Supporting speech, language and communication skills

**Top Talking Tips**

**Take time to talk and play together. You can make a difference!**

*Put a tick next to the most applicable tips for each child:*

* **Get down to your child’s level**

This will give your child the chance to make eye contact with you and to watch your facial expressions.

* **Encourage your child to join in with play**

Play is very important in encouraging the development of speech, language and communication skills.

* **Speak to your child using the language you are strongest in**

This does not have to be English. It is beneficial for children to speak more than one language.

* **Reduce background noise**

Turn off the television when playing and talking together. This will help your child to learn to listen.

* **Share books together**

Choose books that your child is interested in. Even if your child is too young to read the words, you can talk about the pictures and the story together.

* **Enjoy songs and nursery rhymes together**

The repetition and actions in songs and rhymes may encourage the development of your child’s communication skills.

* **Give your child at least ten seconds to respond to what you have said**

‘Thinking time’ is very important and will help your child to join in with conversation.

* **Reduce the number of questions that you ask your child**

Instead comment on what your child is doing

(Questions test, comments teach).

* **Name items and pictures that your child is looking at**

Repeat new words several times. This will help your child to learn new words.

* **Give your child choices**

Hold up the choices that are available and name them (e.g. orange juice or blackcurrant juice?). This will help your child to learn new words.

* **Talk about events as they are happening**

Everyday activities provide wonderful learning opportunities (e.g. naming the food items as you unpack the shopping or describing what you can see when you walk down the street).

* **Show your child how to say it correctly**

Children make mistakes. Show them how to do it rather than telling them that they have got it wrong (e.g. Child: “I runned to the park” - Adult: “Good boy, you ran to the park”).

* **Add one word to what your child has said**

This will show your child how to put more words together (e.g. Child: “car” – Adult: “red car”)

* **Emphasise the correct pronunciation**

If your child makes a mistake, repeat the word and emphasise the correct pronunciation

(e.g. Child: “tat teep” – Adult: “the cat’s asleep”).

Do not tell them that they are wrong or ask them to say it again. They will do this when they are ready.

**For further information, please talk to your health visitor or contact your local**

**Speech and Language Therapy Team**