



# Developing every child's speech, language and communication in Early Years settings

Worcestershire Children's Health Services

# Introduction

In Worcestershire we believe that every child should have the opportunity to develop their communication skills to the full.

The development of good communication skills is the foundation for children's education, health and well being. It is one of the key priorities in helping us ensure all children succeed.

This guidance provides suggestions and ideas to inform good practice in the development of speech, language and communication and ensure that the same messages are shared across the whole county.

It is designed for all professionals who have a role in supporting children in Early Years settings in this area of development and includes messages that can be shared with parents and carers too.

We want to enable all our young children in Worcestershire to have the best possible start in life and believe that this guidance will keep speech, language and communication high on the agenda and help us to achieve that aim.

Every effort has been made to acknowledge sources of material used in this booklet. Sometimes it is not possible, because sources may be untraceable, or material may have been used unknowingly. If you recognise any unacknowledged material please notify Speech and Language Therapy Services within Worcestershire PCT and we will do our best to rectify this.

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# Developing Every Child's Speech, Language and Communication

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# Developing Every Child's Speech, Language and Communication

## Why?

"Communication is an essential life skill. It is the basis on which all children learn, achieve and make friends. It is vital to the development of children's social and emotional well being" <sup>(1)</sup>

10% of children have long term persistent communication difficulties.  
50% (sometimes more) have transient difficulties, with the right help they can catch up. <sup>(2)</sup>

## National Context:

**Recent research has indicated that there are still many children starting school without the extended vocabulary and communication skills necessary for learning and making friends. It also shows us that there is:**

- An increasing awareness, at a national and local level, of the importance of developing children's communication and language skills
- Greater recognition of the crucial role which language plays in supporting children's later development
- Acknowledgement that all early years practitioners are teachers of communication and language
- A need for an increase in practitioner skills and expertise to work with both children and their families
- A need for parents to play a crucial role in their child's development

Children develop their communication skills through interaction and conversation with those around them, particularly adults.

Dickinson and Tabors (2001) did some observations in nursery classes and found that:

17% time was spent in meaningful conversation with the teacher  
18% time was spent in meaningful conversation with peers  
51% time was spent not talking at all

We owe it to our children's future to be aware of their communicative attempts and enable them to develop their language skills, seen in their widest sense, to include spoken language, signing and alternative communication.

Ref: (1)Bercow report 2008a (2) ICAN 2006 "The Cost to the Nation of children's poor communication"

This document has been put together by speech and language therapists from Worcestershire Primary Care Trust working in the Early Years Team and the Early Language Consultant leading the Every Child a Talker project (Worcestershire LA Jan 2009 – July 2010)

It provides suggestions and ideas to support every child's speech, language and communication, including those with specific speech, language and communication problems, who may have already been referred to the speech and language therapy service.

Many of the suggestions are simple common sense, but are still often overlooked when we are rushing around following our busy agenda.

How often have we strived to fit in those routines of register, toileting, snacks, and clearing up, perhaps reaching the end of the day without having taken the time to play and interact with the children in our care at their level and on their terms about something they are interested in?

We hope that the following ideas can be used in your settings to support every child's speech, language and communication.

Take the time to read them and try them out, as you become more familiar and confident with them you will find you will be adapt and use them automatically without even having to think about it and become a truly supportive communication friendly environment, giving children the best possible start!

The information sheets can be copied and shared with parents too, helping them to become better communication partners with their children.

# Speech, Language and Communication Development

## Monitoring

The aim of monitoring children's development is to plan and provide more accurate support for each child to make good progress.

Using the speech, language and communication development chart (pg 7) it is possible to make a judgement as to whether a child is developing as expected in this area or seems delayed or "at risk" of delay.

- Judgements of a child's stage of development are made through a process of ongoing observational assessment.
- Observation involves noticing what children do and say in a range of contexts; information from families about what the children do and say at home should be included.
- For children learning English as a second language, it is important to find out from families how their child uses their mother tongue and communicates at home.
- The assessment is a "best fit" match to a stage band. This involves considering what is known about the child, and matching it to the development described.
- Each strand of communication is described separately and it is possible that some children may only have a delay in one area, and others have difficulties in several strands.
- In considering whether a child is at risk of delay it is necessary to consider the child's actual age in months in relation to the overlapping age bands.
- If a child is within 2 months of the end of the age band and development is not yet within the band or is judged to be "emerging" then a judgement of "at risk of delay" would be appropriate.
- The developmental chart can be used to record progress over a period of time.
- If a child has a considerable delay at the outset, or fails to make progress then onward referral to the speech and language therapist should be considered. Contact information for your local speech and language therapy department can be found at the end of this document.

# Speech, Language and Communication Development

Age	Attention and Listening	Understanding (receptive Language)	Communicating (Expressive Language)	Social Communication and use of language	Speech Sounds	Play
0-11 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turns towards sounds and locates a range of sounds accurately</li> <li>By 6m can pay fleeting attention but easily distracted by new event</li> <li>Stops and looks when hears own name</li> <li>Is intrigued by new events and actions</li> <li>Listens to, distinguishes, and responds to intonations and the sounds of voices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 6m responds to different tones of voice</li> <li>Recognises parent's voice</li> <li>By 10m stops and looks when hears own name</li> <li>By end of 1st year, begins to understand frequently used words such as "all gone", "bye bye", "no"</li> <li>Understands single signs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicates in a variety of ways including smiling, gurgling, crying, making sounds</li> <li>By 6m will engage in sound play with familiar adult</li> <li>Babbling in strings of connected but different sounds, e.g. 'ba-da-ga'</li> <li>By 12m, may hear "word" like utterances e.g. "dada", "mama", "gogo"</li> <li>Can point to object or activity to express wants and needs</li> <li>May have 1-5 "words" by 12m, related to child's own world and functional needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gazes at faces and copies facial movements e.g. sticking out tongue</li> <li>Makes sounds with their voice for social interaction</li> <li>By 12m uses voice, gesture, eye contact &amp; facial expression to make contact with people and keep their attention</li> <li>Initiates an interaction with adult</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Babbles with range of sound combinations</li> <li>By 12m consonants such as "b, d, g, m, n, w" predominate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploratory play; mouths, bangs, shakes objects</li> <li>By 12m, relates 2 objects, e.g. spoon in cup</li> <li>Plays alone with toys</li> </ul>
8-20 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likes to listen to a wide variety of sounds</li> <li>By 12m concentrates on most powerful stimulus, difficult to re-focus</li> <li>Is easily distracted by noises or other people talking</li> <li>By 18m will attend to own choice of activity, tolerates limited intervention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 12m understands key words in phrase e.g. "Where's your nose?"</li> <li>By 12m recognises photos of familiar people and objects</li> <li>Understands simple words in context and understands more than they can say</li> <li>Understands naming words e.g. shoe, ball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates personal words as begins to develop language</li> <li>Uses around 10-20 single words although these may not be clear</li> <li>Beginning to use words for a range of purposes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likes being with familiar adults and watches and copies their body language including gesture and pointing</li> <li>Realises that their voice and actions have an effect on others</li> <li>Use pointing with eye gaze to share an interest and make a request</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speech consists of mix of "jargon" and some real words</li> <li>May be difficult to understand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repeats actions that were enjoyed</li> <li>Begins "pretend" play with toys e.g. gives doll a drink</li> <li>Involves others in pretend play</li> </ul>
16-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listens to and enjoys rhythmic patterns in rhymes and stories</li> <li>Starts to focus on an activity of own choice</li> <li>Responds to own name and can move attention briefly and then re-focus</li> <li>Single channelled attention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understands action words e.g. "sleep", "jump"</li> <li>By 2y, understands simple instructions/phrases when context apparent, e.g. "get mummy's shoes"</li> <li>Understands instructions with 2 key words (or signs) e.g. "make teddy jump"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 24m beginning to put 2 words(or signs) together e.g. "Mummy's car", "more juice"</li> <li>Uses different types of everyday words, nouns, adjectives, verbs</li> <li>Uses up to 50 words</li> <li>Asks questions e.g. "where drink?"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interested in stories, songs and rhymes</li> <li>Begins to express feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2y6m starting to use "f, s, sh"</li> <li>Immatunities heard e.g. "tar" for "car" "pu" for "spoon"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starts to demonstrate 2 part play sequence e.g. drives car to petrol station + fills petrol</li> <li>Beginning to play with miniature toys e.g. small world</li> </ul>

Age	Attention and Listening	Understanding (receptive Language)	Communicating (Expressive Language)	Social Communication and use of language	Speech Sounds	Play
<b>22 -36 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begins to listen to talk with interest, but still distracted</li> <li>• By 30m can attend to adults choice of activity for short time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can identify objects by use e.g. "Which one do we eat?"</li> <li>• Understands simple concepts such as in/on/under, big/little</li> <li>• Understands simple "who", "what", "where" questions but not "why" or "when?"</li> <li>• Understands a simple story with pictures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is learning new words frequently and rapidly</li> <li>• Uses up to 300 words</li> <li>• Can link 3-4 words together</li> <li>• Starting to use past tense e.g. "me failed over"</li> <li>• Using some question words e.g. "what?", "where?"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can hold a short conversation but jumps from topic to topic</li> <li>• Expresses emotions towards adults and peers</li> <li>• Has some favourite stories, songs and rhymes</li> <li>• Uses language to share feelings, experiences and thoughts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 3y all vowels are present.</li> <li>• Consonant sounds such as "s, f, sh, z, v, ch" used</li> <li>• Usually understood by others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start of symbolic play e.g. box is boat</li> <li>• Plays alongside others</li> <li>• Some make-believe play e.g. tea party, toys lined up, food offered</li> </ul>
<b>30-50 months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 36m can shift to a different task if attention fully obtained</li> <li>• Listens to others in 1:1 or small groups when conversation interests them</li> <li>• Is able to follow directions (if not intently focused on own activity)</li> <li>• Listens to stories with increasing attention and recall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 3y beginning to understand instructions with 3 key words e.g. "Give the big ball to teddy"</li> <li>• Understanding increasing number of "describing" words e.g. "cold", "top"</li> <li>• Beginning to understand negatives e.g. "can't"</li> <li>• Understands "why" questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses simple statements and questions, often with gesture</li> <li>• Uses sentences with 4-6 words</li> <li>• Beginning to use linking words such as "and", "because"</li> <li>• Increasing vocabulary 500-1500 words (by 4yrs)</li> <li>• Uses complex sentences to elaborate an idea</li> <li>• Uses talk to: connect ideas; explain what is happening; anticipate what might happen next; recall past experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can initiate conversations</li> <li>• Joins in with rhymes and stories</li> <li>• Enjoys rhythmic activities and shows awareness of rhyme and alliteration</li> <li>• Understands turn taking and sharing</li> <li>• Can describe main story settings, events and principal characters</li> <li>• Talks freely about home and community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly understood by others, even in connected speech</li> <li>• By 4y uses "f, s, sh" etc consistently</li> <li>• Blends still simplified e.g. "sp"→"p" "tr"→"t"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes on role of another person during play e.g. fireman</li> <li>• Play with construction toys e.g. duplo</li> <li>• Co-operative play with others, turn takes</li> <li>• Loves home corner/ dressing up</li> </ul>
<b>40-60 + months</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustains attentive listening, respond to what they have heard with relevant comments, questions or actions</li> <li>• Attention is more flexible and able to listen and do at the same time; two channelled</li> <li>• Can take verbal direction without needing to interrupt the task and look up</li> <li>• By 5y, maintains attention, concentrates and sits quietly when appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands "how?" by giving explanations</li> <li>• More aware of abstract ideas including time in relation to past, present and future</li> <li>• Understands humour e.g. jokes, nonsense rhymes</li> <li>• Understands a simple story without pictures</li> <li>• Understands instructions with sequence words: "first...next...last"</li> <li>• Understands everyday conversations unless ambiguous</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentence length and complexity gradually increasing</li> <li>• More question words e.g. "when?", "how?"</li> <li>• Uses sentences that are easily understood by adults and peers</li> <li>• Uses language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences in play</li> <li>• Will ask the meaning of words &amp; naming, exploring the meanings and sounds of new words</li> <li>• By 5yrs using 1500 – 2000 words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has confidence to speak to others about their own wants and interests</li> <li>• Takes account of what others say</li> <li>• Uses language for a range of purposes</li> <li>• Uses talk to pretend and for imaginary situations</li> <li>• Uses language to express needs/feelings in appropriate ways</li> <li>• Works as part of a group or class, taking turns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 5y fully intelligible to others</li> <li>• May not use "th"</li> <li>• May swap "w" for "r"</li> <li>• May find it difficult to say 3 consonants together e.g. scratch</li> <li>• Multi-syllabic words difficult</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follows rule-governed games e.g. Simon Says</li> <li>• Engages in longer sequences of pretend play e.g. acting out familiar situations</li> <li>• Increasing use of imagination</li> </ul>

# General Strategies

## What can we do to help?

1. **Child's level:** Get down to your child's level when communicating with them. This makes it easier for them to listen.
2. **Secure attention:** Say your child's name first, in order to secure their attention, then talk to them or give them an instruction.
3. **Key words:** Use key words only when talking to your child or when giving an instruction. This will help him/her understand better.
4. **Visual support:** Use objects, photos, symbols etc (depending on your child's level) in order to help them understand more effectively.
5. **Signing:** Use signing to support spoken language. Signing is easy to learn and is beneficial in focussing your child your child's attention and supporting their understanding.
6. **Environment:** Allow your child to work in a quiet area away from lots of activity. Your child can not concentrate in busy areas and you will not get the best from him/her.
7. **Hands-on work:** Your child learns by seeing and doing and therefore learns best when actual hands-on activities are used to facilitate learning.



## Speech and Language Therapy Service

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# Top Tips for Talking

## Ways in which practitioners can support and develop communication

	Examples
<b><u>A Unique Child</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow the child's lead</li> <li>Join in with the child's play or mirror their actions</li> <li>Focus on what a child is looking at or doing</li> <li>Wait and allow the child time to start the conversation</li> <li>Take turns to communicate so that adults and children both get a turn at talking.</li> </ul>	<p>If a child is playing in the sand &amp; just filling &amp; emptying a bucket – fill your own alongside him &amp; tip it out. You can add words like "more", "again", "full up", "empty"; wait for him to prompt you to refill.</p>
<b><u>Positive Relationships</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build up a child's sentences by repeating what they say and adding words</li> <li>Give choices to increase vocabulary, e.g. 'apple or satsuma?'</li> <li>If a child says something inaccurately, acknowledge what they have said and repeat it back in the correct way</li> <li>Share the top tips with parents so that they can do the same at home.</li> </ul>	<p>In the home corner, child picks up a cup and says "drink"</p> <p>You could add "teddy's drink" whilst offering it to the nearby teddy.</p> <p>Child might say "teddy drink" copying you.</p> <p>Adult: "teddy drinking tea"</p> <p>Child: "drinking tea"</p> <p>"more tea"</p>
<b><u>Enabling Environment</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get down to the child's level – it's easier to talk if you are face to face</li> <li>Get a child's attention before you start to talk</li> <li>Make sure you use lots of statements and fewer questions</li> <li>Try to have a conversation with every child every day.</li> </ul>	<p>Looking at an animal picture book with a 2y6m child.</p> <p>Adult pointing....."oooh....I can see a ..... (leave a gap for child to name)</p> <p>Adult: "There's another..... " child may then name himself</p> <p>Adult: "That cow's having a drink"</p>
<b>Learning and Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan a variety of interesting activities so that there is plenty to talk about</li> <li>Use daily routines to repeat and emphasise basic language</li> <li>Listen to sounds around you and play games that encourage listening</li> <li>Have fun together with songs and rhymes.</li> </ul>	<p>Shared snack times are useful for all sorts of vocabulary:</p> <p>"more", "no more"</p> <p>"hot/cold"</p> <p>"full/empty"</p> <p>Names of food and drink</p>

Devised by and for Every Child a Talker, Worcestershire 2009

## Expanding a Child's Utterances

Some examples: The first column gives examples of what you might typically hear a practitioner say in response to the child's utterance; these responses may not always be appropriate, with too many questions which stop the flow of the interaction. In the second column are some examples of responses which would extend or enrich the child's language development.

	Context	Child's utterance	Typical response (inappropriate?)	Much better if ...
1	3-year-old building a train track	My track's very long	Yes it is isn't it. (Doesn't invite further discussion)	Wow you've made a long windy track
2	2-year-old pointing to car	Car!	What colour is it?	Yes, it's a red car Or Daddy's car
3	4-year-old looking at book of sea animals	Look at that whale	What else can you see?	It's a giant blue whale. It's swimming in the ocean Can you see his blowhole?
4	20-month-old eating yogurt	poon	Ssspoon..you say spoon	Oh yes, a spoon Or Daisy's spoon
5	40-month-old pretending to have a tea party in the home / corner	Dinner's ready	What's for dinner? What have you cooked? Have you washed the pans?	Yum,yum, I'm hungry, I'd like some..... Tell me about the food
6	30-month-old finger painting	No utterance	What do you feel like painting? Are you going to paint a house?	Just find your own apron and join in alongside, could add words like "more", "messy" "again"

# Use of dummies with babies and small children

During a baby's early months a dummy can be useful to comfort. Most babies have a very strong sucking reflex and therefore a dummy can help to settle a crying baby. However, dummies can be harmful if they are used a lot and particularly after the age of 12 months.

## What does this mean?

### Speech and language development

- Dummies can stop the full range of tongue movements that are needed for some speech sounds: this can have long term effects.
- If your child has a dummy they have less opportunities to babble and use sounds and to communicate with you.

### Teeth

- Dentists have found that sucking a dummy a lot can make teeth crowd together or lead to a gap between the top and bottom teeth, this may cause a lisp.

### Mouth breathing

- A child may tend to breathe through their mouth rather than their nose. This may lead to long-term dribbling.

## What can we do to help to reduce the use of a dummy?

- If you need to use a dummy, use it for a few minutes to settle your child
- Don't automatically give your child a dummy - wait until they ask or indicate that they want it
- Keep dummies for sleep times only
- Gradually reduce the use of a dummy: it is much easier to break the habit before the age of 12 months than after 12 months
- Encourage your child to throw a dummy away in the bin
- Father Christmas or a favourite character can 'magic' away a dummy leaving a small present in its place.



## Speech and Language Therapy Service

# Developing attention and listening skills

## What does this mean?

Good listening and attention skills are extremely important for children as they learn to talk. They need to take notice of and learn from what they see and hear going on around them. As a child grows, their learning depends on being able to concentrate. Without good listening and attention skills, your child's talking will not progress as easily as it should.

## What can we do to help?

- Playing somewhere quiet without distractions. Make time each day to turn off the television, radio, mobile phone and computer for a playtime together
- Sit down with your child so that they can see your face easily
- Call their name and make sure they are looking at you before asking them to do something
- Have one activity or toy out at a time. Put other toys out of sight
- Always encourage your child to finish what they are doing whether it is a drawing, puzzle or game: and help put things away
- Keep things simple. It is better to finish a three piece puzzle than leave a six piece one unfinished
- Keep instructions clear and simple and stress the important words. Give help if needed but don't take over
- Comment on what you can both see rather than asking questions
- Talk about one thing at a time and keep it relevant to what is happening now
- Show your child how to take turns i.e, one for you, one for me. Later introduce more people to play, so that your child begins to learn to wait for their turn
- Stop when you are losing your child's interest and try to get them back on task
- Give lots of praise and encouragement and never let your child feel they have failed if they can't finish a task.



## Speech and Language Therapy Service

# Special Time

## What does this mean?

It is extremely important to make time to play with your child without any distractions or pressure for them to talk. By following your child's lead, you are showing them that you are interested in what they are doing. This will mean that they feel more confident and relaxed in order to try to communicate.

## What can we do to help?

1. Make time to play with your child for about 5-10 minutes each day.
2. Reduce distractions, turn off the television.
3. Sit on the floor facing your child.
4. Have a small selection of toys within reach of you both.
5. Follow his/her lead and focus of attention - your child may move around the room so go with them!
6. Give your child time to respond and listen to what they say.
7. Avoid asking questions and comment on what your child is doing - using simple language with a fun sounding voice, e.g "teddy eating, teddy jumping, etc..."
8. Repeat what your child says. Remember your child needs to hear the same words lots of times before they start to use them.
9. Don't worry about how the words sound: praise any attempt to communicate and always respond to them.



## Speech and Language Therapy Service

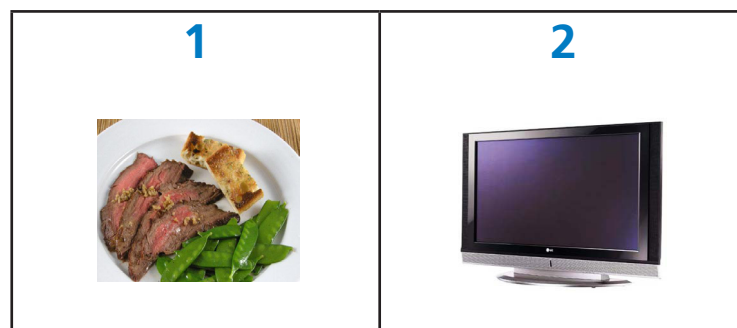
# Using Visuals

## What does this mean?

It is much easier to remember what has been said to us if a person's talking is supported by photos, pictures, symbols or actual objects (visuals). Learning by looking at visuals makes remembering much easier and more effective. Visuals are very useful when showing children what they will be doing next: this will help to calm them down and reduce their frustration and anxiety about change.

## What can we do to help?

1. Show your child the actual object when giving an instruction or when you want to show him what he will be doing next. e.g. Show your child his dinner bowl when you tell him it is dinner time.
2. If your child understands photos, pictures and symbols
  - Show him a photo of WHERE he will be going e.g. Photo of nursery, Grandma, Tesco
  - Show him a photo of WHAT HE WILL BE DOING e.g. Photo of 'playing in sand', 'going to bed.'
3. Use a First - Next board to show your child what they need to do first and what they can do later. This is sometimes called a Now and Then board. Draw a line down the middle of a blank sheet of white paper. Write the number '1' on the left of this line and the number '2' on the right of this line. Stick a photo or picture of what your child needs to do first on the left (e.g. Dinner) and a photo/picture of what he can do later (e.g. Television) on the right. Point to the pictures and say, "first dinner, then telly". How quickly your child learns to use this tool depends on their level of communication and understanding.



## Speech and Language Therapy Service

# Developing Symbolic Sounds

## What does this mean?

Symbolic sounds are speech sounds which represent an object or action in a meaningful way. It does not matter if these sounds do not sound like a word. These sounds often develop before words and will help to support your child's development of first words.

## What can we do to help?

Have fun playing with your child making different noises and sounds. Use the sounds lots of times in simple language.

### Sounds for Feelings:

"mmmm"	"Lovely cake"
"ah ah ah "	"Poor dolly...hurt"
"uh oh"	"Oh dear...fall down"
"wow"	"Look...big slide"
"shshsh"	"Baby sleeping"

### Sounds for Vehicles:

"Beep beep"	"Driving...car"
"Nee nah"	"Ambulance...racing"
"Choo choo"	"Push...train"

### Sounds for Animals:

"Woof woof"	"Dog...barking"
"Quack quack"	"Duck...eating"
"Moo moo"	"Cow...walking"
"Baa"	"Look...sheep"



## Speech and Language Therapy Service

# First Words

## What does this mean?

Children find certain words easier to understand and use when they are just beginning to talk. This is a selection of words that children typically use when they start talking. All children are different though, so this is only a guide - experience can have an effect on which words children hear most frequently and start to say themselves.

### Labelling Words

Daddy	Duck	Cup	Bike	Ball	Mouth	Mummy	Pram
Drink	Bricks	Tree	Dog	Feet	Swing	Milk	Car
Table	Chair	Hands	Teddy	Juice	Doll	Nose	
Banana	Tummy	Bird	Water	Apple	Flower	Dinner	
Eyes	Cat	Bed	Biscuit	House	Gran/dad		

### Action Words

Brush	Clap	Cook	Cry	Play	Stand	Cut	Drink
Dry	Eat	Give	Throw	Hit	Jump	Kick	Push
Want	Walk	Read	Run	Sit	Sleep	Make	Wash

## What can we do to help?

### Go

Take it in turns to roll a ball to each other - your child has to wait until you say go before they do this, then let him tell you to do this by saying go.

### Gone / All gone

Use when something has disappeared e.g when they have finished their drink you can say 'all gone' or 'look gone'. Hide a toy under a blanket and say e.g 'teddy gone'.

### On / Off

Use opportunities through the day to use on and off e.g 'lights on', 'telly off'.

### More

Anything your child likes doing can be used to encourage the word more. After the action e.g blowing bubbles say 'do you want more?' Pause before you carry on to give them the chance to say the word.

### Up / Down

Going up and down the stairs provides opportunities for using these words. At the park talk about going up the ladder and then down the slide.

### Words for objects

Name toys as you get them out / put them away.

## Speech and Language Therapy Service

# Questions or Comments

Questions work well to engage a chatty child, but quiet children or those with limited language skills find questions hard to deal with.

We tend to ask children questions all the time.

A more successful way to engage a quiet child is simply to comment on what they can see or what they are doing. They will be more likely to respond to you, in their own time.

## Instead of...

"What's that?"

"What colour is it?"

"What noise does it make?"



## Try...

"A tiger!"

"Ooooo ... he's stripy."

"I hope he's friendly."

"I wonder what he'd like to eat?"

# Linking Words

## What does this mean?

Now that your child can understand and say a lot of single words, we want to help them to put words together. They may sometimes do this already by saying 'mummy car', 'more juice' or 'bye-bye dolly'.

You can help by expanding or adding on one more word or idea to what your child has said. E.g when your child says 'Ball' you could say 'Big ball' or 'Throw ball, or 'Daddy throw ball'

There are a number of different ways in which children can combine words to get across different meanings, for example:

- To comment on what they see:  
'Dolly drink' 'Kick ball' 'Jump there'
- Children also talk about things disappearing:  
'all gone biscuit',
- And use their language to make requests for things, 'bike out'.

## What can we do to help?

### Expanding

By adding a word to what your child has just said, you are talking about what they are interested in and telling them more about what things are doing, what they look like and where they are.

### Modelling

Help your child to understand and use two

word phrases, by using them yourself when you talk with your child during daily routine activities. Here are some examples of daily activities and the words you might use: ('Name' means use your child's name e.g 'Bobby's shirt'.)

### Getting dressed

- Pants on
- Socks on
- Where's t-shirt?

### At meal times

- Name's chair/spoon
- Want toast?
- More juice?

### At bath-time

- Water in
- Wash tummy
- Soap gone

### Other ideas:

- You could also set up situations so that something unpredictable happens: this helps children to use their language. e.g if you 'forget' to put the child's spoon on the table at breakfast time, this could encourage the child to say "spoon gone / want spoon". You may need to tell them the words to begin with.
- When your child is more confident you could swap roles by saying 'tell mummy, brush hair', so that your child is acting as the adult and has to tell you what to do: 'Coat on', 'brush hair'.

## Speech and Language Therapy Service

# Speech Sound Difficulties

## What does this mean?

In the English Language there are some sounds which are easier to produce than others. This table shows you the order that children learn to produce sounds and the age at which they will usually be able to produce them accurately.

Approximate age	Sound	Approximate age	Sound
2 + years		4 + years	
	p		v
	b		s
	m		z
	n		l
	w		sh
	h		ch
	j		zh
3 + years		5 + years	
	t		r
	d		th
	k		
	g		
	ng		
	y		
	f		

## Speech and Language Therapy Service

# Speech Sound Difficulties

## Seven stars to success:

### What can we do to help?



1. Don't correct your child or ask them to say the word again, instead:

If your child says a word incorrectly- give them a good model yourself:

Child: "it's a tow"

Parent: "yes, it's a cow" (emphasise "c")



2. Avoid putting your child on the spot and making them "perform" in front of others.



3. Play "I spy" with rhyming words e.g I spy something that rhymes with "Ben"



4. Find objects around the room that begin with the same sound as your child's name.

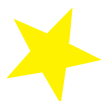


5. Put objects that begin with the same sound in a bag e.g cat, car, key

- Your child picks out an object
- Talk about the object together and say what it is - "Key" (emphasise the "k" sound)



6. Take it in turns to make a rhythm on a drum or by clapping, then see if you can copy each other's rhythm



7. Play games to develop awareness of syllables (beats) in words

- Say family names together
- Clap/stamp your feet to the syllables at the same time as saying the name
- Only use one or two beats at first e.g mummy (2 beats) "mum - my"

# Where to find further help

## Worcestershire:

### Speech and Language Therapy Departments:

- Catshill Clinic, The Dock, Bromsgrove. 01527 488326 (Bromsgrove and Redditch)
- Franche Clinic, Marlpool Place, Kidderminster. 01562 752749 (Wyre Forest)
- Isaac Maddox House, Shrub Hill, Worcester. 01905 681592 (Worcester, Evesham)

**Talking Matters Workshops** - [www.worcestershire.nhs.uk/talkingmatters](http://www.worcestershire.nhs.uk/talkingmatters) local training organised by Speech and Language Therapists.

**Language for Learning** - local training which aims to support children with language and communication difficulties in mainstream classrooms and early years settings.  
[www.languageforlearning.co.uk](http://www.languageforlearning.co.uk)

**Early Years Childcare Service** - 01905 790558

## National:

**The Inclusion Development Programme (IDP)** - [www.nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.org.gov.uk](http://www.nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.org.gov.uk)

**The Early Years Foundation Stage** - [www.nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk)

**Communication Language & Literacy (CLL)** - [www.nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk)

**Every Child a Talker** - [www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/nationalstrategies)

**ICAN** - A national charity working for the development of speech, language and communication skills in all children. [www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)

**Talking Point** - [www.ican.org.uk/talkingpoint](http://www.ican.org.uk/talkingpoint)

**[www.do2learn.com](http://www.do2learn.com)** - good for resources and ideas

**Talk to your baby** - [www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk) - good for advice for parents

**Nasen** - A national organisation which aims to promote education and training for people with Special Educational Needs. [www.nasen.org.uk](http://www.nasen.org.uk)

**NAPLIC** - A national organisation for teachers, speech & language therapists and other professionals which aims to promote and increase awareness of speech, language and communication needs. [www.naplic.org.uk](http://www.naplic.org.uk)

**AFASIC** - An organisation for parents of children with speech, language and communication difficulties - [www.afasic.org.uk](http://www.afasic.org.uk)