

Parent films - 1-2 years old factbox

The Communication Trust has launched *Through the Eyes of a Child* – a series of four short films, highlighting how children learn to speak, listen and interact with their parents or carers.

In this fact box, you will find ideas on how the film clips could be shared with parents to highlight important messages around language development. Below is a brief summary of each film clip, with some background information and questions for discussion that could be shared with parents.

Links are made with our *Small Talk* booklet and a summary of key messages given. For more detailed information on speech and language development and what to expect at different ages and stages, download or order *Small Talk* www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/resources

If parents are concerned about their child's speech, language and communication development they can find more information from the *Talking Point* website www.talkingpoint.org.uk

Key messages from film

- Reading books to your child in a quiet place at home is a lovely way to connect with your child and it helps them to learn new words and focus on what you're saying
- Remember to keep distractions to a minimum – too much background noise can be difficult for children's listening and concentration
- Try not to ask too many questions – your child will need time to process what you're saying and think about how to answer
- When your child understands a word, add an extra word to the sentence to help them develop their vocabulary and longer sentences

a. Film clip – bed time

Mum is reading a book with her little girl at bedtime, pointing out the pictures, reading out the story and making lots of comments about the story and pictures in the book. It's very calm and relaxing at bedtime.

Some helpful information

- Reading books is a great way to spend a bit of time together
- There are some really lovely story and picture books for very young children. Simple, bright pictures are great and don't worry about sticking to the story – you can use your own words too

For parents

- Are there any books you and your child like to look at together? Share ideas on good books to read for this age group
- Lots of children like to read the same story over and over again. Have you got any examples of books your child wants every time? A good reason to choose stories and books you like too

- When do you find is a good time to share books? It doesn't always need to be bed time. What works best for you and your family?

b. Film clip – tea party

Mum and her little girl are playing outdoors with a plastic tea set. Julie uses the idea of adding a word to something Rosie says to help her understand more words and longer phrases.

Some helpful information

- Adding on just one word to a sentence or using a new word in different ways can really help children understand what they mean
- Some words, like colours, can be more complicated than others because they apply to lots of different things
- Using them in simple sentences, with lots of repetition whilst playing can really help children understand

For parents

- Children's understanding changes a lot between the ages 1 and 2 – what kinds of things does your child do to show they understand?
- How do they cope if people don't understand them? It can be a difficult time for toddlers who are keen to talk, but maybe don't have just enough words yet – what helps with your toddler? Sometimes showing you or taking you to things can help
- They might be starting to pretend in their play – do they like you to join in, maybe talking on a pretend phone or making a pretend cake. What does your toddler like?

c. Film clip – in the car

Mum and child are travelling by car. The child is in the back and mum has the radio on and is talking to Rosie at the same time. Mum starts talking about what she can see.

Some information

- It can be really difficult to listen to what people are saying when there is a lot of background noise. Young children can find this particularly hard – for example if the radio or TV is on
- It is also important with young children not to "overload" them with too many questions. Thinking time is really important when you are young and learning to talk

For parents

- Are there times at home when it is possible to turn off background noises such as TV or radio for a while? What sort of time would work best for you? What difference do you think it would make?
- For a bit of fun, try out asking each other lots of questions without giving any time for an answer – take turns to ask as many as you can. How easy is it to listen or answer the questions? Sometimes we can do this to children

- Young children love a bit of adventure. Where is the best place near your home to go out and about? Is there a park, local shops, countryside walk, library, train station?

Some links to Small Talk

Small Talk has information on what to expect at different ages and stages and how to check this out with their own children, it also has suggestions on what parents might like to do to support communication development.

There are lots of changes in children's language between the ages of 1 and 2 – sometimes it can seem like children are learning new words every day. Parents could discuss the things their toddlers are doing and whether any of the suggested activities and ideas in *Small Talk* are ones they would use:

1. What are the words your child uses most?
2. Have they started asking questions yet - things like who that, what that?
3. What kinds of questions or instructions can they follow now?
4. Pretend games really help with language development – what kinds of pretend games are they playing?