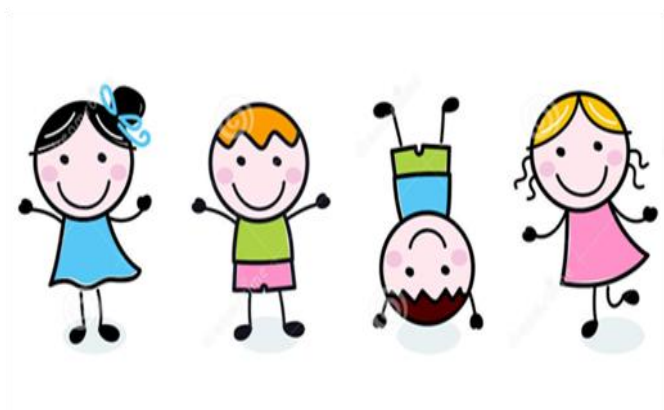


How to encourage early language and communication with your child

Information for Parents



Listening and Attention

It is important for your child to develop listening and attention skills to understand and learn to talk

- ◆ Be face-to-face when you are talking to your child
- ◆ Say your child's name and get their eye contact before talking
- ◆ Reduce background noise e.g. turn off the television
- ◆ Use an animated voice and facial expressions to get and maintain your child's attention
- ◆ Talk about what you hear, e.g. "splish splash" (in the bath), "broom broom" (in the car)



Turn Taking

Turn taking is important as it is the basis of a two-way interaction. We naturally take turns in conversations

- ♦ Play simple turn taking games with your child
- ♦ Incorporate turn taking into everyday activities and routines
- ♦ Ideas for turn taking: try building a tower, rolling a ball back and forth, blowing bubbles, tidying up toys
- ♦ During turn taking games, why not try saying “your turn”, “my turn”



Play

Play is vital to how children develop language and discover the world around them

- ♦ Spend time every day playing with your child
- ♦ Let your child choose how to play with the toys
- ♦ Follow your child's lead - watch to see what your child is interested in and join in
- ♦ Comment on what your child is doing during play, e.g. “teddy's sleeping!”
- ♦ Name objects and toys your child is interested in



Developing Language

Children need to hear language and be given opportunities to learn and try new words

- ◆ Always name things around you. Keep language short and clear to allow opportunities for imitation. Praise any attempts – clear or not
- ◆ Use pointing and gestures to aid understanding, e.g. holding your hands palms up for “all gone”
- ◆ Offer choices wherever possible, e.g. snack – “milk or juice?”
- ◆ Model and expand language, e.g. child: “dog”, adult: “big dog”
- ◆ Encourage imitation with toys. Give your child time to copy
- ◆ Repeat new words over and over again so your child can begin to understand and use them



The Communication Pyramid



Contact Details

Useful Web Links

www.lets-talk.scot.nhs.uk

Interpretation and Translation

This leaflet may be made available in a larger print, Braille or your community language – please use our website www.lets-talk.scot.nhs.uk