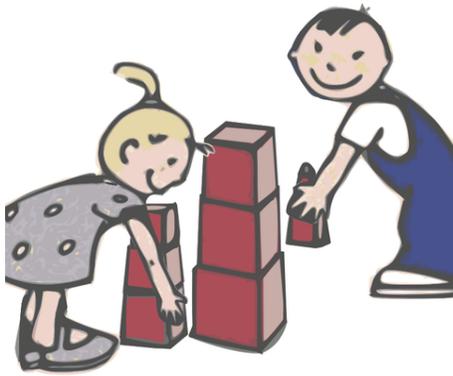




SEND Support Services: Early Play Skills



Age Range: 6 months-5years

Who can use this: Parents/Teachers/TAs,

When to seek extra support:

- If you feel that your child is not making progress with stages of play and their language and communication
-

Who needs this?

Children who are:

- Slow to develop talking and stages of play

What can you do?

The development of play is closely linked to the development of language. If your child has delayed language, observe and encourage their play skills. Whilst playing encourage appropriate adult-child interaction. Here are some things you can do:

- Follow your child's lead and let them choose the toy, or type of play. Join in and copy your child and their play
- *Wait, watch and respond.* Wait for your child to talk, listen to what your child said, respond by modelling language; *Explain*, describe what your child is doing using simple sentences which are 2 or 3 words longer than the sentences your child you use. *Repeat*, what your child says, using correctly models. *Expand*, add 1 or 2 words at the end or within the sentence.
- Make comments rather than asking questions and talk about what your child is doing such as; 'You are brushing dolly's hair, she likes that'.
- Match the language you use to your child's level of language.
- Make your voice sound interesting
- Give lots of praise.

SEND SUPPORT SERVICES: Speech and Language Team

Aesca House, South View, Ashington, Northumberland NE63 0SF, Tel 01670 624802

FACEBOOK: <https://m.facebook.com/speechandlanguageteam/?ref=bookmarks>

Play

Play involves a developmental sequence and starts with exploratory play, where a child uses all of their senses by using mouthing, touching, smelling, listening and observing others to learn what to do with objects. A child then begins to develop their motor skills to support hand to eye coordination to enable more precise movements. Recognition of dolls and teddies and that objects can relate to these begins and the child starts to act out every day events such as bathing dolly, dressing teddy. This is the start of imaginative play. Next a child recognises miniature toys such as small world play, play with pictures and dressing up. Role play is an important stage of play as it enables a child to explore roles and feelings of others, crucial for social and emotional development. Language develops alongside all of these stages of play.

Ideas to try and encourage:



Exploratory play - Provide your child with exploratory toys, depending on their age these may be; rattles, mobiles, sand, water, messy play. Model simple names for objects such as; 'milk', 'juice', 'biscuit' verbs; 'sleep', 'eat', 'laugh', and 'more', 'all gone', 'again'. Give your child real life objects, a spoon as they eat, bottle as they drink and model simple language. Show your child how to use real objects.



Imaginative play-Use dolly or teddy in everyday situations and match objects for example, feed teddy when your child is being fed, wash teddy's face when your child is being washed. Show your child how to use the objects on teddy, model language and join sequences of play eg bath teddy and put teddy to bed.

Small Word play- Play with real objects and then the miniature toys, like play mobile, lego figures. Show your child how to relate these miniature objects to dolls and teddies. Comment and model language.

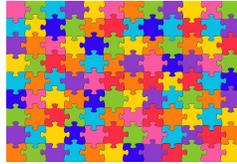


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Developing problem solving/sequencing skills Model simple patterns using blocks, duplo, play doh and see if your child will/can copy you. Building sequences helps children to learn about first, next, last concepts that they will need to learn to tell stories. This type of activity along with shape and colour sorting also teaches children about similarities and differences between objects.



Pictures/Photos- Use photos, coloured pictures and match objects to them. Use inset puzzles and jigsaws, model language at an appropriate level.

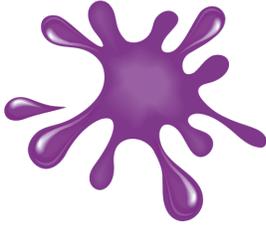
Role play- Enjoy role play by dressing up and model language and taking on a role. Support your child to develop cooperative play with peers by encouraging turn taking and sharing. Introduce conversational language and specific vocabulary required for the role. Don't be afraid to take your child's lead. Let them talk you through their thoughts on what might happen next. Follow their lead and subtly introduce linked ideas e.g. "OK, we're going on holiday, what shall we pack?"



Outside active play. Many children love to play outside. Use outdoor play to model lots of language including words to name the things your child can hear/see/touch and the actions they are carrying out. Make funny noises whilst they are playing that they may enjoy repeating ("weeeee" as they go down the slide, "boo" when they hide and you find them, "pour pour" as they play with water). The more children hear sounds and words repeated, the more likely they are to repeat them.

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Messy Play Children learn best by using all of their senses. Messy play such as painting, play doh, sand pits, water tables, mud kitchens and even activities such as baking expose them to learning lots of new words. Encourage your child to get involved in this play whilst you model describing words (slimy, sticky, red paint) and doing words (mix, roll, squash, cut the dough) to comment on their actions

Useful Links for more ideas and information

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

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