



PEOPLE



PROMOTE



PROTECT



PROVIDE



PARTNERSHIP

Delivering good health
and prevention services

Public Health in Leicestershire

Leicestershire
County Council

Communication and Language

Development Tips

Narrating your child's play

- Describe what your child is doing, use simple repetitive phrases and pause between each phrase.
- Narrating, also known as commentary, is useful for quiet children, children who can only say a few simple phrases, children who are reluctant speakers, children with English as an additional language. Narration focuses on what your child is doing at that moment, it reduces pressure on them to talk, and encourages their vocabulary development.
- Examples of narrating play – “You have a blue car”, “that ball is red”, “you are painting”.
- **Remember:** If your child says something that isn't pronounced properly or has the wrong object name/colour in it then narration can be used to model the word or phrase back to them rather than telling them they are wrong.
- Your child does not have to respond to your narration, but ensure what you say is in a clear, happy tone so they listen to, and hear what you said.

Expanding vocabulary

- Expanding on what your child says is a great way of teaching new vocabulary and encouraging the use of longer sentences.
- It's helpful for children who; have limited speech, talk in shorter sentences, bilingual children, and reluctant talkers.
- You can expand on single words, simple sentences, questions, or phrases depending on where your child is in their development.
- **Remember:** Don't make it sound like you are correcting the child, start your expansion sentence with 'yes' or 'oh'. Stress the words you are adding by putting more emphasis on them.
- To expand on what your child says repeat the phrase back to them and add in words, e.g., Child – “I played cars”
- Adult – “Yes, you played with your race cars and pushed them along the racetrack”

Modelling

- Modelling words and phrases to your child is a great way to support your child in their communication and language development. It can be particularly useful for children with trouble pronouncing words or sounds, children with English as an additional language, and children who are reluctant talkers.
- Examples of modelling:
 - Child- “Look at my bapple”
 - Adult- “Yes look at your apple”
- Remember: Don't make it sound like you are correcting them, repeat the word back starting with 'yes' or 'oh'. Stress the word you are trying to correct. Don't correct every single error as this may be too much for the child.
- Modelling can promote proper pronunciation, expand on a child's vocabulary and be a non-threatening way of correcting a mispronounced word.



PEOPLE



PROMOTE



PROTECT



PROVIDE



PARTNERSHIP

Delivering good health
and prevention services

Public Health in Leicestershire



Leicestershire
County Council

Pausing for a response

- Pausing for a response gives your child the time they need to reply after being spoken too. This applies to instructions, questions, or just regular talking.
- This is useful for children who; are reluctant talkers, bilingual children, children who need longer time to think before they respond, and children with a stammer or stutter.
- A good amount of time to pause for is between 8-10 seconds, however some children may need longer.
- Remember: Keep looking at your child during the pause to let them know you are still listening and smile to keep it positive.
- Pausing for a response reduces pressure on your child to talk, allows time for them to give a fuller answer, and gives them extra processing time.

Giving instructions

- The best way to give instructions is to; ensure you have their full attention (this can be done through calling their name or gently tapping them on the shoulder), keep the instructions short and simple, use vocabulary that your child understands, emphasise key words, use gestures to make it easier to understand.
- You can give your child harder two-part instructions once you know they are confident carrying out simple one-part ones.
- Remember: Your child should carry out the instruction straight after it is given, or your child may forget or get confused. If they get it wrong simply give the instruction again, you may need to slow your speaking down or change your wording.
- Examples of simple one-part instructions can be 'please get a book' or 'give to mummy'. Examples of simple two-part instructions can be 'get a tissue, then wipe your nose'.

Watching and copying

- Your child will start communicating from day one, this becomes more advanced the more they learn. Children learn best at a young age through copying and watching.
- Your child will watch as you communicate, they will watch your verbal and non-verbal communication. This includes watching your hands move, watching your mouth move and observing your body language. This is another reason why it is so important to get down to your child's level and have their full attention when communicating with them.
- Remember: Your child watches your verbal and non-verbal communication, even when you don't want them to. Everything you do in front of your child can influence their development so be aware of your body language, tone, and pitch of your voice when communicating near, or, to your child.
- Your child will learn best by copying what you do. For example, smiling, laughing, waving, and clapping.