

Let's Get Talking

Top tips to encourage speech and language

- ✓ **Talk to your child about the here and now e.g. the toys they are playing with**
Comment on what they are doing and what you are doing.
- ✓ **Encourage play by playing alongside your child - do what they want to do**
Copy your child's ideas and actions allowing them time to explore and be creative. Name what your child is playing with. This helps them learn the word at the best time (when they are enjoying play).
- ✓ **Simplify your language – keep sentences short and simple**
Label objects with one or two words
- ✓ **Give extra silence and wait for your child to communicate with you**
Children need time to process and respond and are then more likely to have a go at trying new words / sounds,
- ✓ **Sit where your child can see your face**
This makes your child feel important and listened to, and allows them to see the way your mouth moves for different speech sounds
- ✓ **Wait for your child to give eye contact before you respond**
For young children: Looking = Listening.
When you have your child's full attention they are ready to take in new words.
- ✓ **Listen and repeat, to provide an adult model e.g. child says 'tar', you say 'car'**
Your child can hear how the word should sound and it helps your child feel listened to and valued.
- ✓ **Repeat and add a word e.g. your child says 'car', you say 'red car' or 'car driving'**
This shows your child what else they could say, and helps them put words together.
- ✓ **Give your child choices e.g. "do you want the apple or the orange"**
Wait for them to show you in some way which they would like e.g. pointing, trying to say the word
- ✓ **Show them as well as telling them e.g. when offering them a drink, show them a cup**

Things to avoid:-

- x **having lots of toys out at the same time**
- x **trying to do many things at once whilst you talk to your child**
- x **asking lots of questions**
Questions can be overwhelming, especially when you know your child cannot say the answer. Yes or no answers don't give your child an opportunity to use new words.
- x **asking your child to "say"**
If your child doesn't have the word for an object asking them to say it won't help them
- x **focussing too much on colours, numbers, please and thank you**
There are many more useful words we can model e.g. body parts, food, toys, and clothes.