

Let's Get Them Talking!

Here are some suggested strategies to develop your child's talking

1 MODELLING

Children learn from observing and imitating role models. Model the language you want your child use by emphasising the conventions, vocabulary and actions which you want the child to produce.

For example: when leaving a entering or leaving a friends house: "Good afternoon, how are you?" "Bye, thank you." Then turn to your child to copy you.

2 SELF-TALK

Self-talk is when the adult talks to himself/herself as they undertake their actions, giving a running commentary on what is happening or verbalising the things they are doing. This is similar to a cookery programme where the presenter talks through what they are doing as they are doing it.

For example: If you are painting with your child you might say the following:
"I am using the thick paintbrush to paint the eyes." "I am using a blue circle." or "I wonder what will happen if?"

This may feel a little alien at first but with practice it will become fun and it is a great way to develop children's vocabulary.

3 PARALLEL TALK

This strategy is all about the adult verbalising what the child is doing, pairing their actions into words. This is similar to a sports programme where the commentary is about the actions of the players.

For example: When in the park with your child you may use the following:
"Oh, you are climbing really high on the climbing frame, I can see you using your strong arms to pull yourself up."

You may find you switch between self-talk and parallel talk, this is fine and is good practise as it can spark a richer conversation with your child.



4 REPHRASING

This strategy is to model correct language conventions with your child, purposefully rephrasing an awkward sentence. This strategy also encourages your child to feel confident to try out new words and phrases.

For example:

Child: *"I drew picture day."*

Adult: *"You drew a picture today?"* or *"I drew a picture today too."*

5 EXTENSION

This strategy is to extend and add more vocabulary to a child's sentence. This is similar to modelling but here you take the lead from your child.

For example:

Child: *"Big swing"*

Adult *"Yes, that's a big swing. It is a big, green swing. It goes back and forth when I push you on it."*

6 WAIT TIME

Waiting for a response

Sometime children (and adults!) need to time to process their thoughts before speaking. Waiting for a response takes account of this and also demonstrates that you are genuinely interested in what they have say. A guideline is to count in your head for at least 5-10 seconds before expecting a response. It also models good conversational skills in turn-taking talk.

Waiting and listening

This strategy helps to tune into conversations which are meaningful to your child. This can give you a genuine indication of their interest. Sometimes children may find your enthusiasm for engagement more of an interference.

PLEASE REMEMBER!

Children can get weary from being bombarded with questions especially if they are not relevant and meaningful to them. Therefore it is important to think about the reason and necessity behind your questioning. Sometimes silence is a golden opportunity for your child to be observing and reflecting about the world around them.

For example: If the child knows the colour red, you don't need to ask them to name that colour again and again.

