

Supporting your child with their communication and language development in the early years



Introduction

Supporting your child's communication and language development is one of the most important ways that you can help them to learn, socialise and find out about the world around them.

You can find some quick and easy ways to help you child here...

Babies

Babies will...

- Move their arms, legs or body or make noises when they hear sounds that they know
- Smile or move their arms, legs or body when someone is talking to them
- Stop what they are doing and listen to a new voice or sound
- Start to show that they understand what someone is saying to them by waving good-bye or pointing
- Make different sounds to show how they are feeling like crying, babbling and laughing

You can help you child by...

- Playing “peek a boo” games, using your hands or a scarf to hide your face
- Singing a song or rhyme as you rock or hug your baby
- Tell your baby what you’re doing as you’re changing their nappy or getting them dressed
- Have a chat with your baby by copying their sounds and babbling



Toddlers

Toddlers will...

- Explore toys and other things that look interesting to them
- Stop what they are doing or playing with if they hear a noise or someone talking
- Begin to understand words that are important to them like “cup” or “teddy” by pointing or finding the thing
- Use single words, like “cup” or “daddy”
- Make up and use their own words, like as “baba” for baby
- Tell you the names of toys or things that they want
- Start to say two-word phrases such as “want ball” or “more juice” to tell you what they want or need

You can help you child by...

- Sharing stories together
- Singing songs when you’re getting your child dressed or changing their nappy
- Holding your toddler’s hands to help them make the actions as you sing songs
- Talking about the sounds you can hear all around
- Playing games where your child has to follow instructions like “roll the ball” or “throw the ball”



Two year olds

Two year olds will...

- Recognise sounds by finding or going to the thing or place
- Join in with stories or singing songs and rhymes
- Stop, look and listen when someone says their name
- Point to the right picture to show you that they understand action or “doing” words like “Who is jumping?”
- Use simple sentences with 3-4 words to talk about what they are doing or what is happening
- Talk about lots of different things
- Ask questions such as “what”, “where” and “who” when sharing a book or playing with toys
- Begin to use word endings, such as “I am going” instead of “I go” and plurals, such as “babies” when talking about more than one object or person

You can help you child by...

- Using sock puppets, toy people or animals when you’re sharing stories or songs
- When you are making a sandwich together talk about what you are doing
- Joining your child in their play, talking about what you are doing and what things are called



Three and four year olds

Three and four year olds will...

- Listen to stories and talk about them later
- Join in with their favourite rhymes and stories
- Follow simple instructions like “Come and put your coat on”
- Begin to understand when you ask questions like “How can we mop up the juice?” and “Why do you want to wear your boots today?”
- Begin to use longer sentences with words like “because” and “and” like “I cried, I did, because I banged my foot”
- Ask lots of questions and can answer questions too
- Talk about what they are doing now, and what might happen later or tomorrow
- Learn lots of new words

You can help you child by...

- Playing listening games like “Simon Says....” or “Ready, Steady, Go”
- Making up silly sentences where each word begins with the same sound as at the start of your child’s name
- Talking about things you have done together and what you might do later
- When you’re tidying up give your child simple instructions like “Put your shoes in the basket”



Top tips

Talk to your child often and don't be afraid to use new and interesting words

Read together and sing together

Give your child lots of eye contact and take time to listen to them

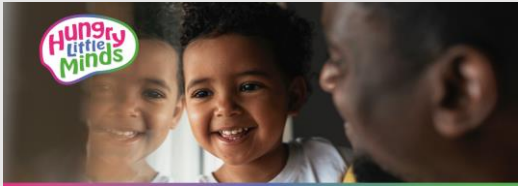
Join your child as they play, showing an interest in the things they like to do



Online support

School Improvement
Liverpool

For more activities and online support you can visit:



<https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/>



<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>



<https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/>



https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2015/03/4Children_ParentsGuide_2015_WEB.pdf

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