

LANGUAGE STIMULATION STRATEGIES

EYE CONTACT

- Encourage your child to look at you when talking, teaching and during play to help them listen and identify important details.
- This is also important for social skills development.

TURN TAKING

- When playing, encourage your child to take turns.
- Provide verbal prompts as you are playing. For example, you may say "It's Mummy's turn" as you roll the ball, and then reinforce when it is their turn.
- This is a skill required for conversational turn-taking and social skills development.

REPETITION

- Use words and sentences repetitively to increase your child's exposure to new vocabulary.
- This also provides children with more opportunities to process what has been said.

LABELLING

- Point to objects in your child's environment and name them (e.g. 'It's a book' or 'Big, blue car').
- Encourage your child to name them after you. This is a great way to teach new vocabulary, as objects in their environment are of interest to them, and they are able to see a direct association between a tangible object and spoken word.

IMITATION AND EXPAND

- Imitate (repeat) what your child has said. For example, if they say "Book" you may say "Big book", "The big, red book".
- This helps to expand on your child's vocabulary and sentence structure.

EXTENSIONS

- This is similar to expanding, but is related to longer sentences.
- If your child says "Time for food" you may say "Yes, it is time for food. It is time for food because we are hungry".

PARALLEL TALK

- When playing with your child, or doing daily tasks, describe what you or your child is doing. For example "Mummy is cleaning. Cleaning the windows. Cleaning the big windows".
- This provides a direct relation of visual and spoken words to develop word meanings.

SABOTAGE

- Sabotage can be used when withholding an object your child wants, until they use their words to tell you.
- For example, if your child is pointing to an object on a shelf they cannot reach, ask them "What do you want?", "Do you want the red toy?", "Tell me what you want?"
- If your child provides a short, one-word response, this should be positively reinforced with praise and by giving them the item.

VERBAL PROMPTS

- When you can see that your child wants something such as food or a toy they are pointing to, ask them to use their words to tell you.
- Provide them with lots of praise every time they say a word.
- Often, we are able to predict what it is a child is wanting, however it is important that they are encouraged to tell us verbally.
- For example, if your child points or brings you a book, you may say "Do you want to read?" or "Tell Mummy what you want to do".

OBSERVE, WAIT AND LISTEN (OWL)

- Often, we can jump in too soon if we are able to interpret or predict what a child is wanting to say. It is important that we give children the time to say or attempt to say what they want.
- Observe your child as you are interacting to see what they are showing interest or disinterest in.
- Remember that communication can also be through words, as well as eye gaze, body movements, gestures and crying.
- Wait to give your child the opportunity to communicate or interact with you.
- While waiting, you may lean forward as though you are 'expecting' them to say something. As a general rule, wait for five seconds.
- Now listen to what they are saying.
- Using this strategy ensures that children are given the opportunity to respond or offer information, before prompting is given.

