

Working on Speech and Communication at Home

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What is Language?

- Language is the comprehension and/or use of a spoken, written and/or other communication symbol system.
- Modes of Communication:
 - Using picture boards/books
 - Gestures
 - Words and Sentences
 - Sound Approximations
 - AAC devices
 - Writing



Looking at Language

- Expressive Language
 - It is a broad term that describes how a person communicates their wants and needs.
 - It encompasses verbal and nonverbal communication skills and how an individual uses language.
 - Expressive language skills include: facial expressions, gestures, intentionality, vocabulary, semantics (word/sentence meaning), and syntax (grammar rules)
- Receptive Language
 - It is the ability to understand language.
 - Comprehension involves attention, listening, and processing the message to gain information.
 - Areas of receptive language skills include: attention, receptive vocabulary, following directions, and understanding questions.

How can we elicit language?

- Ways to introduce and target language at home and in the community
 - Read Books together
 - Engage in pretend play
 - Talk to your child
 - Turn off background noise
 - Model what you want your child to say/Expand the utterance
 - Sing Songs
 - Allow them to make choices

Strategies to Use

- Speak slowly and clearly
- Initiate and maintain conversations
- Allow time for your child to respond
- Repeat/Reinforce right after your child speaks
- Provide choices
- Take turns
- Provide positive reinforcement/praise immediately



Tools When Teaching Language

- Play- Choose a toy that your child tends to favor or an activity that they really enjoy. Wait to see if they ask to join you or for the toy. This will allow for the opportunity to engage in joint play and for you to model some language for them.
- Place Items Out of Reach- Put a highly motivating or highly desired item/toy up high or up on a shelf so your child can not reach it. This will encourage them to ask for it or to engage with you so they can get that toy or item that they want.
- Sabotage- Do not complete the entire activity with your child. This will require them to ask for something to complete the activity (e.g.- get the bath ready, but forget to add their favorite tub toy)
- Choices- During snack time or when getting dressed in the morning, give your child choices about what they want. This encourages them to use more language to get what they want.

Language In Everyday Activity

- Use everyday activities to introduce common language.
- Focus on routines with repetitive sequences or language
- Introduce new descriptive words
- Tangible objects help to improve comprehension
- Children enjoy the attention and connection



At Bath Time



In the Kitchen



At the Grocery Store



Doing Laundry



Goals for Language at Home

- Have fun with language. Keep it simple.
- Let the child lead or pick the activity
- Use choices to support their communication skills
- Manipulate the environment to create opportunities to communicate
- Expand your child's utterances
- Reinforce/Remodel any communication
- Use interactive games/activities to model
- Try to use everyday activities and routines as opportunities to use new language
- Remember that your children recognize your facial expression and your tone

References

- American Speech-Language-Hearing Association <https://www.asha.org/>
- ASHA LEADER <https://blog.asha.org/2017/10/03/new-free-toolkit-for-parents-of-young-children-and-members-who-interact-with-them/>
- Read Aloud <http://readaloud.org/bookselections.html>