

Speech and Language Therapy Service's 'Help at Home' scheme

USING WORDS AND TALKING

Helping your child to talk and say more



When children learn to talk, they start by using single words and gradually put more words together to make sentences.

For young children, the best way to learn new words and how to put words together is through play. It is important that children understand what words mean before we can expect them to use them.

Make sure words you try to encourage your child to say are ones which they have heard lots of times before and don't worry about how your child says the words – some mistakes in pronunciation is normal for young children.

Top tips before you start

- Try to avoid asking your child to 'say this' and 'say that' as this can discourage children from wanting to talk.
- Accept the sounds your child makes as the words they mean and say it back to them correctly (e.g. Child: "ta-ter", adult: "yes, tractor").
- Use actions and gestures to support what you say, sometimes learning an action for a word can help children learn the word itself.
- Wait and listen for your child to talk, sometimes we talk too much because we want to fill in the silences. Model words over and over and give your child chance to try saying them for themselves.

Ways to encourage your child

Model language: Comment and repeat simple words and phrases, when playing favourite games or during every day activities (e.g. hanging the washing out).

This will show your child the types of things they could say.



Build and Expand: If your child says a word, say it back to them but add another word on to show them how to say more E.g.

Child: 'daddy',
Adult: 'daddy gone', or E.g.

Child: 'doggy eat',
Adult: 'yes, doggy eating dinner'.

Cue them in: Demonstrate some phrases for your child by saying a few first, then cue them in so that they try a phrase, (e.g. in a book – “here’s teddy jumping on the bed, here’s teddy drinking some tea and here’s ...”).

Types of words to think about

Naming words (nouns) -

e.g. banana milk eyes nose bus
plane horse lion coat.



Doing words (verbs) -

e.g. run jump sit sleep wash cry dig
swim brush.

Describing words (adjectives) -

e.g. big little hot cold wet long dirty red
blue.



Position words (prepositions) -

e.g. in, on, under, in front, behind, next
to, in between.

Remember: Don't worry about getting proper sentences, 'teddy sleeping' is fine (rather than 'the teddy is sleeping'). It's words that carry information that are important

If you are worried about your child's talking or would like more information, please call your local Speech & Language Therapy Services

Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board	Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend
Aneurin Bevan Health Board	Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and South Powys
Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Wrexham & Flintshire 01978 727071 Conwy & Denbighshire 01745 443178 North West Wales 01286 662760	Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham) as well as some parts of mid Wales, Cheshire and Shropshire
Cardiff & Vale University Health Board	Cardiff & Vale residents
Cwm Taf Health Board	the Cynon Valley, Merthyr Tydfil, the Rhondda Valleys and the Taff Ely area
Hywel Dda Health Board	Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.
Powys Teaching Health Board	Brecon, Newton, Montgomeryshire and Knighton, Becknockshire and the remainder of Radnorshire

Afasic Cymru is the only charity in Wales, representing children & young people with Speech, Language & Communication Needs (SLCN), with a particular focus on Specific Language Impairment (SLI)

www.afasiccymru.org.uk

Afasic Cymru acknowledges Amy Hewer, a S&L Therapist at Betsi Cadwaladr UHB & Wrexham Flying Start for working in partnership to produce this information.

Production of this leaflet has been funded by
The Waterloo Foundation & Welsh Government

