

Promoting speech and language while Taking part in everyday activities

Using everyday activities can be a great way to practice speech, language and literacy skills. These activities can also change a mundane event into a pleasurable one. The child may also not realise that you are practicing speech and language skills because the activity will be fun.

Using everyday tasks to promote speech and language is relatively easy, you just have to use your imagination.

Washing hands

Mum: look your hands are dirty (takes Amy to the sink)

Amy: baa

Mum: lets turn on the tap...whoosh, here comes the water, whoosh

Amy: squeals with laughter

Mum: put some soap on

Mum: (rubs Amy's hands together) wash, wash, wash, wash your hands

Amy: laughs

Mum: lets dry them now (dries Amy's hands)

Here is a typical example of a daily activity, but mum makes it fun and at the same time uses lots of language. This is a learning activity, with lots of language and it is a fun moment for mum and daughter. How easy is that!! Positive interaction like this is enriching interaction for the child. Surely these activities that last only a few minutes are worth more than an hour sitting passively in front of the TV.

Bathtime

Use lots of vocabulary during bath-time, talk to your children, and model the words for them. Introduce vocabulary: Verbs: wash, scrub, rinse, clean, brush, dry, splash, sink, float. Nouns: soup, towel, water, tap, flannel, bath, sink, body parts. Sing songs in the bath.

Cleaning the bedroom

Play "I-spy" to practice initial sound awareness (good for speech and language development).

Shopping

Divide foods into categories to help learn vocabulary and categorization skills e.g. fruit, vegetables, meat, diary, desert etc





Driving in the car

Letter recognition: all choose a letter and then have a competition to see who can spot the most number plates starting with that letter. Alternatively, if you are working on a speech sound, look out the window and see how many things you can spot starting with that sound, and then try and say the word. Or to make it harder, see how many things you can spot, ending in your target sound. These activities are good for speech skills, sound awareness and literacy. You could all choose a different sound and have a competition to see who could spot the most things beginning with that sound.

Talk about what the people on the street are doing (e.g. walking, working, riding etc) to focus on verbs, or name as many different occupations that you can see (driver, policeman, road-worker, shopkeeper etc). These are just simple ways to use everyday opportunities to find entertaining and simple ways to focus on speech and language.

Remember, if you make speech and language sessions into games your child enjoys it more, is more motivated and may not even see it as speech and language practice, but as a game. Children like games and are motivated when it becomes competitive. This means you can create ideal situations away from the table-top activities to work on speech and language. Just use your imagination because almost any daily event can be turned into an educational game.

For more information and strategies around all forms of communication and communication impairment 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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