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Children's Speech and Language Therapy Team Play and Communication

Children learn a lot of language through play. They also learn how to listen, how to respond and how to share. These are important skills for communication.

Top Tips

- Get down to your child's level
- Observe your child's play
- Wait before joining in
- Comment on your child's play
- Model some new play ideas
- Match your language to your child's level of understanding



Visual Attention

- Blow bubbles and watch them "pop"
- Throw a balloon or ball between you and your child
- Blow up a balloon, then let the air out and listen to the sound
- Roll a car along the floor or between you and your child. Encourage him to roll it back.



Exploratory Play

- Use a box to make a "feely" box. Put objects in it such as an apple, a squeaky toy, a glove puppet and playdough. Let your child feel inside the box and take something out to play with. Use simple language such as "ooh, an apple" "what does it feel like? 'It's hard"
- Use playdough to make different shapes and objects such as a ball, sausages, snakes and cakes.
- Use a scarf to wave up and down over your child's face. Lift it high and let it fall over your head. Let your child pull it off. Hide a toy under the scarf and let him pull it off.



Imaginative Play

- Use pretend cups or real ones to make tea. Make cups of tea for the family.
- Cut pictures out of magazines of pretend food. Talk about the foods and what you like to eat
- Put dolls/teddy bears in pushchairs and pretend you're going shopping or on a walk. Talk about what you can see and where you go.
- Pretend to wash and dress teddies using clothes and a sponge, brush etc
- Make pretend beds and baths out of cardboard boxes
- Use a dolls house to pretend the doll is getting dressed, eating and washing.



Manipulative Play

- Take turns to build a tower of bricks
- Take turns to put rings on a stack
- Put different sound making toys out and take turns to shake something or bang 2 items together. Items could include rice in a jar, saucepan and spoon, bell, rattle and pasta in a packet.
- Build towers, bridges and houses with bricks. Build alongside your child first.



Useful Websites

<https://www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/ourservices-a-z/speech-and-language-therapy2/speech-and-language-therapy-toolkit/>
www.bbc.co.uk/tinyhappyypeople

Outdoor Play

- Make mud cakes in the garden using fingers and containers. Make different shapes in the mud.
- Make castles in a sand pit. Mix water with the sand and talk about "wet and dry". Use shape cutters to make shapes in the wet sand.
- Move cars around a track. Use bricks in the sand to make a road.
- Make a den using an old clothes rack and a blanket on top. Use large cardboard boxes to make walls and smaller ones to make pretend furniture. Have a tea party inside and use dolls/teddies as pretend friends.
- Have races in the garden to see who is the fastest and slowest. Try different actions such as skipping, jumping, hopping to a finish line.