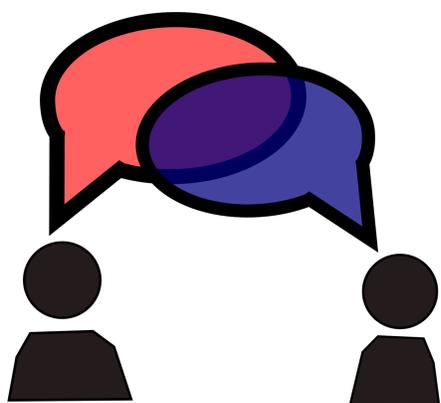




# SEND Support Services: Spoken Language



**Age Range:** 3 + years

**Who can use this:** Parents/Teachers/TAs

## **When to seek extra support:**

- When the child cannot communicate their basic needs through either verbal or non-verbal communication.
- If the child is school-age but still frequently using babble-type language.

## **Who needs this?**

- Children who are not yet using 4 or more words together to make sentences.
- Those sentences which are “muddled” in terms of word order.
- Children who seem to struggle to find the right words to use.
- Children who are using immature forms of grammar.

## **What can you do?**

Working with children/young people with spoken language difficulties can be challenging, here are some things you can do:

- Give additional time to respond. Count to ten in your head and don't be afraid to remain silent and wait.
- Model back the language that you want to hear, repeating rather than correcting.
- Emphasise the words you wish to draw the child's attention to.
- Add doing/describing/missed out words to the sentences the child uses, repeating what they have said in a more adult-like format.
- Ask open-ended questions (those where children can't answer “yes/no”).

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## Activities to try:



**Picture Recap.** Try to take photos of you and your child doing things during the day so that you can go through them together and talk about what you have done. You can use words like “first, next, later” and encourage your child to choose their favourite activity and why they liked it.



**Model making.** Use duplo/lego/modelling clay/drawing/mark making activities. Take it in turns to give each other instructions about how to make a particular shape or picture. You may want to take pictures of each stage of building models so that your child has a reference there to go from when telling you what to do.



**Encourage imaginative** “doing word games”. Ask your child to find their favourite toy and move around the house together making the toy complete different actions (e.g. teddy is jumping, teddy is running fast, teddy is making brownies for pudding tonight).

**Use colour coding** to structure sentences. This idea involves one shape or colour representing different parts of sentences e.g. **The dog is jumping the fence.** The idea would be coming up with a range of options (these could be drawn together or might involve photographs of family members).



**Talk through or read** your child’s favourite story books and then ask them to read the story back in their own words either to you or to a toy or even a family pet. Make sure they have the book with pictures as a reference. Also, try to make links to your child’s favourite books during the day e.g. whilst on a walk, making reference to “we’re going on a bear hunt” and “we can’t go over it, we can’t go under it, we’ll have to go through it!”

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**Leave gaps** at the end of familiar rhymes, songs and stories to see whether your child can fill these gaps in themselves.



**Talk about** likes and dislikes with your child whilst you experience things together. Using words to express opinions is a really good way to motivate children and you are able to give them an example by taking your turn first e.g. “I like apples because they are crunchy” “I don’t like celery because of the stringy bits!”



**Tell me about it.** Gather a range of household items and toys. Encourage your child to choose an item and describe it to you so that you can try to guess what it is. Encourage them to think about what the object looks like, what you can do with it, whether it can be categorised into a group etc. Board games like Headbanz and Who am I can also work really well.

### Online Resources:

- [ICANs Early Language Development Factsheet](#)
- [ICANs iPad Apps Helpsheet](#)
- [Talking Point website](#)

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