

## **HELPING YOUR CHILD WITH SPEECH AND LANGUAGE LEARNING:**

from the Speech/Language Pathologists  
Hamilton County Educational Service Center

### **SUGGESTIONS**

Many parents have indicated that they would like to know how they can help their child at home to develop their language abilities.

The following are some easy suggestions to help your child.

1. Show interest in your child's daily experiences. Encourage your child to speak about school activities, T.V. programs that were viewed and activities outside the classroom (shopping, riding, walking.)
2. Discuss colors, (red car, blue bike.) Size relationships (is a car bigger or smaller than an airplane?) (Is the loaf of bread bigger or smaller than the orange?) Use of objects, (We eat meat with a fork, we wear coats, etc.) Label all objects.
3. Encourage your child to go on simple errands to friends, neighbors, or stores giving him/her instructions to remember. "Please get an egg and a cup of milk from Mrs. Trine's house", or "When we're at the store we need to buy a loaf of bread and a gallon of milk."
4. Play listening games. Listen for noises inside the house (doorbells, kitchen noises, appliances.) For example: refrigerator noises, cellophane of bread wrapper, tin foil, water dripping in sink, coffee boiling, etc. Outside the house - (trucks, sirens, animal noises, cars.) Is it coming toward the house or is it going away from the house? Is that the noise of a truck, a bus, or a car?
  - A. Let the child discuss who or what made the noise.
  - B. Is the noise near or far away?
  - C. Is the noise loud or soft?
  - D. Listen to people's voices - are they happy? sad? angry? surprised? whose voice is it?
5. In the evening ask your child to help set the table. As the child does this activity, count the number of plates, glasses and silverware. You can discuss:
  - A. If more or less items are needed.
  - B. Which spoon is bigger?
  - C. Are two glasses the same size and color or are they different?
  - D. Which item is on the left of the plate; which item is on the right?
  - E. Did he remember all the items you told him to put on the table?
6. Counting can be brought into many activities. Count stairs, houses on the street,

- toys, cars, license plates, etc.
7. Colors: Play a game where your child can point to a color in his clothing, in a room, and in a picture. For example: red shirt, red rug, and red flower. Have the child state the color clothes he wishes to wear each day.
  8. Encourage correct use of "little words" such as: a, an, the, in, on, under, over, behind and beside; pronouns - he, she, it, her, him, them and they. Practice by using a ball or block.
  9. Point to and name the different body parts and how they are used. i.e., Eyes are for seeing. A nose is for smelling, etc. While your child is dressing have him/her name clothing, and discuss what items of clothing would be worn on a sunny day, a rainy day, a snow day.
  10. Encourage your child to play "Follow the Leader" and "Simon Says" with his friends. Both you and your child could enjoy this activity when done together.
  11. Encourage your child to help pick up around the house. Encourage him to tie his own shoes, button and snap his own clothes. Your child can help zip your dress or help button your coat.
  12. For inside play, encourage coloring, pasting, and cutting simple pictures and designs.
  13. Help your child learn new words by naming and explaining new objects, actions and events.
  14. Ask your child to give you certain items, or follow directions. He should do them in the same order you gave them. Increase the number of things he is to do. "Get the book, put it on the table and close the door." (three items)
  15. When grocery shopping discuss size, shape, smell, feel and color of boxes, cans, bottles, fruits, vegetable, and meats. Make comparisons between big boxes and little boxes, etc.

#### THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN WORKING ON LANGUAGE .....

- Involve and stimulate all of the senses for the development of an inner language vocabulary (a vocabulary of words recognized and understood by your child but not necessarily used verbally.)
- A. Use simple vocabulary for following directions.
  - B. Simple, economic language for explanation.

- C. Use objects not just words or pictures - touch, hold, squeeze (feel the hardness) taste, smell, look at an apple, or anything else. Don't just talk about it, get involved in all there is to learn about what you are teaching.
- D. Stimulate thinking - feel how round it (the apple) is. See how round it is, feel how smooth it is. Do this with eyes open and eyes closed.
- E. Develop the concept with more simple but specific vocabulary.  
...it grows on a tree...an apple tree, it is round, it is red, it has skin...peel it, taste it, chew it, this is just the beginning, keep going.

In the meantime, remember, this is the development of inner language that you are working on...stimulate thinking and awareness, but also encourage your child to talk clearly and to use their words. Hopefully, what you are doing is successful and your child is absorbed in the activity and he is, of course, learning. Look for the non-verbal signs for learning: delight, curiosity, physical participation, concentration and the like. Keep this light and cheerful. It should be fun, not a military maneuver.

Introduce new objects in the same way.

Keep a record - visual - for your child.

1. Pasting big clear pictures of said objects on paper and hanging up the paper.
2. Make a book of them.
3. Collect the objects and put them in a special place.
4. Make the objects out of various materials.
5. Model them out of clay.
6. Have fun ... you are on your own.

**Additional information at American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA)**