

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

## BEFORE WORDS

### How to help the child who isn't talking yet



Children learn to talk by copying and experimenting with sounds and noises.

They love to do the same things over and over again and this gives them plenty of opportunities to watch and learn from you.

When playing with your child or even when doing everyday activities, remember these simple ideas.

# Ways to encourage your child to make sounds

Make sounds that match up with favourite toys or games. E.g. 'Boo!' – peek-a-boo/jumping out of a hiding place

- Brmm brmm' – racing toy cars
- 'Choo choo' – playing with trains
- 'Shh shh' – cuddling dolly sleeping
- 'Pop' – blowing a popping bubbles



Make animal sounds when you see animals out and about, on the telly, in a book or when playing with a toy. E.g.

'moo, moo' – cow

- 'baa-aa' – sheep
- 'woof-woof' – dog
- 'quack-quack' – duck
- 'ROAR' - lion



Children really respond to changes in pitch and intonation so make sounds enthusiastically so that they sound fun – this way you child is more likely to try and copy you.

**TOP TIP - Give choices:** *if your child points to something they want, pretend you don't know and say e.g. "you want biscuit or juice?" - offer a couple of times before handing over what they point to.*

# Encourage them to copy, praise them and model words

Sings songs and action rhymes: sing songs and do the actions over and over – helping your child to join in if necessary.

Favourites are:

- Round and round the garden
- Row, row, row your boat
- Old MacDonald had a farm
- Twinkle, twinkle little star

Model familiar words: saying the same words each time you play a game will help your child learn words to say. E.g. saying “ready... steady... GO” every time you knock a tower down or throw a ball,

or “more?” every time you go to blow some bubbles.

**Remember:** *Keep activities short and make playing and making sounds fun – for you and your child!*



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

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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](http://www.afasiccymru.org.uk)

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