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# LANGUAGE IN MOTION NEWSLETTER



## Lab Update

- After shutting down in-person studies to reduce possible risks during the COVID-19 pandemic, **we are thrilled to invite participants back into the lab!** Our researchers are ready to continue their important work, and we hope that you will partner with us and **sign up to participate in a study!**
- We are currently recruiting families of children **4-7 years old** to participate in studies. This includes children who are typically developing, as well as children who have speech and language disorders.
- If you are interested in learning more about what it is like for your child to be a junior scientist, please see the [For Families](#) section of our website!
- Please email the lab at [languageinmotion@utdallas.edu](mailto:languageinmotion@utdallas.edu) if you think your child might qualify for one of our studies.

## Research Update

- **Preschool children with DLD** often continue to have **difficulties with language** as they grow and develop. Our lab recently published two studies about how **fine/gross motor skills and hand gesture skills** may help **predict** those children most likely to have continued difficulties with language.
- In the first study— published in [The International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology](#)— Leah Sack, Christine Dollaghan, & Lisa Goffman found that **preschoolers with DLD** who also had **weak fine/gross motor skills** were more likely to have a **language impairment** in to the **early school years (6-7 years old)**.
- In [Applied Psycholinguistics](#), Laiah Factor and Lisa Goffman wrote about children's production of gestures. Gestures are important for communication in young children. **Preschool children with DLD** showed **difficulties** in the **accurate production of gestures**. Those with **weaker gesture productions** were **more likely** to have a **language impairment** in the **early school years**.

### THE TAKE-AWAY:

*Weakness in fine/gross motor skills and/or with hand gesture abilities among preschoolers diagnosed with DLD may be a sign that these children will continue to struggle with their language in later school years.*

### IMPLICATIONS:

*Deficits in motor and hand gesture skills may be recognized before language deficits become obvious. So, this awareness that motor skill, gesture, and language may be connected in DLD could allow earlier intervention services for young children at risk for or demonstrating language impairment.*



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## DLD CORNER

**FOCUS: SOCIAL SKILLS!**

### Did you know...

- Children who have trouble learning language often have difficulty with social skills as a result. When they cannot communicate easily with their peers, these children may shy away from social situations or act aggressively.
- This leads to a lack of a similar social experience to that of their peers, and it keeps children with DLD from advancing their social skills at the same rate. Their ability to converse with others, stay engaged while playing with friends, and assert themselves when needed could be affected.
- Speech-language pathologists are equipped and ready to help your child with DLD practice and learn the social skills they need! They might teach social scripts using language for particular situations, strategies for how to interact with others, and vocabulary to help them describe personal feelings.
- To learn more about DLD check out the resources from [The DLD Project](#)

***If you have any concerns about your child's speech and language, contact a speech-language pathologist!***

# Language Activities for Spring & Summer

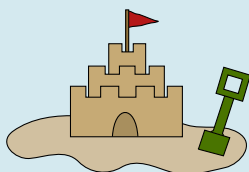


## Sensory Fun!

*Sensory play keeps kids active and engaged while providing lots of opportunities to practice language skills! Try these activities:*

### Graham Cracker Castle

- Mix graham cracker crumbs with butter to create a moldable sand-like substance
- Use new **action words** like *pinch, poke, smash, roll, scoop* as you manipulate the graham cracker crumbs into a sandcastle or any other shape you like!
- Practice **making requests** by keeping most of the substance in a container near you, and give your child more to play with little by little as they need it! Be patient and **wait** for your child to communicate that they want more; try not to anticipate their needs and provide it too quickly! Reward your child's request by affirming them and **adding language, repeating, and highlighting** what they said or could expand on! For example, "*You need more sand! More sand, to make a bigger castle. Let's get some more sand.*"



### Car Wash

- Have fun playing car wash with toy cars!
- Get them "dirty" with some soil, paint, or shaving cream first. Then help your child wash them in soapy water with a toothbrush, rinse them in fresh water, and dry them with a towel.
- Practice **descriptive words** as you play, such as *dirty, clean, wet, dry* as well as descriptors of the cars themselves, such as *red, blue, big, small*. You can also bring out different types of cars, such as a fire truck or ice cream truck, and talk about what they do!
- Use **sequencing language** as you play to describe each step and help your child organize their language and the activity. For example, **first** the car gets dirty, **next** the car gets washed, and **last** we dry it with a towel.

## Beach Bingo- a printable activity!

- Print out the pages that follow to create a beach-themed game to play with your child! Make sure to print out an extra copy to cut into calling cards.
- As you play Bingo, you can highlight **prepositions!** Describe where objects are on the board in relation to each other (Where is the seashell? It is **BELOW** the bucket.).
- **Target wh- questions** by practicing asking/answering out loud, and then giving your child a chance to answer. You can focus on questions such as: *WHO has the bucket? WHAT do we use to dry off after we go in the ocean? WHY do we need sunglasses? WHEN do we use sunscreen?* Play with the whole family, and take turns being the card dealer with your child.



## Book Recommendations for Spring and Summer!

[Pete the Cat: Five Little Ducks](#)  
[It's Not Easy Being a Bunny](#)  
[Flower Garden](#)  
[Pout Pout Fish](#)  
[Manana Iguana](#)



# BEACH BINGO



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