



Newsletter

November 2008

GROUND BREAKING

Ready to dig! On October 2nd, children from the Sound Beginnings preschool joined dignitaries and USU administrators to break ground for the new 60,000 sq ft Emma Eccles Jones Early Childhood Education and Research Center and the Dolores Doré Eccles Center for Early Care and Education.

Thanks to a generous donation of \$25 million dollars from the Emma Eccles Jones Foundation, and an additional \$1 million dollars from the Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation, this state-of-the-art center will provide early education and care services to the children of Cache Valley and the surrounding Intermountain Region. This facility will also be home to the Sound Beginnings program to offer children and families a continuum of auditory education services for spoken language development in children with hearing loss.

The Dean of the College of Education, Carol Strong, explained that “the center will pursue the highest standard of early childhood education, teacher training, research, and service.” President of Utah State University, Stan Albrecht, noted that this new building is consistent with USU’s quest for excellence in teaching and research, notwithstanding tough economic times.

The children in Sound Beginnings have enjoyed watching the big trucks that are busy at work and we anxiously await the projected Fall 2010 completion date of this tremendous facility.

GRANDPARENT’S DAY

Sound Beginnings held its first annual Grandparents Day on September 25, 2008. This was a fun and exciting day for the children in Sound Beginnings to invite grandparents or special family members into their classroom. The invited guests had a glimpse into our school day and learned how language is used in everyday activities. We enjoyed music and story activities, we decorated cookies, and we created a keepsake picture with our grandparents. We appreciate the support of all our families and thank everyone who participated. It was a successful day!



TRAINING MODULES

The faculty and staff from Sound Beginnings are offering ongoing training modules in spoken language development to professionals across the state. These in-service training modules provide a continuum of content instruction to early interventionists, pediatric audiologists, speech-language pathologists, special educators, teachers of the deaf, program administrators, and regular classroom educators who serve children with hearing loss who are developing spoken language skills.

The series of training modules began Spring 2008 and are based on the Standardized Curriculum originally developed by Auditory-Verbal International (AVI) and now supported by the AG Bell Academy for Listening and Spoken Language. The Standardized Curriculum is comprised of eight content modules:

- History, Philosophy, and Professional Practices
- Hearing and Audiology
- Development of Auditory Function/A-V Techniques
- Child Development
- Parent Guidance
- Spoken language
- Cochlear Implantation
- Mainstreaming.

Working in collaboration with the Up-to-3 (Part C) Program in Northern Utah, the Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind, and local public school districts, three modules have been presented thus far. To date, more than 135 professionals have attended these workshops, and the goal is to offer a different workshop every two months. Feedback from participants has been highly positive, with attendees reporting that the modules provided valuable information in improving professional skills and delivering services to children with hearing loss. In addition, these training modules are instrumental in assisting participants who are seeking certification as an Auditory-Verbal Therapist (Cert. AVT) or an Auditory-Verbal Educator (Cert. AVEd).

(For more information about these certification programs, please visit the AG Bell Academy at www.agbellacademy.org).

For more information about these training opportunities, please contact Dr. Todd Houston at (435) 797-0434 or todd.houston@usu.edu

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www.soundbeginnings.usu.edu

SPOTLIGHT

Allow us to introduce you to two children in the Sound Beginnings Program: Elijah Lopez and Luke Smith. Elijah just turned five years old. He enjoys coming to the Preschool 2 classroom and to speech therapy. Elijah has been working hard to reach his goals and has made marked progress in spoken language over the past two years. He is very good at math and is a hard worker. He has a great sense of humor and loves to tease. His curly blond hair and bright blue eyes are sure to win over anybody in mere seconds! Elijah's favorite after-school snack is plain Velveeta cheese. He loves his older brother, Gabriel, plays with any toy having to do with trains, and enjoys riding his bike. His mother, Jodi, volunteers a significant amount of time in the Sound Beginnings program and is a dedicated participant in Elijah's educational success.



Elijah Lopez



Luke Smith

You've never heard a laugh until you've heard Luke Smith's laugh! This not-quite-two-year-old warms the hearts of all who work with him. Luke's family recently moved to Cache Valley from Kentucky and he now participates in the Sound Beginnings Program. Luke loves to play with cars, big or small. He enjoys music and likes to dance, especially when his dad plays the guitar. This active toddler loves the outdoors and plays hide-and-seek with his big brother, Lance. His mother, Jenny, is a very dedicated mother who makes the most of every opportunity to provide enriching experiences for her boys. She actively participates in the Sound Beginnings Program and tends to her family's needs while her husband pursues a Master's degree in tax law at Georgetown in Washington, D.C. These children and their families are a great joy to work with!

LANGUAGE IDEAS

Holidays offer a wealth of language opportunities to share with children. One fun way to extend language experiences is to document them. Draw pictures or take photos of your child during each step of a sequence of events. Add simple narration, and you've got a book your child is sure to love! For older children, you can also make these into cards that the children can sort into beginning, middle, and end. You can add in as many steps as you think your child can put in order. Here are a few ideas for events that can be broken down into a sequence:

- Eating Thanksgiving dinner
- Getting dressed for a party
- Making chocolate milk
- Decorating a Christmas tree
- Making holiday cookies
- Cleaning up toys
- Calling grandma on the phone



Remember to have fun, and above all—Keep Talking!

MEET DR. BETH FOLEY

Dr. Beth Foley is Head of the Department of Communicative Disorders and Deaf Education at Utah State University. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses and has received numerous teaching awards, including USU College of Education Teacher of the Year in 1999 and again in 2004. She brings to her teaching a wealth of clinical experiences and was instrumental in establishing the Sound Beginnings program. She is passionate about bridging research and theory with classroom and clinical practice to provide excellent services to children with hearing loss and other communication disorders. Beth, her husband John, and her son Michael, enjoy skiing at Beaver Mountain, camping, hiking, and other outdoor activities.



Place
Stamp
Here

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