



Promoting Talk at Home

Why is talk important?



We communicate and interact with each other in different ways; learning the skills of interaction is really important for having good conversations. We need to learn when to talk and when to listen, how to take turns and how to notice if someone is not listening. We need words to do this, but also skills in looking, listening and noticing people around us.

From an early age, children develop an awareness of the different sounds in our spoken language. They learn to use their voices to make contact with you and to let people know what they need and how they are feeling.

Children need lots of opportunities to talk with others as they develop and practise these skills. This helps to build their confidence and improves their ability to communicate with other people, this is a really important part of learning to socialise.

Spoken language is also the foundation for becoming effective readers and writers. In order to make a good start to reading and writing, children need to be listened to and talked with.

This booklet contains some practical ideas on how you can support and promote talk at home.

Top tips for developing talk

Children learn a great deal from other people. As parents and carers, you are your child's first teachers. You have a powerful influence on your child's learning. Children need adults to nurture and support their language and communication.

Put aside time each day for talking to one another

Switch off the tv, mobile phones and radio -and really listen to one another.

Get their attention!

When children are absorbed in another activity it is hard to get them to listen. Make eye-contact and say their name, to ensure they are listening.

Talk about what your child is interested in

Children are much more motivated to talk when it is about something that they are interested in.

Explore words

Explore and talk about new vocabulary. Build in time for repetition and practise. Did you know, typically a child needs to hear a word twelve times before it becomes part of their vocabulary?

Modelling

If your child does not get it quite right the first time, model 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.'

Give children time

Children need time to process what others have said, work out what they are going to say and how they are going to say it. Use facial expression to show you are listening and happy to wait.

The Importance of Play

Why is play a really important part of children's learning development?

Children learn all kinds of skills through play. Playing enables children to test things out in a safe way.

Through play, children learn:

- How things work
- How to interact and share with others
- How to enter a world of imagination
- How to communicate and respond to different emotions

How does play promote talk?

Play enables children to practise the language skills they have learnt and build upon their expanding vocabulary.

Interacting with others, whilst playing, enables children to refine their speech sounds through listening to others.



How can you support your child at home?

Everyday activities such as preparing meals, tidying up, putting shopping away and getting ready to go out offer you the chance to talk to your child, explaining what you are doing. They hear the way language is put together into sentences for a purpose.

Here are some activities that promote speaking and listening. These activities can be carried out at any point throughout the day: at the dinner table, out for a walk, at bath time etc

<h2>I Spy...with a twist!</h2>	<h2>Would you rather?</h2>
<p>Instead of saying what the object begins with, describe it e.g.</p> <p><i>I spy something that we can eat. It is long. It is orange. It is crunchy!</i></p>	<p>This game encourages children's imagination as well as talk! Ask some 'would you rather' questions.</p> <p><i>Would you rather fly to the moon in a bathtub or on the back of a horse?</i></p> <p><i>Would you rather swim with mermaids or fly with dragons?</i></p> <p>Encourage children to justify their responses.</p>
<h2>Odd One Out</h2>	<h2>Barrier Games</h2>
<p>This game is designed to get children thinking and talking. There is no right or wrong answer.</p> <p>You can use pictures, objects or just list three objects verbally e.g.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">    </div> <p>Which one is the odd one out?</p>	<p>Sit back-to-back. One person draws a picture, or builds an object out of Lego, or selects a shape etc. This person then has to describe what they have drawn or made by giving a verbal description. The other person must draw exactly what they have described. When the description has finished, turn around and compare results!</p>
<h2>Trust Walk</h2>	<h2>Books!</h2>
<p>This is a game of trust, which requires very clear spoken instructions. Take it in turns to wear a blindfold and follow the directions you are given around your home, garden, park etc. This game reinforces the use of commands, time related vocabulary and prepositions e.g.</p> <p><i>Next take three steps to the right, around the tree.</i></p>	<p>Books are a rich source of new words for your child - words you would not use in everyday conversations appear in books. Children need to have a wide stock of words (vocabulary) to understand the meaning of books - so read aloud and share books as often as you can. They will enjoy it and it will be useful to them when they come across these words in their own reading.</p>

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Picture time</h2> <p>Have fun making a squiggly picture together. One of you draw a squiggly line and then the other person adds to it to turn it into a picture. The first person adds a bit more and then so on...until you are happy with the picture. Then talk about what you have created.</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">What if?</h2> <p>This game encourages children to use their imagination. Ask 'what if' questions e.g.</p> <p style="color: green;">What if the sky was red? What if there were no trees? What if cats had six legs? What if you were invisible?</p>
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Hide and Seek</h2> <p>Hide a ribbon, object or a toy. Ask the children to hunt for it (in the house or in the garden) you can use the language of 'cold' 'colder' 'warm' 'warmer' 'hot' 'hotter' to describe how close the children are to finding the item. Whoever finds the item has to explain where it was hidden, e.g. My teddy bear was under the flowerpot.</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">A noisy lunch!</h2> <p>Make a noisy lunch together, talking and copying the sounds you hear. Encourage children to learn new vocabulary by introducing new utensils and food. Guess the noise:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pick a noisy utensil or piece of equipment in the kitchen 2. Tell your child to close their eyes and listen carefully 3. Make a noise e.g. chop on a board 4. Get your child to open their eyes and make a guess If they are incorrect, do it again and then show them
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Family Quiz</h2> <p>Ask open 'tell me' questions rather than questions that require a 'yes' or 'no' response.</p> <p style="color: green;">Tell me about your earliest memory... Tell me about your favourite food... Tell me about what you want to be when you are older... Tell me your favourite thing about school... Tell me about your favourite TV programme...</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">The Jellybean Game</h2> <p>Each type of bean called out has a particular action that the children do. This will support children's listening skills.</p> <p>Broad bean - stretch as far and as wide as you can Runner bean - Run on the spot String bean - Reach as tall and high as you can Baked bean - curl up into a small ball Jellybean - Wobble your whole-body French bean - say 'ooh, la, la!'</p>

We would love to see what you have been up to on Tapestry and SeeSaw!