/10.1002/chp.121>
- Tamis-Lemonda, C. S., & Rodriguez, E. T. (2014). PARENTING SKILLS Parents' Role in Fostering Young Children's Learning and Language Development\*. Retrieved from <http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/sites/default/files/textes-experts/en/654/parents-role-in-fostering-young-childrens-learning-and-language-development.pdf>