

Tips for Speech & Language Development in young children

Here are some tips on how parents/carers can support their child's speech and language development:

- Use short and simple **sentences**
- **Comment** about the activity that your child is engaged in
- Help your child to build their **vocabulary** by introducing new words in a meaningful context
- Role-play and other **play activities** are fun ways of exploring communication in children
- Use **gestures, body language, facial expressions** along with speech to improve child's understanding of spoken language
- Be a **good listener**; Give the child adequate time/opportunities to respond
- Create a **need to communicate** by encouraging your child to make choices, pretending not to understand, pointing out towards objects, asking yes/no questions.
- Provide a **good speech and language model**.
- Include fun activities (e.g. Simon says) for gross body imitation, non-speech sounds as well as speech sounds in your daily routines. Mirrors are great for children while engaged in the imitation task.
- **Praise the child for all attempts in communication**. A hug, smile, happy face, thumbs up can all have positive effects.
- **Seek help early** if your child has difficulty understanding or speaking
- **Read** to your child daily. Story time is very effective in building a special bond between parents/carers and children.
- **Practice at home** to help your child to carry over targets from school.
- Please **do not force** your child to talk.
- **Maintain a communication book and make a note of** a child's achievements, strengths and needs which can be shared with teachers.