



Strategies to Assist your Child with Communication Development



It is important to spend time talking with your child during a range of activities every day so they have an opportunity to practice understanding and using new words and sounds.

Areas of Early Childhood Development related to Communication:

Speech: making sounds and sound patterns that enable us to communicate with spoken words.

Receptive language: understanding messages being shared with us.

Expressive language: sharing thoughts, ideas, needs, and wants using vocabulary and grammar.

Social Skills: both verbal and non-verbal skills that we use to communicate. This can be through gestures, body language and our personal appearance. These help us to communicate our messages, thoughts and feelings with others.

Pre-Literacy: the skills your child needs to help them learn how to read and write. This includes a child's engagement with books before they can read by exploring and talking with you about pictures, stories, and letters and their sounds.

Voice: movement of vocal cords coordinated with breathing to produce voice sounds (phonation). If you notice your child has a hoarse voice, high/low pitch, reduced or increased volume, or loss of voice, see your doctor or a speech and language therapist.

Fluency: the smoothness with which we speak. When a child does not speak smoothly we call this stuttering. Stuttering can present as repetitions of sounds, syllables, words or phrases, or pausing between or stretching sounds out for a long time. If your child is stuttering, see your doctor and a speech and language therapist.



Strategies to assist your child at 3 years:

Speech	Receptive Language	Expressive language	Social skills	Pre-Literacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speak clearly - Model and repeat words correctly if your child has difficulty producing a sound or word - Practice saying the sounds with your child - Model the correct target sound during reading time - Repeat and model tone of the words during conversation - Practice sounds on their own before combining sounds or practicing in words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ask your child to repeat what you say, to make sure they understand - Say less if your child doesn't understand and emphasise important words - Ask your child questions during daily activities e.g. reading a book, getting dressed, eating dinner - Ask different types of questions: yes/no, give a choice, who/what/where e.g. do you want a drink?, do you want milk or water?, where is your cup? - Point out colours and shapes and other new words - Give your child 2 step instructions to follow e.g. "get your shoes and your school bag" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take time to play with your child and introduce new words - Ask your child questions during activities (see receptive language) - Help your child learn new words by adding a word to what your child says e.g. "my bike" – "your green bike", "look, dog!" – "look, big dog!" - Help your child learn new words by talking about body parts and what you do with them - Sing songs and nursery rhymes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage your child to play with you and with others e.g. use toy phone to call each other - Encourage your child to take turns with others during games or during daily routines e.g. take turns packing away toys or household items - Help your child to maintain conversations for longer by talking about topics that motivate them e.g. food, special occasions - Talk with your child's kindergarten teacher if you have any concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read your child a story that they like each day - Read slowly and stress key words or sounds when you read - Use simple books with short sentences and pictures - Talk about the story with your child, ask simple questions e.g. "what's she doing?", "who's that?" - Encourage your child to hold the book and turn the pages – let them lead - Point to the picture as you read so your child can follow along - Encourage your child to hold a pencil and draw - Sing songs with your child about different things e.g. school, friends, games

Further information and location of speech pathologists can be found at:

<http://trinhfoundation.org/our-resources/locations/>



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This resource was developed by students from the University of Newcastle Speech Pathology program, in coordination with the Speech Therapy team at Da Nang University of Medical Technology and Pharmacy and Trinh Foundation Australia.



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