



## 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 (SLP).

**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 (SLP).



### Strategies to assist your child at 6 years:

Speech	Receptive language	Expressive language	Social skills	Pre-Literacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Model and encourage your child to imitate correct sounds</li> <li>- Practice making speech sounds and tones if incorrectly produced</li> <li>- Practice a little everyday</li> <li>- Make practice fun</li> <li>- Practice at the level your child is at – check with your SLP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage your child to ask for help if they do not understand</li> <li>- Help your child to understand by showing them what you mean, e.g. point to a picture or a real object</li> <li>- Practice following 3 or 4 step directions e.g. "give me the cup then the spoon then the bowl"</li> <li>- Stress/emphasise the important words in your sentences</li> <li>- Talk slowly and repeat important words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When reading ask your child "who", "what", "where" and "why" questions.</li> <li>- Ask your child to tell stories using picture books</li> <li>- Get them to tell you about their day or retell a short story</li> <li>- Play games such as "ito vui"</li> <li>- Repeat your child's sentences back to them using correct grammar</li> <li>- Use opportunities such as riding on the motorbike and dinner time to encourage your child to join in with conversation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage imaginative play with others e.g. based on a story or movie, role play doctors, looking after baby, playing vet.</li> <li>- Ask your child questions about themselves and encourage them to ask questions about others and practice together</li> <li>- Support your child to practice their social skills e.g. role play meeting new people, how to join in with others playing a game at school, role play upcoming events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage your child to read books together and independently</li> <li>- Let your child choose their own book to read</li> <li>- Encourage your child to read out loud</li> <li>- Read together with your child for 10-15 mins per night</li> <li>- Ask your child questions about the story e.g. "what will happen if?", "how can you tell if he's sad?"</li> <li>- When reading point out words your child doesn't know and talk about their meaning</li> <li>- Encourage your child to tell and retell stories</li> <li>- Talk about sounds and their matching letters</li> </ul>

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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