

Speech & language
therapy

Activities to Develop First Words

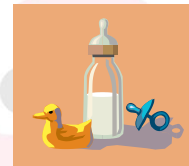
1. Books

Books are one of the best ways for children to learn new words. Encourage your child to sit with you and point to pictures of objects and animals as you name them. Soon your child will start to repeat the words after you.



2. Forced Alternatives

Instead of asking children questions that can be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no', try to give them a choice of alternatives, e.g. 'do you want milk or juice?' This simple strategy encourages the learning of many more words.



3. Word diary

Keep a written record of every new word spoken by your child and try to place them in a situation where they can use their new words, e.g. once a child learns to say 'more', give them small helpings of food so they will ask for, 'more'.

4. Posting Box Game

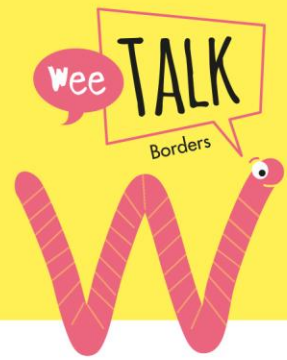
Using simple flashcards encourage your child to pick up the pictures as you name them and 'post' them into a cardboard box or ice cream tub. Encourage your child to name the pictures as they post them.

5. Fishing Game

Using flashcards cut into the shape of fish, encourage your child to fish various pictures, saying the name of the flashcards when they are 'hooked.' You can start by sticking pictures of mummy and daddy on to the fish.

6. Lotto Game

Buy a picture matching lotto game with pictures of everyday objects that are within your child's experiences. This will encourage them to name them.



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7. Encourage

Encourage all speech attempts no matter how poorly articulated. Do not correct a child's mispronunciations at this stage, as all too often this results in the child withdrawing and making fewer efforts to speak.

8. Don't be too obvious

in your attempts to get your child to speak. If they realise you are trying to make them speak, they are likely to remain silent.

9. Keep it simple

Remember it is much easier for a child to copy animal noises (moo, baa etc.) and simple words (key, door etc.) than polysyllabic words (elephant, computer etc.) So remember to encourage simple words at first. Don't be afraid to use 'baby talk' (e.g. horsie, doggie, choo choo etc.) as children often find these easier to say than their adult equivalent.



For more information on the Speech and Language Therapy Service (including how to request support from us) please see:

<http://www.nhsborders.scot.nhs.uk/slt>

[Check out our Wee Talk Borders Facebook page or you can call us on 01896 826710](#)