

Knowing what words mean and understanding what you say

When learning what words mean and what it is you are saying, children rely on clues - such as actions you do or what's going on around them.

This might mean that they appear to understand better than they actually do. Not being able to understand words and sentences can leave children feeling uncertain and confused. They may also seem to ignore you or do the wrong things. Read this leaflet for ideas of how you can help.

## HELPING YOUR CHILD TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING

When playing games to try and develop your child's understanding, make sure you have their attention – so turn off the T.V. get rid of as many distractions as you can, and make it as fun as possible!

- Children need to hear words over and over again, in different situations and at different times.
- They need to hear the word and see the object or activity it relates to so that they can link the two together.

## WHERE TO START

Start by building up your child's understanding of single words (names of things and action words).



### At the supermarket:

model words by naming them (e.g. "mmm, tomato").

Do this lots of times, then later ask your child, "oh no where's the tomato?"



### In the garden:

show your child different actions

e.g. "look mummy's

jumping can Tom jump? Wow good jumping"



## HELPING WITH SENTENCES AND THINGS YOU ASK THEM TO DO



Build your child up slowly, from understanding single words (e.g. finding a 'car', or 'cup' when you ask during a game) to pointing out things in the street (e.g. when you ask them if they can see 'a cat in a tree' or 'dog in a car').



**Books and stories** - read through books over and over, pointing and talking about the pictures so that your child becomes really familiar with them. Gradually start asking them to find things in the pictures e.g. "where's the horse eating some sweeties?".

### **Hide and seek games -**

Hide their favourite toy around the house, telling them each time where e.g. 'naughty teddy' is hiding  
– later ask them to hide him (e.g. let's put him under the bed, on the telly, in the box" etc.

### **Remember:**

Try not to bombard your child with questions and praise them if they respond even if they aren't right.

**IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S TALKING OR WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL YOUR LOCAL SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY SERVICES.**

Afasic acknowledges Amy Hewer, a S&L Therapist at Betsi Cadwaladr UHB & Wrexham Flying Start for working in partnership to produce this information

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