

# Talking Matters

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*Helping your child to reach their potential*



## Goal: Developing Early Language

To provide a range of ideas to assist children as they learn to talk.

*By thinking about our everyday communication with children we can find extra ways to help them learn to talk in day to day situations.*

Here are a range of ideas to help get your child to use their language.

- ❖ Create situations where your child needs to talk (e.g. to ask you for items). By making deliberate mistakes your child may try to talk to let you know how “silly” you have been e.g. When giving your child a drink you may ‘forget’ to put the liquid in. When colouring in you may ‘forget’ to give them pencils.



- ❖ Play games your child enjoys so they are more likely to talk e.g. play with puppets, or colouring in. The activities don’t need to be all about talking.
- ❖ Make sure you give your child a chance to talk also. Avoiding filling all silences with questions.
- ❖ Talk about children’s favourite topics. They love to talk about pets, cuts and sores, things that are broken or unusual.
- ❖ Reduce the pressure to talk so the child can get involved without feeling like they need to perform. Nursery rhymes, songs and stories can be great, especially ones with physical movements as well like “Incy Wincy Spider” or “Open, shut them”.
- ❖ Give children plenty of listening and thinking time as well. When they are busy trying to talk they are unlikely to be ‘learning’ new words. A child’s chances to ‘understand’ through listening are vital to learning to communicate.
- ❖ Let the child be involved in household jobs and events as well. Let them help to wipe plastic cups when you are doing the dishes or put pegs on the line when you hang out clothes. Talk about things they are experiencing using both naming words and action words (e.g. cup, spoon, fork, washing, drying, cleaning). The child doesn’t have to say anything, but they can if they want to.
- ❖ If your child has enough language try asking open ended questions (e.g. I wonder what’s happening here?).
- ❖ Give your child special jobs to do and messages to run (e.g. Go tell Dad “Dinner Dad”)
- ❖ Model for the child what they ‘could’ say in a situation (e.g. “biscuit please”, rather than do you want a biscuit?)