

Speech and Language Therapy

Top Tips for Developing Play

- **Follow your child's lead** - see what your child is interested in playing with and play with that rather than you choosing the toy.
- **Don't ask lots of questions** - comment on what your child is doing rather than interrupting play with questions e.g. "dolly's having a drink" NOT "what is dolly doing?"
- **Keep language simple** - matched to your child's language level.
- **Model without directing** - play alongside but don't force your child to do something different. If play is repetitive e.g. train up and down the track, get another train and do something different with it e.g. going over a bridge, through a tunnel, they are more likely to copy if they don't feel forced to change what they are happy doing.

Recommended Websites:

www.ican.org.uk

www.talkingpoint.org.uk

www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk

Helping Your Child's Play: Things To Do

There are many different types of play and all are important for developing language and learning.

1. Exploratory Play

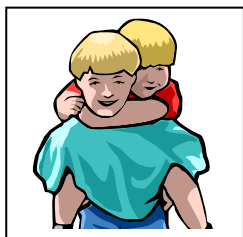


Through play with toys & objects babies discover that they can make things happen e.g. shaking a rattle makes a noise.

It is important to let babies explore as much as possible using everyday things in the home and environment.

Collect some safe items & put them in boxes or under tea towels so that your child can play at discovering the object. Bang things together to make a noise.

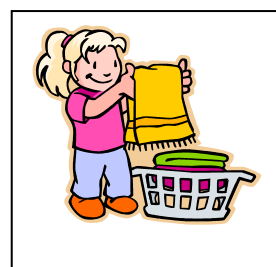
2. Physical Play



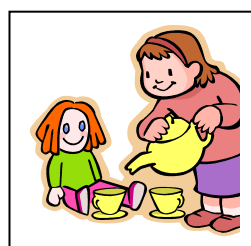
Physical play and rough and tumble games give children experience of movement and space which will help develop action words e.g. jump, skip and positional words e.g. up, down, in, under. **Children love hide and seek games, ball games and obstacle courses with household items.**

3. Everyday Experiences

Real experiences and everyday routines are important for developing play and imagination.



Try and involve your child in every day routines even though it may take longer to do if they are involved e.g. helping with the washing, cooking, shopping, sweeping/hoovering the floor.

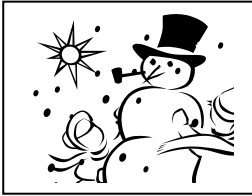


4. Pretend and Symbolic Play

This is where children pretend to give a doll, teddy or person a drink from a cup, later they will use a different object as a cup - this is real symbolic play.

Play tea parties, large doll play, playing with playmobil, farm animals, all large and miniature toys can be used to develop pretend play. Giving toys drinks, food, putting to bed, feeding animals, building an animal a house from lego or a shed for a train are all good ways of supporting development of pretend play.

5. Co-Operative Play



Learning to play together is essential for learning language and social communication.

This could be building a tower together, doing a puzzle together or playing pretend games e.g. where one child is a waiter and another a cook.



6. Imagination and Role Play

This is when children act out their own experiences. At the same time they experiment with language and communication.

Fun games can be played using old boxes as pretend trains, boats, houses etc. Dress up to pretend to be different characters from stories, songs, TV programmes etc.

Role playing at shops, restaurants, hospitals, vets etc. is a good way to develop these skills in your child and where you can join in.