

Home Strategies for 5-11 year olds to support Language and Communication Skills

Attention and Listening:



- Enjoy 5 minutes 'special time' with your child. Turn off background noise, remove distractions, follow your child's lead, listen to what they say, avoid asking questions, repeat back clearly anything they might say, add a short simple comment that might interest your child.
 - Prompt your child to use their good listening skills and then give instructions to follow (such as tidying their room, putting toys in specific boxes etc.) e.g. 'put your trousers in the top drawer and your pencils in the blue box.'
- Carry out a treasure hunt around the home. Ask your child to remember 2-3 items from the list. Encourage strategies such as repeating it to yourself and putting the items in a story to help them remember.

Learning new words:



- Talk about things you see and do
 - When your child has learnt the names of objects, talk about what they look like and what they do. Play games at home and in the community e.g. in the kitchen 'can you find me something that is hard and round?'
- Find out about the topic your child is learning at school, explore a few words about the topic at a time. Find objects around your home or find pictures on the internet together. Keep revisiting the words until your child remembers them

Talking



- Repeat your child's sentence back to them using the correct structure, add one or two more words to the sentence to model more complex language
 - Practice sequencing activities such as making a sandwich and getting dressed. Using language such as

‘first, next, then and last’ to model story telling skills

- Ask your child about their day and encourage them to use ‘first, next, then and last’.
- When having a conversation with your child don’t ask too many questions, if your child has difficulty understanding ‘when’ ‘why’ and ‘how’ questions start with ‘who’, ‘what’ and ‘where’.

Speech sounds:



- Correctly repeat back the word your child says within your conversations e.g. ‘It is cold outside today’ ‘yes it is cold outside today’
- Repeat the correct word multiple times to increase exposure e.g. ‘yes it is cold today, when it is cold we need gloves.’
- If your child is having difficulty with a particular sound make up funny stories using words containing the sound and read them to your child.

Social skills



- Enjoy simple turn taking games such as rolling a ball or building a tower
- Set up play activities that encourage pretend play
- Share your day with your child. Encourage your child to ask questions about what they have heard
- Talk about how you feel and how your child might be feeling, e.g. ‘I can see you are excited now because you have a big smile and you are playing with your favourite toy.’

Useful websites for more information:

<https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/>

<https://radld.org/about/dld/>

<https://www.ican.org.uk/>

<https://www.autism.org.uk/>

If you wish to discuss any of the information on this handout or to discuss your child’s progress with their Speech and Language Therapist, please contact the Language and Learning Team on 0208 288 5692.