

GOOD MODELLING FOR SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

An important aspect of learning speech is listening. A child learns new sounds and words by listening to those around him. This is why it is important to provide good, clear speech for the child to listen to. When you talk say words clearly and slowly and use plenty of intonation. When you are talking to a young child, point to objects when you talk about them so your child can make the link between the word and the object. When your baby is babbling, respond by babbling back. If your child is not using speech yet, but pointing to things, share the moment by also pointing to the object/event and naming it.

As children's speech develops they will attempt to produce words of their own. If your child attempts a word and it is not pronounced correctly, praise him for trying. Do not try and get your child to repeat the word correctly. Repeat the word back yourself to show you have understood, and your child will hear a correct version of the word. Avoid asking your child to name objects to see if they know the words, this does not teach children language. Children learn language from listening and observing.

When playing it is important to feed lots of vocabulary into the game. Every time you play with a toy, name the toy, say what the toys is doing e.g.

Child: (making car noise and pushing toy car) Brum brum

Dad: It's a car

Child: Brum

Dad: Pushing the car

Child: Brum

Dad: Pushing the car in the garage

In this example, the father is using nouns (car, garage), a verb (pushing) and a preposition (in). The more the child hears the words, the more he will link the words with objects and events and eventually attempt the words himself.

KEY POINTS FOR GOOD MODELLING

- Praise your child for attempts at speech and communication
- Repeat back words to show you have understood and give a good model
- Point to things as you talk about them
- Avoid constantly asking your child to name things
- Feed language to the child during play by expanding on their words and adding your own
- Avoid using a dummy.

For more information on child development, and activities to develop speech and language skills visit www.icommunicatetherapy.com