

Speech and Language Therapy Service

Helping Your Child Learn Language Through Play



- Some things to remember**
- Always try to be on the same level and face to face with your child when playing or talking to them.
  - Avoid putting pressure on your child to speak.
  - Play should be fun; it is enough for you just to join in at this stage.

More Ideas for You to Try:

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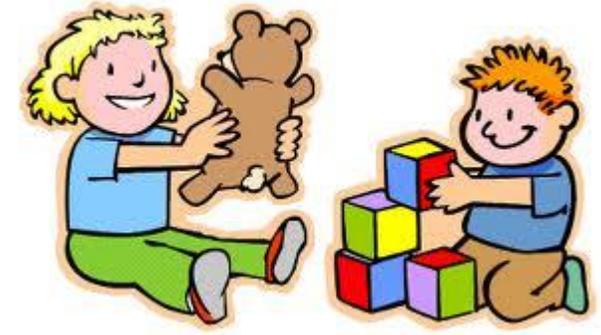
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Play is your child's opportunity to practise for real life. Through play, children learn about the real world and also develop early language skills. Particularly important for language development are imaginative play (the ability to pretend) and social play, which is vital in encouraging your child to communicate with others.

## Ideas to Develop Play

Allow your child to take the lead.

Play should be about allowing your child to experiment and have fun, not about being taught.



Encourage social play.

At first, play alongside your child, doing what they do. Later, they will enjoy you joining in. Sing action songs and rhymes together.



Encourage pretend play.

At mealtimes let teddy or dolly sit at the table so your child can give them their dinner. At bathtime, wash dolly too. A large cardboard box can be many things - a car, house or boat, etc.



## Encouraging Language Through Play



While playing with your child, you can demonstrate the language they can use.

The more they hear words relating to the objects they can see and to what they are doing, the easier it will be for them to understand and then start to use the words themselves.

Use lots of repetition.

Tell them the names of objects and actions that match what they are seeing or playing with:

"It's a dog. The dog's jumping. The dog's eating a biscuit."

Comment on what you and your child are doing.

Use short, simple phrases, so that they can easily pick out the words they know, e.g.

"You're pushing the red car."

"I've made some lovely biscuits."



Avoid lots of questions.

Try not to use too many questions such as "What's this?" or "What's Mummy doing?" Tell them instead - "This is a frog", etc.