Becoming a Parent

Ross A. Thompson
University of California, Davis
Baby

A Guidebook For Parents
INPUT

OUTPUT

Intelligence
Personality
Self-concept
Is the world safe or dangerous?
Can I depend on support from those around me?

Why do people do the things they do?

How can I communicate with them?
Cumulative Vocabulary (Words)

Child’s Age (Months)

16 mos.  24 mos.  36 mos.
Cumulative Vocabulary (Words)

- **High income**
- **Middle income**
- **Low income**

**Child’s Age (Months)**

• Early experiences that are rich in language
• Language in the context of warm, responsive social interaction
• Storybook reading, conversation about the child’s experiences and interests, play
• Eliciting the child’s language
• Multilingual environment
You didn’t like that he was bouncing your guy off the game, and that made you really mad.

It’s hard when you feel so angry. You’re going “AAAH, he’s bouncing my guy off there!” Right?

It makes you sad thinking about it, doesn’t it?

You know, after you stopped the game, the other guys said, “Joey wasn’t really doing so bad.” You thought you were losing, but you weren’t.
Is the world safe or dangerous?
• Warm, sensitively responsive care
• Mind-mindedness
• Valuing child’s unique characteristics
• Support in relieving distress
• Offering understanding
• Protection
Why do people do the things they do?
• Label and talk about mental states: intentions, feelings, goals, thoughts, expectations, beliefs

• Clarify the child’s internal states and the behaviors that are associated with them

• Compare children’s personalities or temperaments and the behaviors that result
Self–regulation develops very slowly in childhood and adolescence.
Patient Capital
Thank you!

Ross A. Thompson
rathompson@ucdavis.edu