

Tips to help with speech development

Here are some tips and activities to help your child develop their speech skills:

- use things your child is interested in for play, follow their lead and make sure you're physically at their level while playing
- if you notice your child looking or pointing at something, talk to them about it before they lose interest in it
- picture books introduce your child to new things they haven't seen yet in real life – ask them to tell you the story, or talk about what the characters might be thinking and feeling
- make reading, singing and playing even more fun by using lots of actions and different voices
- take turns to make noises or speak – your child will be able to hold longer conversations, so slow down your speech, give them plenty of time to respond and listen carefully to what they have to say
- talk to your child in short, simple sentences, as it's easier for them to understand you and have a go at copying when they are ready
- try to use the same book or sing the same song, as young children learn a lot from repetition



Imaginary Play

- Try role-playing games together, like shopping – set items out on the sofa, give your child a bag and some pretend money, and take it in turns to be the shopkeeper.
- Play a make-believe journey like going into space – make a rocket out of a cardboard box you decorate together, or cushions, and pile in a few toy passengers.
- Start a simple game with your child by making up a story together about their favourite toy going to the beach and encourage your child to take the lead.
- Play "I spy!".

For more advice, visit:

https://www.nhs.uk/start4life/baby/learning-to-talk/3-to-5-years/?WT.mc_ID=PR_Organic#anchor-tabs