

the early years toolkit

hope making a difference choice understanding friendly
other quality understanding dedication hope enthusiastic specialist compassion
personal community people together help care understanding specialist dedication safe local support trust depe
equality care choice independence respect community trust together quality t
tion hope enthusiastic specialist compassion safe health service local dependable help equality care d

Toddler talk

Parents and carers are very important in developing children's language.

Children learn language best from the people around them talking about the things that are happening to them and that they are interested in. Although the television and DVD are very useful, they cannot respond like you do to your child.

How can I help my toddler to talk?

The following activities and strategies can all help your child learn to understand and to talk:

Keeping language simple

Add to your child's talking just a little. If your child says no words, you could use one word. If your child says one word, you could help by saying two words, such as:

- Child points to car
- Adult points to car and says "Car"
- Child says "Car"
- Adult adds to what the child said – "Blue car"

Symbolic noises

Encourage use of symbolic noises, for example 'choo choo' for train and 'meow' for cat. These are easier for children to copy than words and children often use these before true words.

Using gestures

By using gestures alongside words, for example pointing, you are helping the child to understand what words mean.

Providing experiences

Children learn language by hearing about things and doing things. Give a simple commentary for everyday activities and routines. Talk about what you are doing, what things are called and why you are doing it. Your child will understand the language through their experiences and, in time, will start to use the words.