

Speech and Language Therapy

Activities to Develop Early Communication

Activity 1 – Ready SteadyGo!

Use any toy or instrument as a noise maker e.g. a rattle, tambourine. Hold the noise maker and say, 'Ready Steady Go'. Make the noise. Hold up your free hand and say, 'Stop'. Show your child how to do this and then give them a turn

Activity 2 – Ready Steady Go! With a ball

You will need a soft ball. Say, 'Ready, Steady.... (leave a pause for your child to say 'go')...Go!'. Roll the ball towards your child. Hold up your hand and say, 'Stop'. Encourage the child to stop the ball on your request and roll it back to you. You can play this game with any wind-up toy, throwing bean bags or toy cars

Activity 3 – Building a tower of bricks

You will need some toy building blocks. Take turns with your child to add a brick to the tower saying, 'Brick on' as you do so. Say, '(Child's name) turn' and, 'Brick on' as they add another brick to the tower. When the tower gets tall enough encourage your child to knock the tower over, saying something like, 'Crash!' or 'All fall down!'.

Activity 4 – Simon Says

Use your own name instead of 'Simon'. Say, '.....says touch your nose', 'stamp your feet', 'stand still' etc. Wait for your child to do the action before you show them what to do.

Activity 5 – Animal Musical Statues

You will need some music and a CD player. Ask your child to move around the room like a particular animal e.g. an owl, tiger, snake etc. while the music is playing. When you stop the music ask your child to stand still. You can play several rounds of this game being different animals. This game can be played with siblings and friends where the last person to stand still when the music stops is out

Activity 6 – Singing

1. Sing the following words to the tune of 'Here We Go Loopy Loo' (you will need a shaker)

Shaker goes up up up
Shaker goes down down down
Shaker goes up up up
Shaking it all around

As you sing the words do the actions with the shaker
Give each child a turn with the shaker
Follow what your child is doing with the shaker when singing the song e.g. if your child is holding the shaker on the floor, sing, 'Shaker goes on the floor' etc.

2. If you're happy and you know it

If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap hands)
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap hands)
If you're happy and you know it and you really want to show it
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap hands)

You can sing several verses replacing the words, 'clap your hands' with, 'stamp your feet, touch your nose, touch your feet' etc.

Pause before doing each action yourself to give your child the chance to do it first

3. This is the way we.....Song

Sing the following to the tune of 'Here we go round the Mulberry Bush'
This is the way we brush our hair/wash our face/put on our socks
Adapt the words to whatever activity your child is doing
You can sing this song during any daily washing and dressing activities

4. Head Shoulders, Knees and Toes...Song

Sing the following
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes, Knees and Toes
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes Knees and Toes and Eyes and Ears and
Mouth and Nose
Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes, Knees and Toes
Leave a pause before doing each action to give your child a chance to do it first

5. Blow the Bubbles. (Sing to the tune of London's Burning)

Blow the bubbles, blow the bubbles
Blow blow, blow , Blow, blow blow
Pop the bubbles, pop the bubbles
Pop pop, pop, pop, pop, pop

Encourage your child to pop the bubbles
Wait for your child to indicate that they want, 'more' and repeat the above all over again!

Activity 7 – Listening for Sounds

For this game you can use toy instruments, any toy that makes a particular sound or household objects e.g. a squeaky toy, a salt shaker, saucepan lids, a wooden spoon on a chopping board.
You will need to have two of each sound maker
Show your child the sound that each object makes.

Ask your child to look away or make a screen so that they cannot peek and play 1 of the sound makers.

Ask your child to decide which objects made the sound and see if they can copy it with the same sound makers on their side of the screen.

Activity 8 – Copying beats on a drum

You will need 2 drums, one for your child and one for you

Bang your drum a number of times (keep it simple)

Ask your child to copy what you have done on their drum

You may need to model this activity using another adult first

Activity 9 – Feely box

Collect some familiar objects

Cut a hole in a box so your child's hand and the objects will fit through it

Show the child the objects before putting them in the box

Ask your child to find one object at a time by feeling it

Activity 10 – Give theto dolly/teddy

You will need a number of familiar objects and a dolly and teddy

Place the objects and dolly and teddy in front of your child

Give your child instructions using a combination of all the items above such as;

'Give the cup to teddy'

'Give the key to dolly'

If your child finds this easy then increase the instructions to;

'Give the apple and cup to teddy'

'Give the key and apple to dolly'

Activity 11 – Hide and Seek with objects

Choose a number of familiar objects such as a toy car, teddy, hat etc,

Hide the objects around the room in obvious places

Ask your child to find 1 object at a time e.g. 'Find me the spoon'/'Where's the spoon'

If your child finds the correct item:

Reinforce the vocabulary by saying, 'Well done, you found me the cup'.

Congratulate them on their, 'Good listening'

If your child has difficulty or finds the wrong object;
Help them find the correct item by reducing the choice of items to 2 e.g. a cup and an apple. Hold each object up and ask, 'Is this the cup or is this the cup?'

If your child finds it easy to find 1 object then you can ask him/her to find 2 objects.

Activity 12 – What's in the bag?

Choose a number of objects from the attached vocabulary list

Put the items into a bag or pillow case

Sing the following words to the tune of 'The Farmers in his Den'

What's in the bag?, What's in the bag?

Ee-i-adeo What's in the bag?

Ask your child to pick an object from the bag and name it