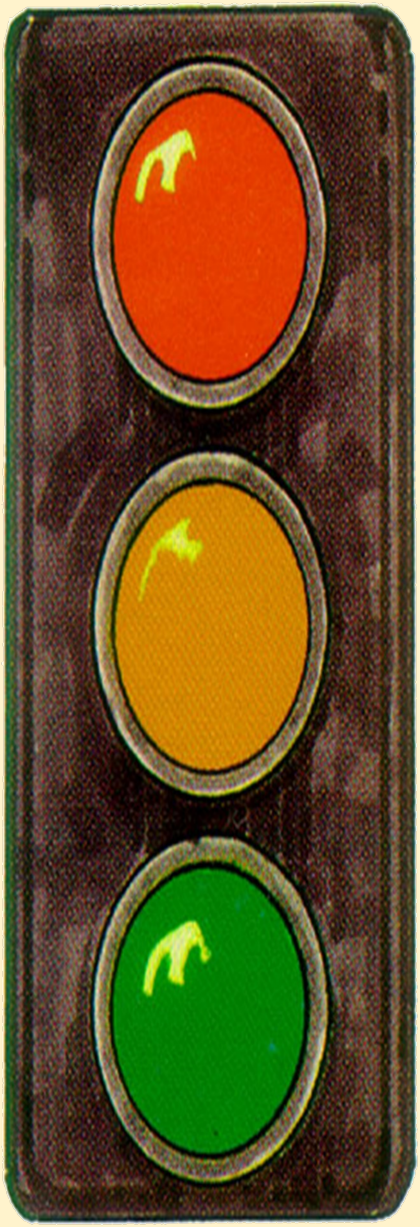
Top Tips to develop Language Skills

Wye Valley NHS
NHS Trust

Research shows using these top tips can help develop your child's language skills:



Reference; Elkan – Liz Elks & Henrietta McLanchlan

STOP

Stop encouraging the child to join in with what you want to do. Instead, let the child lead the play and choose what they would like to do.

OBSERVE

Watch your child, and note any attempts to communicate e.g. pointing or using a sound e.g. "woof woof".
Treat all attempts as meaningful communication.

RESPOND

Respond by modelling language which is useful for the child, such as:

EXPLAINING: Describe what the child is doing or looking at using short, simple sentences which are 2 or 3 words longer than the sentences the child would use. If the language matches the child's interest, they are more likely to listen & absorb the information. If your child isn't using words yet, just use single words or sounds matched to what the child is looking at or playing with.

REPEATING: Repeat what the child says but use a correctly structured sentence. For example, if your child says "fi-" reply, "yes, a fish".

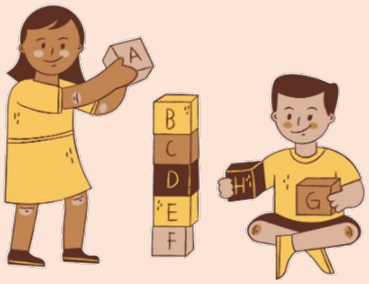
EXPANDING: Repeat what the child says but add 1 or 2 words either at the end of the sentence or within the sentence. For example, if your child says "doggy" reply "yes, doggy is eating".

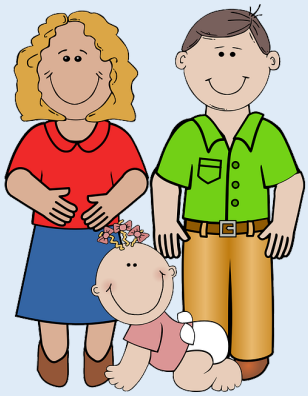
SCAN ME
Communication Trust

Your child's therapist will ask how your child responded to you using these top tips at your first appointment, so please keep a record of what helped your child as this will help inform your next steps.
If your child is not ready for these types of activities, please contact the department on salt.hereford@nhs.net for more tips.

SCAN ME

Spend at least 15 minutes every day trying these tips out with your child and his/her favourite toys. There are more helpful tips on the Tiny Happy People (BBC) Website.





<u>To help your child get the most out of these activities, try to create a communication friendly environment by:</u>

- Turning off the TV or Radio while you play, to help them listen to your language
- Making sure your child doesn't have their dummy in while you play, as this stops them being able to make sounds
- Using their favourite toys in new ways—instead of the dinosaurs only fighting, can they *run and jump*, *eat dinner*, or *climb up and down*.
- Trying to leave pauses for your child to respond to your language, even if this is with a noise or gesture.

What if your child has more than one language?

Evidence shows it is most beneficial to expose children to all languages in your home, not just one.

Use all of the advice listed here in any language your child may be exposed to, as the earlier they hear your speaking these languages the more likely they are to develop understanding and use of these languages.

Tiny Happy People (BBC)

SCAN ME

What if it is difficult to understand what your child is saying?

Try to focus on what your child is saying, and not how it sounds.

If you can, repeat words back to the child correctly—but don't ask them to try and say it again as this can lead to frustration.

If you didn't understand what your child said, don't pretend to understand. Instead, ask them to try and show you or point to what they are talking about.

SCAN ME

Tiny Happy People (BBC)