

Talking Together



Why is language important?

- ★ Your child is learning new things every day, making new brain connections faster than at any other time in their lives.
- ★ Language development starts as early as before your child is born and continues all the way through childhood.
- ★ You are your child's first teacher. Your child will be learning language from you in all of your conversations, games and daily life.
- ★ All the little chats you have with your child over the day set the stage to support their learning and development as they grow.
- ★ You don't need special toys or activities. Your child will learn from your talk during all of your everyday routines like tidying up, bath times and going for walk.
- ★ Helping your child's language and communication in this way is important because it means they can express how they feel, share fun and make friends.
- ★ Your child's language helps set their path for learning right through childhood.



How can I help my child's language development?

- ★ Communication is more than just talking. Your child is communicating with you even before they are using words. This may be through looking at you or something they would like, pointing, smiling, frowning, and making sounds.
- ★ When you watch, listen, and respond to your child's communication this makes them feel understood. It will let them know you are interested in what they have to share and will encourage them to communicate more.
- ★ You can do this by:
 - **Getting down to your child's level**
 - **Following your child's lead and interests during play**
 - **Pausing and waiting for your child to show you what they are interested in**
 - **Listening, watching, and responding to your child's communication**
 - **Copying what your child says and adding a word**
 - **Using simple language to describe what your child is doing**
 - **Asking open questions**
 - **Using an interesting voice and having fun!**
- ★ Talking with your child in this way during your daily routines will help your child make connections between words they hear and the world around them.
- ★ For more information, helpful tips, and advice to support your child's communication, visit:

BBC Tiny Happy People



NHS Start for life



How to be a Super Communicator

- ★ Your child's language helps set their path for learning right through childhood.
- ★ Language and communication support your child to understand the world around them, express how they feel and interact with others.
- ★ Being a 'Super Communicator' can help your child learn words and sentences.

There are lots of ways to be a **'Super Communicator'**.

Follow the tips on the next page. These tips can be used at any time of the day, during everyday routines and play.

Scan the QR code to watch some families and see how they are helping their child to learn.



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Super Communicator Tips



Get down to your child's level

When you get down to your child's level, they will be able to see what you are looking at, and hear your sentences more easily, and you will be sure that you are talking about what interests them the most.



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Follow your child's lead

When you follow your child's lead and interests, you can model the language they need to talk about what interests them. This will help them learn words more quickly.



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Pause and wait for your child

When you pause and wait for your child to show you what they are interested in, it gives them time to start communicating or respond to your actions or words. Your child may point, look at an object or say a word. The words you say will be all about what has interested them, making it easier for them to learn.



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Describe what your child is doing

When you describe what your child is doing or looking at, you are modelling the language they can use to talk about what interests them. This will help them learn words more quickly.



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Listen, watch and respond

When you listen, watch and respond to your child's communication, it helps keep the conversation going about something your child is interested in. The more turns you and your child take, the more words and sentences your child will learn.



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Copy what they say and add a word

When you copy what your child says and add a word, it helps your child know they have shared their ideas with you and helps them learn how to make their sentences longer. If your child says 'car', you can reply with '**big car**', '**fast car**' or '**red car**'.



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Ask fewer questions

Questions can put pressure on a child to talk when they may not have the language to answer. To help your child, describe what is happening and talk about what you are doing as you and your child do it.



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Ask open questions

When you do ask questions, try to keep them 'open'. That means 'what', 'why', 'where', 'who' and 'how' questions that encourage more than just Yes or No answers. When you ask open questions, it helps open up the conversation, allowing it to continue with more turns and follow the child's interests.



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Have fun and use an interesting voice

When you show you are having fun and use an interesting voice, it will encourage your child to focus and listen to what you are saying. Having fun together will encourage your child to communicate with you.



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Resources

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The website includes activities, short videos and articles with helpful tips and advice to support your child's communication. The QR code will take you to fun activities to do with your child to support their communication development. Almost any daily activity is a chance to talk and have fun with your child.



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NHS Start for life

The website includes tips, games and activities to try with your child to support their language and literacy development



Some people find it helps to choose a time of day to practise the Super Communicator tips. Think about when might be your best 'Together Time', this is when you feel you can really tune in to your child. Have a look at these examples and see which might work for you.

Finding the right 'together time' for your family



Bath time



At the shops



Breakfast, dinner or tea time



Sharing books



Out and about



At toddler group



Bed time



Playing with toys

Some people find it helps to choose just one tip to concentrate on. Choose one tip you think you could do more often during your 'Together Time'.

Choosing a Super Communicator Tip

	Get down to your child's level		Follow your child's lead and interests
	Pause and wait for your child to show you what they are interested in		Describe what your child is doing or looking at - imagine what they are thinking and feeling and say that
	Listen, watch and respond to your child		Copy what they say and add a word
	Ask fewer questions and instead describe what is happening		Ask open questions
	Show you are having fun and use an interesting voice		

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