

Home-based talking and listening activities for young children



Primary-aged children

- ▶ The following tips and activities have been suggested by speech and language therapists to help develop primary-school aged children's speech, language and communication skills through home-based activities.
- ▶ Parents should not feel like they have to be “teaching” their child - there's lots they can learn from just talking and having fun .



General talking tips

- ▶ On the following slides are some general tips to try while talking to your child that will help with their language development:



Catch your child's interest

- ▶ Talk about the things your child is interested in. For example, if they're playing with dinosaurs or with dress ups, join in and comment on what they're doing.
- ▶ They're more likely to pay attention and chat with you if it's about something they're interested in.



Keep the conversation Going

- ▶ Use comments to keep the conversation going rather than questions. For example, if your child is eating an ice-cream, comment, “Mmm, that looks good. I love ice-cream.”
- ▶ They can then respond with more words than if you ask, “What’s that you’re eating?”
- ▶ Questions can feel like a test and may actually make your child want to speak less rather than more



Set aside time

- ▶ Put aside some time each day for talking together. Even if it's just 10 minutes at the end of the day to talk about your favourite thing that happened that day, or what three things you're grateful for today



Model it

- ▶ If your child doesn't get it quite right the first time, don't say "that's wrong". Instead, fill in the gaps for them by saying it back the right way. For example, if your child says, "I goed swimming", just say back to them, "yes you did, you went swimming."



Explore words

- ▶ Explore words - talk about new words when your child comes across one, like when they're reading a book or watching a TV programme. If you have a dictionary at home, you could look up the meaning of the word in the dictionary together, or even Google it!



Talking about your day

- ▶ Try taking photos of an activity on your phone while you are doing it, and looking back at the pictures together afterwards and talking about what you did together. For example, take photos of all the steps when you are making sandwiches for lunch (with your child's help).
- ▶ Later, look back at the pictures together and talk about all of the steps. This helps to develop children's ability to understand and say the words involved in the activity, because you'll be repeating the words more than once .

Enjoy Talking

- ▶ Enjoy conversations with your child - children learn from conversations with adults as much as their friends. Don't feel like you have to be teaching them things all the time for them to be learning



Be Silly!

- ▶ Don't be afraid to talk in funny voices or have silly conversations - playing around with words by making up rhymes or using silly words can encourage your child to experiment with language, which is good for their development.



Most importantly - have fun!

