

Encouraging Talking



Research has shown that parents are not responsible for children's speech or language difficulties. However parents can make a big difference to their child's language development by changing the way they talk and listen to their child.

Here are some ways you can help:

Slow down: If you slow your own speech down your child will find it easier to keep up. The best way to do this is to leave extra pauses between phrases.

Keep it simple: Use simple words or explain as you go along e.g. 'Astronaut... that means a person who goes into space.'

Keep it short: Less really is more when it comes to language. Lots of children with language difficulties find it hard to remember what they hear. By keeping instructions and talking short your child will find it easier to follow what you are saying.

Choices: Give your child choices to encourage them to use words. Instead of asking 'Do you want juice?' Try asking 'What do you want to drink, juice or milk?'

Expand: Expand what your child says to give him or her a good model,

e.g. child: 'That pig'
adult: 'Yes, we used the pink paper to make the pig...'

Copy back: Try to repeat back your child's sounds, words or actions. This shows him or her that you have understood and encourages him or her to try again.

Provide a good model: If your child makes a mistake give them a good model of what they are trying to say,

e.g. child: 'Him runned fast'
adult: 'Yes, he ran very fast'