

TOP TIPS FOR PARENTS ON SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

1. Vocabulary is key and learning new words is incredibly important. Help children of all ages by using all the senses to learn new words and then build in lots of repetition and practice.
2. Build on what your children say. This can mean adding words for younger children and expanding phrases for older ones.
3. Talk about what your children are interested in. This will mean they are much more motivated to speak.
4. Check out understanding. Encourage your children to ask if they have not understood. Check by asking them if they know what to do. Can they explain the steps they need to take?
5. If you let your child watch TV, watch it with them (as much as possible). It's an excellent way to spark off conversations and learn new words.
6. It's really important to always remember that children need quiet time where you turn off background noise and have time just to play. This is really important for listening and language development.
7. Use technology with your child to keep in touch with distant relatives or friends. E-mail, send photos or even Skype to keep in touch and use it as an opportunity to ask your child what they might want to ask and say.
8. Play 'name that tune'. Download from YouTube tunes they will know – maybe film tracks, nursery rhymes or pop classics. Play the first few bars – who can name the tune? This is really good for developing listening skills.
9. Look together at the photos you've saved or posted – can your child remember the story behind the photo? See if you can find a similar photo of when you were young. Talk about the differences and similarities – this exercise is great for sharing stories, which are so vital for communication development.
10. Remember, it's OK to turn technology off! Sometimes the best way to encourage children is to model it as a parent. Communication technology is great, but face-to-face conversations can be even more rewarding.



For more information on *Talk of the Town*, visit

www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/schools/projects/talk-of-the-town