

Give them time to think

Children need more time than adults to think about what they've heard, and to decide what to say back. Give them time to respond, and look at them while you wait.

Use simple language

Keep your sentences short. For example, "Food time now" or "Wow, you're building a tower".

Repeat what you say

It's good to say the same thing over again. Babies and toddlers need to hear words and sentences lots of times to understand them and learn new words.

Make it easier for them to listen

Turning the music, radio or TV off helps children focus on your words.

Build on what they say

Adding one or two words to what they say helps your child onto the next stage of talking. So, if your child says "bus" you say "Yes, big bus".

Speak in your home language

It's important for children to learn their first words and sentences in their home language. Your child will learn in English later, at nursery and school.

Make it easier for them to talk

Dummies can get in the way of talking. Try to keep them just for sleeptimes. Take it out to talk.

Show them the right way

Young children often make mistakes. Show them that you understand, rather than asking them to repeat words correctly. Say the word or sentence again correctly for your child. If they say "Look at the dod", you can say "Yes, it's a dog".

Copy what they say

Repeat back sounds, words and sentences. Whether its "la la" or "Oh, you liked the banana?", it shows you're interested and that sounds and words are important.

Learning to talk can be difficult

Some children find talking and listening harder than others.

They might find it hard to understand what words and sentences mean. Some struggle to find the right words and sounds to use and put them in order. These children may need extra help.

If you are worried about your child, talk to people you know and who know your child. The stages in this leaflet will guide you as they are right for most children. Remember, every child is different.

If you're still worried, go with your instinct. Talk to someone who can help, for example a speech and language therapist or your health visitor or GP.

In the meantime, to help get you started, follow the tips in the leaflet. Visit www.talkingpoint.org.uk for more information.

You are your child's first and most important teacher. What you do together can really help your child!

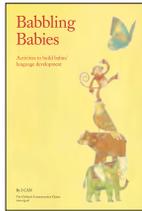
Visit www.talkingpoint.org.uk/talkinglinks to find your nearest speech and language therapist, or ask at your local children's centre.

Useful I CAN resources

I CAN works to help all children develop their speaking and listening skills. We have some great DVDs and activity books that you will find really useful:

Babbling Babies

A pack of 30 fun activities, beautifully illustrated on durable cards to be played with babies from birth to 18 months old, to support their speech, language and communication development.



Toddler Talk

A pack of over 30 fun activities beautifully illustrated on durable cards to be played with toddlers from 18 months to 3 years old, to support their speech, language and communication development.



Chatter Matters

An engaging DVD with ideas to help develop your children's speaking and listening skills, and a karaoke session for the kids to sing along to.



Ready Steady Talk

A dynamic activity book of great games to help your child get ready for pre-school and beyond.



The Communication Cookbook

An activity book brimming full of ideas and ingredients essential to children who have just started school.



Order these resources from
www.ican.org.uk/resources

I CAN is the children's communication charity. We work to help all children develop their speaking and listening skills.

To find out more about how I CAN supports parents, visit www.ican.org.uk/parents

To order more Talk Together booklets go to www.ican.org.uk/resources

To get further information from I CAN through our regular newsletter, sign up at www.ican.org.uk/register

If you want to help I CAN help children, go to www.ican.org.uk/supportus

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