



Good communication needs lots of different skills—it's not just about talking!

Children need to develop in all these areas to *build* strong communication that will help them to learn.

Chatting, Playing and Reading with children can help them in all of these areas!





Speech Sounds

Chat about sounds you can hear. Draw their attention to words that rhyme or start with the same sound. Try not to correct your child's speech but just say the words correctly for them to hear.

Play with sounds! Use lots of sounds when you play, like animal noises or 'weeee' down the slide! As they get a little older you could play games like I spy, and talk about the sounds you hear.

Read. Books often have lovely rhyming words or words with the same first sound. Talk about them as you read, notice the sounds as you listen.

Interaction and Talking

Chat together! Take time to have conversations. Take turns back and forth with talking. Even young babies can chat too—respond to their sounds and giggles as though they are telling you something!

Play together and take turns. Let your child show you how to play. Try not to ask too many questions, but comment on their play instead and give them time to reply.

Read. When looking at books, leave pauses as you talk and give your child time to show or tell you something about what they see or to try out new words they have learnt.

Understanding

Chat and use the words for the things your child is interested in at that time so they learn to make the connections. As they get older add new words or more words to their sentences.

Play helps your child to understand what things do and what they are for. Tell them the words for new things, and use lots of actions and gestures where you can.

Read stories together, using the pictures to help your child understand any new words. Use the new words again later when you're chatting too.

Play

Chat while you play; comment on what you and your child are doing. Use new words to help them learn.

Play together! Get involved! Children love it when grown ups join in. Just remember not to take charge and let them lead the way.

Read why not re-enact some of your favourite stories or pretend to 'read' to their toys. Can you find books with pictures or stories about some of their favourite toys or games?

Attention and Listening

Chat about the things your child is focused on. Make sure to get their attention first, use their name and get face to face.

Play together focussing on the same toy/activity. As your child gets older, try to build up the time they can spend focussing on playing together.

Read together. If your child can't yet focus on a whole story, that's fine! Look at the pictures together and talk about the parts they are interested in.