

SUGGESTIONS FOR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Be face to face. Getting down to children's eye level when you talk to them will help them pay attention to you. This encourages them to participate with you and makes it easier for them to imitate your words.

Talk about what the child is interested in. Pay close attention to what a child is looking at, or playing with. When your words match what children are interested in it makes it easier for them to learn from what you say.

Wait for a few seconds so children have a chance to take a turn. If we wait to see how children will respond we can be sure we are not anticipating their needs and robbing them of a chance to communicate.

Slow down your rate of speech. By slowing down the speed at which you talk you give children more time to respond and this may help them understand new information.

Imitate, or copy what babies say.

For example:

Child says: "baa"
Adult says: "baaa, baaa!"
Child says: "baa, baa!"

Babies often will repeat you if you first repeat them.... They like to play copycat games. These games help them to learn turn-taking.

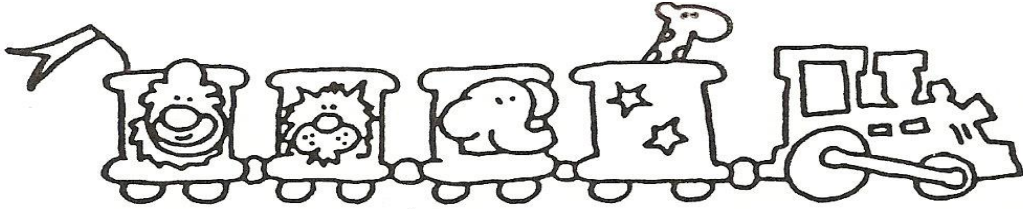
Give older children a correct language model. Repeat what the older child said. Say it in a more correct way. This way he gets another chance to hear what he said with correct grammar and vocabulary. You can even exaggerate or emphasize the words that you want him to learn.

For example:

Child says: "He play too?"
Adult says: "Can he play too?"
"Yes!.... He can play."
"He can play basketball with us."



*This resource has been provided as part of your child's Speech Therapy service plan.
Please contact the therapist if you have any questions.*



Be a partner in the conversation. Try to use more comments than questions. Many questions may put too much pressure on a child. This causes children to talk even less. When you do ask a question try to use ones that require longer answers.

For example: "What's going to happen next?"
"Why did he do that?"

Match your comments to the child's language level. Pay close attention to the language level the child uses and is able to understand. Try not to use too long or too complicated or sentences.

Child says: "That man got bunny!"

Adult says: "Yes. The man is holding a bunny....
"That bunny has loooooong ears....!"

Expand or add to the child's language. Repeat what he said, but add a few words of your own to give new information or complete the sentence.

For example: Child says: "Teddy hiding there."
Adult says: "Teddy is hiding behind the chair."

Or Child says: "The girl doing a letter."
Adult says: "The girl is writing a letter. She is going to mail it.."

Repeat, repeat, repeat! Children learn language by hearing it over and over and over again. Don't be afraid to say the same words several times in different ways.

For example: Child says: "Him gots no mitts."
Adult says: "Hey your right... he has not mitts...!
(pointing to another child)... And he has no mitts!
(pointing to another child)... But... he has mitts!"

Have fun with communication. Adding facial expressions, or using different sounding voices will help keep children interested.

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