

Developing language
in young babies:

**TALK
& PLAY**

**EVERY
DAY**

**0-6
months**



A helpful guide to early language development

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Talk & Play Every Day

is a parent's guide to help encourage your young baby's early language and communication skills.

We hope you find this leaflet helpful...

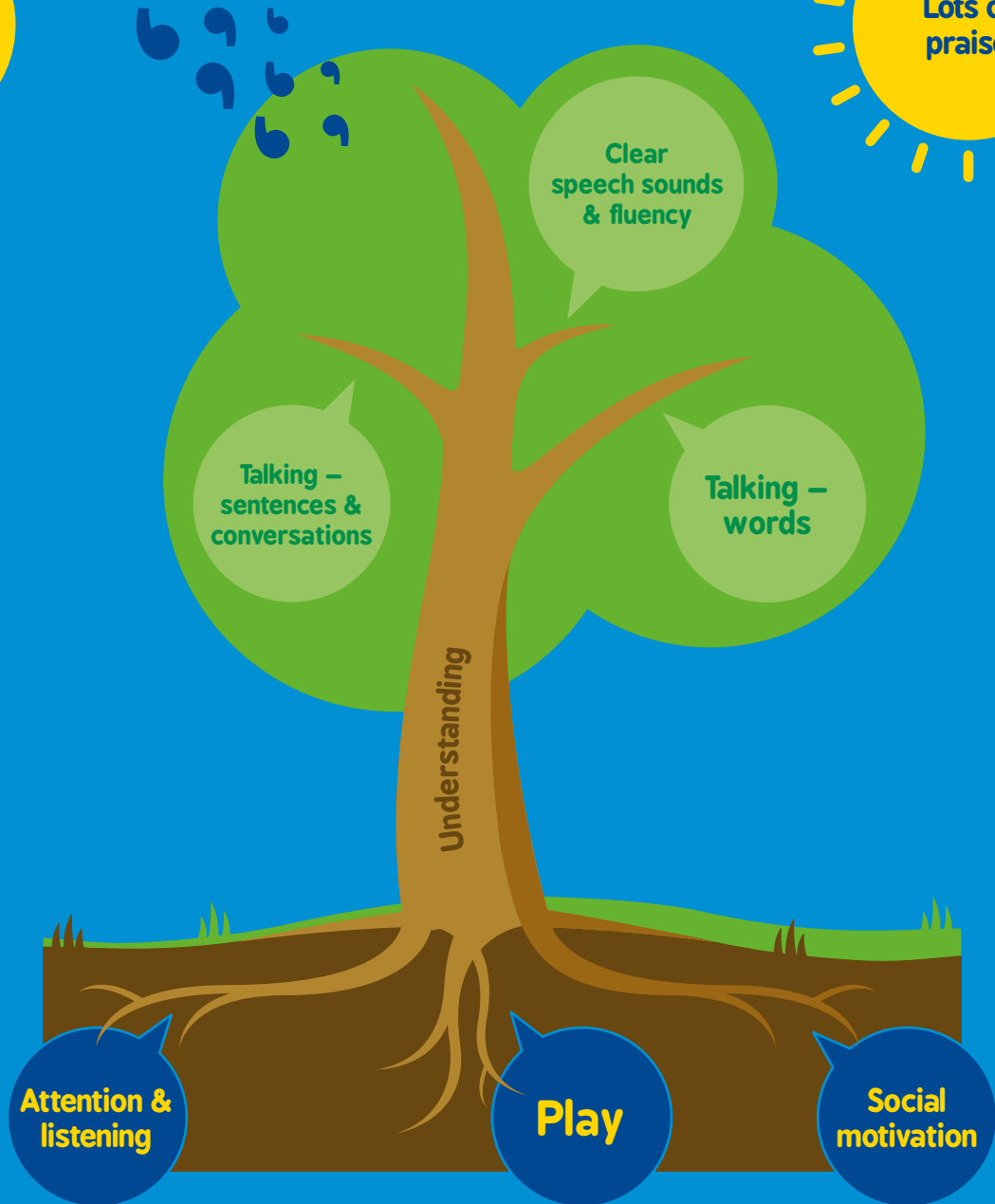


Further advice or information is available from your local speech and language therapist, health visitor or Children's Centre.

How communication grows...

Lots of talk

Lots of praise



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At this stage of early communication development, most young babies...

- **Sense how you are feeling** (e.g. happy, sad).
- **Enjoy being held and touched** and show an interest in your face. They will enjoy looking at you when you talk and play.
- **Recognise familiar faces and voices** such as mum, dad or their grandparents.
- **Express how they feel** by crying, looking at you, making noises and body movements.
- **Like sharing books with you** (e.g. noisy books, board books and books with simple pictures).

Listen & look...

Watch out for your baby using his/her voice and face to communicate with you long before words:

cooing, gurgling and chuckling when happy;
smiling when you play and talk together;
crying when unhappy and uncomfortable;
poking out tongue or moving lips when you speak;
body movements and looking excited when something is about to happen.



5 ways you can help your young baby learn to talk...

LOOK

Watch and wait to see what he/she does. **Hold him/her face to face** and make different facial expressions (e.g. smiling, poking tongue out).

Copy his/her expressions. Using different facial expressions will hold your baby's attention and start an interaction.

PLAY

You are your baby's favourite toy... Play games together such as 'Peek-a-boo', tickling and action rhymes like 'Round and round the garden' and clapping games like 'Pat-a-cake'.

Look at books together. Babies like looking at simple pictures and shapes and so will enjoy looking at pictures and listening to your voice.



LISTEN

Listen together. **Talk about the sounds you can hear:** songs, music, noises outside and family voices. Listen for your baby's sounds. Show that you are listening by copying back the sounds he/she is making.

SHARE

Spend quiet-time together every day. Reduce background noise as much as possible – **turn off TV or radio** and give him/her your undivided attention. This will help him/her learn to concentrate and listen.

By holding him/her close and comforting, **you make him/her feel safe and secure.** Too much TV can get in the way. You and your voice are much more exciting.



TALK

It is never too soon to talk with your baby. Your baby learns from you and needs to hear you talking. **Talk to him/her anywhere...** on the bus, in the car, walking along, during meals and bath-time.

Sing and talk to him/her in a gentle 'singing' voice during everyday activities such as feeding and nappy changing (e.g. 'Ooh, smelly nappy!').

Remember... always use the language **you** feel most comfortable with when talking together.

Further advice or information is available from your local speech and language therapist, health visitor or Children's Centre.

Did you know?

You are your child's favourite toy and they enjoy listening to your voice more than anyone else's!

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Info & contacts...

**“Let children be children.
A skilled five year
old grows from a
busy four year old, a
curious three year old,
a cuddled two year
old, an adventurous
one year old and a
communicative baby.”**

Jenny Lindon

Babies – learning starts from the
first day. Early Education.

“Talk and Play Every Day” are a series
of leaflets written and developed
by Guy’s & St Thomas’ Children &
Young People’s Community Speech
& Language Therapy Service