

Speech & language  
therapy

## Sentences 1: general advice

The following activities can help develop your child's language by encouraging the use of sentences. This will encourage your child to put more words together. You should encourage him/her to join in with these activities as much as possible, accepting his/her efforts in a positive way

- The words to music and rhymes are learned “by heart” and so are easier than making up original messages.
- News-time/telling you about things your child has done gives a focus or topic for discussion, which you can share. You can ask your child questions about this to extend his/her use of sentences further.
- Play activities provide opportunities to direct each other.
- Problem solving, e.g. talking about how things happen.

### Other useful ideas:

#### □ **Modelling:**

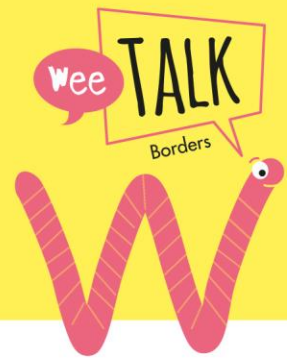
Young children learn most new skills by:

- a) Trying it themselves.
- b) Watching somebody else do it correctly.
- c) Trying it again themselves.

This is the same for learning language:

- a) Child says: “teddy bed”
- b) Adult models: “oh yes, the teddy's in bed
- c) Child tries again: “teddy in bed”

This third stage is often missed. Your child may not want to have another go. Don't worry; you have done the important stage of modelling, i.e. improved upon your child's attempt. In time your child will be more willing to try this last stage. It is through modelling that children will develop use of grammatical skills such as using the correct tense, e.g. ‘he wrote a story’ rather than ‘he writed’.



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## □ **Creating opportunities:**

We need to make sure that children have the chance to use their spoken language effectively within their environment. At home and at school, we often do not give children the chance to make a choice or express their needs and wishes. We need to allow a child to ask for or refuse things – not just tell them what they can play with next or what they should do next. If your child is given genuine opportunities to express these things, he/she learns that using spoken language brings results, i.e. Children can make things happen their way.

e.g. *“do you want to use the plasticine or paint a picture?”*  
*“do you want to go to mcdonald's or pizza hut?”*

You could set a problem for the child to solve.

e.g. Ask the child to draw a picture, but only give him/her paper.  
ask the child to start a video when the machine is empty.

You will find that you will have lots of opportunities to encourage spoken language in everyday activities.

e.g. Asking your child to suggest things to put on the shopping list. This can help develop the use of plurals, e.g. “we need two cartons of milk”.  
Asking your child to tell you what he/she did at school today. This will encourage the use of past tense, e.g. “I read a book”, “I sang a song”, “I painted a picture” etc.

**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](#)**