



The Opinion Pages | LETTER

Helping Children Succeed

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To the Editor:

“To Help Language Skills of Children, a Study Finds, Text Their Parents With Tips” (news article, Nov. 15) highlights a great way to spread the word about the importance of reading and talking with your children. But many underserved families and communities need more intensive services than texting to bridge the preparation gap, including proven home visiting, quality infant and toddler care, and support for working parents. We need to be sure we don’t lose sight of that.

We need a network of services that address the diverse needs of parents and children: families that don’t have any books in their homes, parents who don’t speak English, parents who have very limited literacy skills, and parents who are working multiple jobs to support their families and rarely get to spend time with their children.

We know that the language gap develops long before children enter pre-K and that the best way to prevent it is to work with families before their children ever enter a classroom. We also know that many children who arrive in school unprepared lack not just exposure to language but also lag in their social-emotional development, making it difficult for them to succeed in a classroom.

So if we’re serious about eradicating the gaps and ensuring that all children are ready to succeed in school, let’s make sure we have a comprehensive approach that addresses these different needs early on.

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Garden City, N.Y., Nov. 17, 2014

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