

Supporting Speech And Language Development At Home

Here are some simple, practical suggestions that you can carry out on a daily basis at home to develop your child's speech and language skills.

Chat to your child. Good opportunities to chat arise when children are eating, bath time, when they are in the car etc.

Share books and tell stories. Sharing books and telling stories is fun and can help your child to listen, learn new words and build sentences.

Pretend play (house, shops, school etc) with your child. Play provides a wealth of opportunities for language development. Comment on what they are doing rather than ask questions. Commenting shows the children that you are interested in what they are doing and gives them good language examples to learn from.

Building on what your child says will help improve their vocabulary and their ability to use longer sentences – for example, if your child says 'I can see a car' you can expand this to 'oh, you can see a big, red car'. When talking to your child or asking questions give your child time to think.

Show your children the right way. The most effective way to support language development is to let them hear the words in context. For example if you are outside walking and your child says, 'Look at the dod', you simply say 'Yes, it's a dog'.

