

Talking – how can you help?



Talking is one of the most important skills your child ever learns to do.
Here is how you can help them with this very important skill.



Make time to listen to your child. We live very busy lives and time is precious. We often have televisions, computers, tablets and phones constantly on but every talker needs a listener, so for a short time each day, turn everything off, make time to look at, talk with and listen to your child.

- When children first learn to talk they use single words, such as “daddy”, by repeating and extending what they say we can encourage them to start putting words together. So, daddy becomes “bye, bye daddy” or “daddy’s going to work” etc.
- Even when children say very few words they are learning by listening to us. By talking to them about the world they live in, we can build a child’s vocabulary. Talk about anything and everything and soon your child will be chatting along with you!
- Words are formed by making sounds. The sounds are made using the tongue, teeth and lips. It is really important to look after young children’s teeth so that they can make the sounds properly. Dummies force children’s teeth into an unnatural shape. It is very difficult to make the sounds in words when teeth are damaged in this way, so encourage your child to give up their dummy as soon as possible or at least limit it to bedtime only.



- Sing! Children love to sing and you do not have to be a good singer for them to enjoy singing with you! At nursery we sing all the time and the children have never complained!!! Nursery rhymes and action songs are great fun or sing your favourite pop song! Singing can help children who stammer and little ones who lack confidence, so give it a go.



➤ Give your child time to talk. It's easy to talk for them but sometimes by waiting just a little longer for a response you will find that your child has had time to think then answer. Leaving gaps for your child to fill (eg/ "humpty dumpty sat on a" ; "ready, steady.....") will encourage your child to talk.



➤ Reading with your child is a great way of expanding their vocabulary but also a lovely way of spending time together. Remember that you do not have to read all the words in a book, you can make up your own version by looking at the pictures together. When they are able to, see if your child would like to tell the story to you. Don't be afraid of reading their favourite stories over and over again!

➤ Encourage children to talk by sabotage! If you offer a child a garage to play with but he/she has no cars they will need to ask for them; some children may pull you to the car or point and you can say the words for them, in time a child may say "cars?" but you are making it necessary for them to communicate.

Even our little chatterboxes are still learning try some of these ideas

- Positional language – can they describe where something is by using on, under, besides, next to, behind, etc.
- Talk about feelings – how do the characters feel in a story and why? Are they sad, happy, excited, scared, angry, etc.
- Can they continue a rhyming string by listening to the sounds at the end of the words – cat, hat, bat.....
- Can they suggest what sound different words start with – pig, pen, puppet, pram all start with P etc. Play I spy.
- Can they make silly alliteration sentences where nearly all the words start with the same sounds – Silly Sally's sloppy slippers!
- Make an interest bag with objects in – Can your child describe what it looks like, feels like and what it does? You could make it into a guessing game for you to take turns with.
- Help your child learn new language like the days of the week or months of the year in order.
- Have fun with language – tell simple jokes; say tongue twisters (she sells sea shells by the seashore); change nursery rhymes and make up different endings to stories!

If you have concerns about your child's language development or hearing it is important to get help and advice early. Children who are learning more than one language do take longer to learn the second language and for a time may use both.

For more ideas and information visit
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

