

Good modelling for speech and language

An important aspect of learning speech is listening. A child learns new sounds and words by listening to those around him. This is why it is important to provide good, clear speech for the child to listen to. When you talk say words clearly and slowly and use plenty of intonation. When you are talking to a young child, point to objects when you talk about them so your child can make the link between the word and the object. When your baby is babbling, respond by babbling back. If your child is not using speech yet, but pointing to things, share the moment by also pointing to the object/event and naming it.

As children's speech develops they will attempt to produce words of their own. If your child attempts a word and it is not pronounced correctly, praise him for trying. Do not try and get your child to repeat the word correctly. Repeat the word back yourself to show you have understood, and your child will hear a correct version of the word. Refrain from asking your child to name objects to see if they know the words, this does not teach children language. Children learn language from listening and observing.



When playing it is important to feed lots of vocabulary into the game. Every time you play with a toy, name the toy, say what the toys is doing e.g.

Child: (making car noise and pushing toy car) brum brum

Dad: it's a car

Child: brum

Dad: pushing the car

Child: brum

Dad: pushing the car in the garage

In this example the father is using nouns (car, garage) a verb (pushing) and a preposition (in). The more the child hears the words the more he will link the words with objects and events and eventually attempt the words himself.



Key Points for good modelling

- Praise your child for attempts at speech and communication
- Repeat back words to show you have understood and give a good model
- Point to things as you talk about them
- Refrain from constantly asking your child to name things
- Feed language to the child during play by expanding on their words and adding your own
- Refrain from using a dummy or pacifier

For more information on child development, and activities to develop speech and language skills see our website www.icommunicatetherapy.com



To learn more about child development, communication, and developing your child's speech and language skills, you can read about and purchase books on our website www.icommunicatetherapy.com. Click this link to see our online Resource Centre

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Suggested Reading

The Wonder Years: Helping Your Baby and Young Child Successfully Negotiate The Major Developmental Milestones by American Academy Of Pediatrics (Author), Tanya Remer Altmann

Developing Child, The by Helen Bee and Denise Boyd

Milestones: Normal Speech And Language Development Across the Lifespan by Jr., Ph.D. Oller, et al John W.

Child Development by Laura E. Berk

Ages and Stages: A Parent's Guide to Normal Childhood Development by Charles E. Schaefer and Theresa Foy DiGeronimo

Child Development, Second Edition: A Practitioner's Guide (Social Work Practice with Children and Families) by Douglas D Davies

Child Development by Robert S. Feldman

What's Going on in There? : How the Brain and Mind Develop in the First Five Years of Life by Lise Eliot

Child Development: Principles and Perspectives by J. Littlefield Cook & G. Cook

Let's Talk Together - Home Activities for Early Speech & Language Development by Amy Chouinard and Cory Poland

Born to Talk: An Introduction to Speech and Language Development by Lloyd M. Hult and Merle R. Howard

Speaking, Listening and Understanding: Games for Young Children by Catherine Delamain and Jill Spring

Childhood Speech, Language & Listening Problems: What Every Parent Should Know by Patricia McAleer Hamaguchi

The Parents Guide to Speech and Language Problems by Debbie Feit

The Handbook of Child Language Disorders by Richard G. Schwartz

Does My Child Have a Speech Problem? by Katherine L. Martin

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