

USING WORDS AND TALKING

Helping your child to
talk and say more

When children learn to talk, they start by using single words and gradually put more words together to make sentences.

For young children, the best way to learn new words and how to put words together is through play. It is important that children understand what words mean before we can expect them to use them.

Make sure words you try to encourage your child to say are ones which they have heard lots of times before and don't worry about how your child says the words – some mistakes in pronunciation is normal for young children.



TOP TIPS BEFORE YOU START

- Try to avoid asking your child to 'say this' and 'say that' as this can discourage children from wanting to talk.
- Accept the sounds your child makes as the words they mean and say it back to them correctly (e.g. Child: "ta-ter", adult: "yes, tractor").
- Use actions and gestures to support what you say, sometimes learning an action for a word can help children learn the word itself.
- Wait and listen for your child to talk, sometimes we talk too much because we want to fill in the silences. Model words over and over and give your child chance to try saying them for themselves.

WAYS TO ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD

Model language: Comment and repeat simple words and phrases, when playing favourite games or during every day activities (e.g. hanging the washing out). This will show your child the types of things they could say.

Build and Expand: If your child says a word, say it back to them but add another word on to show them how to say more E.g.

Child: 'daddy',
Adult: 'daddy gone', or E.g.

Child: 'doggy eat',
Adult: 'yes, doggy eating dinner'.

WAYS TO ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD (CONT)

Cue them in: Demonstrate some phrases for your child by saying a few first, then cue them in so that they try a phrase, (e.g. in a book – “here’s teddy jumping on the bed, here’s teddy drinking some tea and here’s ...”).



Remember:

Don't worry about getting proper sentences, 'teddy sleeping' is fine (rather than 'the teddy is sleeping'). It's words that carry information that are important.



TYPES OF WORDS TO THINK ABOUT

Naming words (nouns) -

e.g. banana milk eyes nose bus plane
horse lion coat.



Doing Words (verbs) -

e.g. run jump sit sleep wash
cry dig swim brush.

Describing words (adjectives) -

e.g. big little hot cold wet long dirty red blue.

Position words (prepositions) -

e.g. in, on, under, in front, behind,
next to in between.

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



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one of the following:

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