

HELPING YOUR CHILD DEVELOP LANGUAGE SKILLS



6 IDEAS TO HELP YOUR CHILD DEVELOP LANGUAGE SKILLS:

1. **Model Language.** When your child makes an error, model the correct form back without sounding like you are correcting them (e.g., If your child says "Daddy eating pizza" you may say, "Oh, daddy is eating pizza.").
2. **Give choices.** Whether your child is having difficulty answering a question, naming an object or using a sentence structure correctly, provide them with a choice (e.g., "Is it 'Him playing' or, 'He is playing'?").
3. **Repeat.** Children start using new words and sentence structures after they have heard them many times. Don't be afraid to repeat new words over and over again (e.g., "Look at the giraffe. The giraffe has a very long neck. The giraffe has brown spots.").
4. **Use Gestures.** Use gestures (e.g., point), body language (e.g., nod or shake your head) and visual supports (e.g., photos and pictures) to help your child understand questions and follow instructions.
5. **Interpret.** When the information your child is providing is unclear, try to interpret what they are saying (e.g., If your child says, "I go Tommy and present" you may want to say, "Oh, you went to Tommy's house and gave him a present.").
6. **Add Language.** Add a few words to what your child has said to help him/her use longer sentences (e.g., If your child says, "The dog sleeping" say, "Yes, the dog is sleeping under the tree.").

3 THINGS TO REMEMBER:

1. **Use everyday activities.** Daily activities (e.g., mealtime, bath time, bedtime) are an excellent opportunity to practise language. Remember that children learn better if they use all of their senses. Give your child the opportunity to see, touch, taste, smell and hear when introducing or reviewing new vocabulary or language concepts.
2. **Start simple.** At the beginning, ask your child questions you know they are able to answer. Also, give your child instructions he or she is able to follow. Gradually, increase the complexity of the questions you ask as well as the instructions you give to your child.
3. **Have fun!** Learning language should not be a tedious process. On the contrary, your child will learn language better through enjoyable activities.

Activities to try: pretend play, puppet shows, crafts, cooking, reading together, singing songs, and playing games.



COMMUNICATING FOR LEARNING

SPEECH & LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

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