

Children's Speech & Language Therapy Service

Starting Out With Words

Information for parents/carers and settings of children who are starting to use a few words

All children learn to talk at different rates. The way adults use language can help children to communicate.

- 1) Use **simple language** to talk about what you are doing, e.g. "eating dinner" "Brmm, driving the car"
- 2) Use lots of different **types of words** all throughout the day to help your child to listen to and learn new words.

Naming words (nouns)
e.g. dog, cat, sock, bag,
cup, ball etc

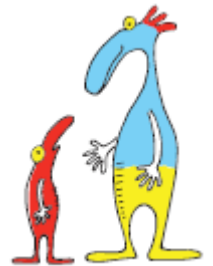
Action words (verbs)
e.g. eating, jump, read,
drawing, painting, skip,
hug, sleep

Words that describe
e.g. hot, wet, soft, big,
small, fast,

- 3) Avoid asking too many questions. Instead, comment on what is happening or what you can see. This gives your child an example of the words they could use... try "It's a cow" (rather than "what's that?") or "you're jumping" (rather than "what are you doing?")
- 4) **Repeat** words lots of times so your child gets more opportunity to understand them and then use them...

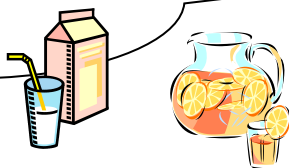


car... big car.....
car crashed.....drive the
car.... car up... car down...



- 5) Offer your child **choices**, even if they respond by pointing to show you what they want, you are saying the words they could use next time.

"milk or juice?"



"car or book?"



- 6) Work out what you think your child means and say the words they could try next time (**interpret** their message), for example if your child points to the door to tell you they want to go out, you can say “out” or “open door”

Don't make your child copy you, just pause and give them time to respond (don't tell them to “SAY out”)

- 7) Use fun words, sounds, animal noises etc to help your child learn:

“Go!” **“splash”** **“brum”** **“meow”** **“pop!”** **“choo choo”** **“woof”** **“ready, steady, go”**

- 8) Always use your home language with your child, speaking more than one language does not cause children to have language difficulties

Check out more ideas in the WellComm ‘Big Book of Ideas’ and Elklan ‘Early Language Builders’ if you work in an early years setting.

Search or view: [Tiny Happy People - Key talking tips for any age](#) for links to ideas and activities.

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[Speech and language therapy - Alder Hey Children's Hospital Trust](#)
(click this link or type into search engine)

This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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