

Speech language and communication



Supporting children to build a positive future

As you wait for our Early Intervention Services, please take your time to read this handout to learn how you can support and develop your child/ren's speech, language and communication.

Definitions

Speech: the physical production of sounds.

Language: understanding what words mean, putting sentences together, writing clearly, and understanding written language.

Receptive language: the ability to comprehend/ understand language.

Expressive language: the ability to produce/use language.

Bilingualism: fluency in or use of two or more languages.

Communication: process of encoding and decoding symbols (gesture, vocalisations, etc.) to exchange information and ideas. Remember, all types of behavior are communication.

Speech intelligibility: the percentage of speech that a listener can understand.

Augmentative and alternative communication: ways to communicate your message which are not only necessarily verbal, such as key word sign, language software such as LAMP, or picture exchange communication (PECS).

Functional communication: most basic form of communication to get one's needs and wants.

Source: Speech and Language Kids by The SLP Foundation
<https://www.speechandlanguagekids.com/>

General tips and strategies



- Acknowledge your child's communication attempt! This lets them know you are listening and encourages them to communicate more.
- Keep the language simple and concrete: avoid jargon, nuances, idioms, and sarcasm.
- Address the meaning behind the communication attempt.
- Use multiple forms of communication for the same message (pictures, gestures, written and verbal, etc.).
- Teach an alternative way to communicate the message, such as a sign.
- Allow processing time and avoid immediate responses.
- Repeat messages to allow for increased opportunity to understand.
- Follow your child's lead in play, as they are more likely to communicate what they are interested in.
- Use books and songs to assist with language. With familiar messages children can anticipate what comes next, making it easier for them to choose what to say.
- Make comments rather than asking too many questions.



Communication and therapy strategies to use at home



Modelling

Provide your child with the correct models for speech and/or language through regular everyday chat and conversation.

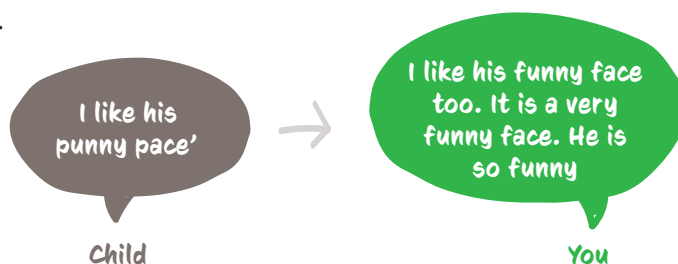
e.g.



Recasting

This is a type of modelling: you repeat your child's incorrect utterance with the error corrected. Do it immediately after the child says it maintaining the meaning of the original sentence.

e.g.



Source: : Modelling and recasting: Supporting Speech and/or Language Development, National Council for Special Education, Government of Ireland. Modelling-and-Recasting-to-Support-Speech-and-Language.pdf (ncse.ie)

OWLing strategies:



Observe: follow the child's lead and tune in to what they are interested in.



Wait: give your child the opportunity to say something first.



Listen: respond appropriately to what your child is saying.

Source: : OWL to Let Your Child Lead, The Hanen Centre (hanen.org)



Windermere®

Appropriate Questioning:

Make sure the questions you ask are appropriate to the child's level of understanding.

Keep in mind to use more comments than questions.

Use Blank's Levels of questioning



1 NAMING

Find one like this (matching objects)

What can you see?

What is this? (pointing to object)

Say this "... " (imitation)

What did you hear?

What did you do?

2 DESCRIBING

What happened?

What shape is it?

What size is it?

What colour is it?

Where is it?

3 IDENTIFYING

How are these the same?

Tell me something else you could use...

Tell me a story...

Find me one to use with this...

Tell me the beginning, middle, end...

4 PREDICTING

What will happen if...?

Why?

What could you do?

How can we tell...?

What should we use that?

Why is... made of...?



Use the 10 second rule:

1. Ask a question
2. Wait 10 seconds for a response
3. Repeat the same question
4. Wait another 10 seconds
5. Ask a rephrased question



Source: : Blanks Levels of Questioning, Language Disorder Australia (languagedisorder.org.au)

Key Word Sign (KWS):

You can use this tool or strategy to support your child's communication difficulties and help them get their message across to others.

Key Word Sign (KWS) adds signs to spoken words. The key words in a message are signed. The first key word signs we recommend are:



Source: Key Word Sign Australia (kwsa.org.au)



YES – Move dominant fist up and down from the wrist, twice.



TO PLAY – Simultaneously move both open hands, palms up, in outward circles.



TO STOP – Move open dominant hand forward from shoulder height.



WAIT – Bounce open dominant hand palm down in front of dominant side, twice.
*May use both hands



TO EAT – Close dominant fingertips onto ball of thumb. Tap formation on chin, twice.



DRINK – Shape dominant hand as for holding a glass – tilt to mouth as for drinking (natural gesture).



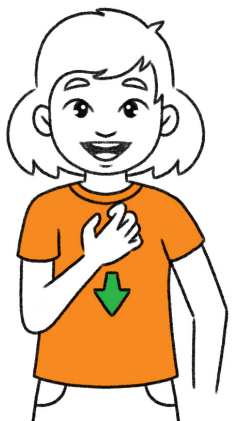
NO – Shake dominant fist sideways in front of body.



TO GO – Swing dominant hand slightly cupped forward in relevant direction. Finish with straight fingers.



TOILET – Fingerspell "I" quickly, twice, index finger on edge of hand.



MORE – Cup dominant hand and place fingertips on centre chest – move hand forward.



TO FINISH – Extend dominant thumb, fingers closed. Rock hand formation from side to side several times.



TO HELP – Place dominant hand into non-dominant hand, palms together – move formation forward.