



Talking with Your Child

How to Encourage Language Development



* Imitation

Imitating what your child has said shows that you are interested. It also confirms that you understand what he has said. To imitate, simply repeat his statement back using correct grammar and pronunciations. This will let your child hear the correct form without saying he was wrong.

* Expand

Expand on your child's attempts to say something by adding more words. Try adding one or two words.

Example:

- Child: Daddy. Parent: Daddy help.
- Child: Doggie run. Parent: Doggie is running fast.

* Talk about what you are doing

The moment to talk about experiences is as they are happening. Talk about what you and your child are doing, seeing or hearing. Keep your language simple, as children listen best to sentences that are a little above their language level. Example: While getting ready for bed, you may say "Pyjamas on.", "Put the toothpaste on." "Max is brushing his teeth". "Pull down the covers" and "I am tired."

* Repeat, Repeat, Repeat

Children need to hear words repeated. Some may need 10 repetitions, while others may need 100 repetitions! There are no 'right number' of repetitions. Consistently repeating the same words every time you carry out a routine will help your child understand and later to be able to use those words. For instance, while helping your child undress you can repeat the word "off" over and over - "shoes off, socks off, shirt off, pants off"!