

Understanding of Language

Description:

Children who have difficulties with understanding language find it difficult to follow verbal instructions. They need help to listen and extra clues, such as, a gesture to help then understand. It is important to change your language to make it easier for your child to understand.



How can I help at home?

1. Avoid lots of questions or trying to get your child to repeat words.
2. Instead, comment on what she/he is doing, or what she/he is looking at, then pause (count to 5 in your head, or even 10 if you can bear it– it feels like a really long time!), this gives him/her a chance to comment too.
3. Remember to repeat an instruction again if the child doesn't follow it, make sure to wait 10 seconds before repeating; if they still do not follow the instruction then try rephrasing it to make it easier
4. Use gesture, sign and/ or symbols as well as the spoken word when giving your child an instruction.
5. Speak slowly.
6. Emphasise important words that carry meaning, e.g. if you had a choice of 2 balls: 'show me the big green ball'.
7. Gain the child's visual attention before speaking– call them by name, tell them to listen.
8. Give instructions one step at a time. For example, "get your coat" - wait for your child to get their coat "now get in the car".