

Developing language
in toddlers:

TALK
& PLAY

EVERY
DAY

1-2
years



A helpful guide to early language development

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Talk & Play Every Day
is a parent's guide
to help encourage your
toddler's early language and
communication skills.
We hope you find this
leaflet helpful...

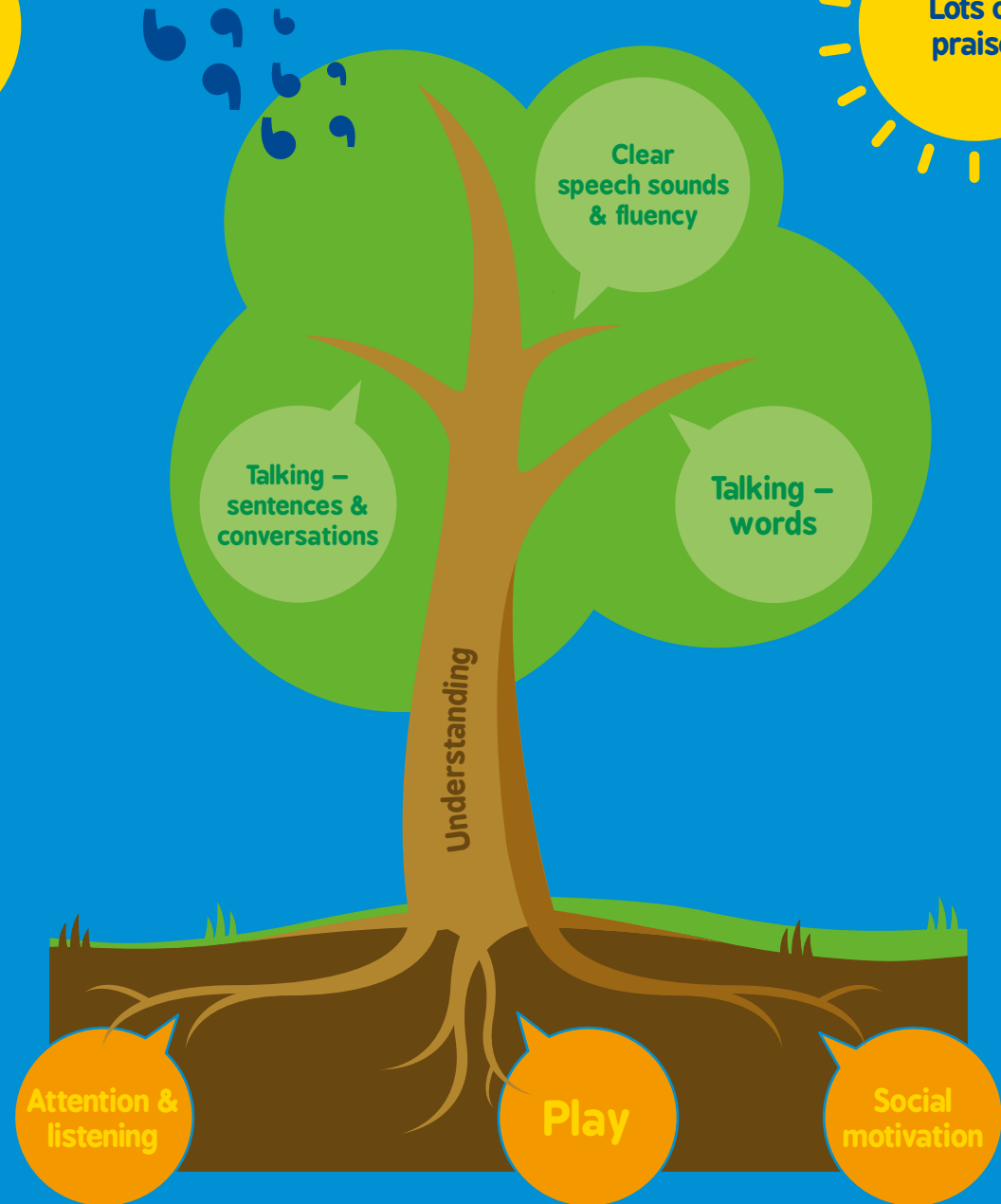


Further advice or information is available from your local
speech and language therapist, health visitor or Children's Centre.

How communication grows...

Lots of talk

Lots of
praise



**TALK
& PLAY**

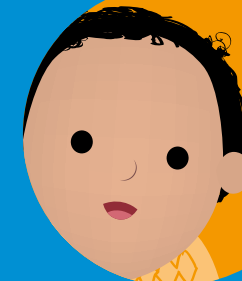
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At this stage of early communication development, most toddlers...

- **Start to understand a few simple words** (e.g. 'drink', 'shoe', 'car', 'ball', 'no').
- **Start to understand simple instructions and routines** (e.g. 'kick ball', 'clap hands', 'shoes on', 'bath time').
- **Use a few simple words** (e.g. 'cup', 'milk', 'dog', 'ball', 'Daddy') – although the sounds they use may not be as clear as an adult (e.g. 'tat' instead of 'cat').
- **Use pointing or gestures**, often with words or sounds, to show what they want or are interested in.
- **Are eager to play games**, sing songs, read books and share new and exciting experiences together!



5 ways you can help your toddler learn to talk...

LOOK

Get face to face! This will help your toddler look at you, understand your facial expressions and see the way your mouth makes sounds. **It will also help you follow his/her gaze** and talk about the things they are interested in.

PLAY

Play is a toddler's work! Spend time together – **playing games** (e.g. 'Peek-a-boo', 'pat-a-cake', 'washing and feeding teddy'), **singing nursery rhymes** (e.g. 'Incey wincey spider', 'Wheels on the bus', 'Round and round the garden') and **sharing books, stories from your childhood or pictures together**. Use lots of actions, especially when you are singing, as this will help your toddler understand and connect the word and action. **Repeating words over and over** (e.g. 'more', 'again', 'all gone') will help focus his/her attention and develop his/her language.



LISTEN

Leave plenty of time for your toddler to **respond** or to join in with your words or actions. **Wait, watch and listen** carefully to what they are telling or showing you, then **follow his/her lead** and join in! Use toys and objects that make a noise, as well as noisy books and tapes to encourage your toddler's listening and attention skills.

SHARE

Try and share some special time together each day, when you and your toddler can talk, play, laugh, cuddle up or simply enjoy being together! **Toddlers don't need expensive or elaborate toys** to play or learn. A simple shoe box, cardboard tube and some tin foil could have them well on the way to creating a 'space ship'!



TALK

Talk, talk and talk! Use every opportunity to talk to your toddler about everyday events and routines (e.g. 'Mummy is putting shoes on', 'We're going to the park'). **Name the objects your child sees** and is interested in (e.g. 'doggy', 'here comes bus', 'more juice'). Clearly stress the important words and **use short, simple sentences** (e.g. rather than saying 'It's raining outside. Let's put your boots on', you could say 'Raining, boots on'). This will help your toddler understand what you are saying and then use these words when they are ready.

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