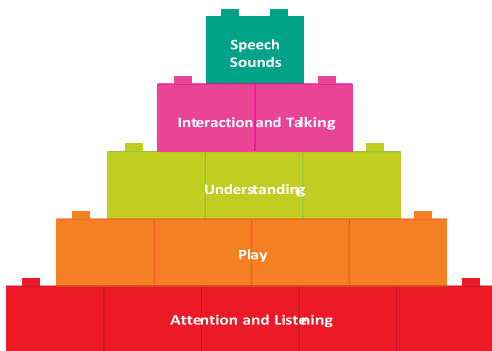


Listen Up

Being able to communicate is not just about talking.

Along with getting your own message across, being able to listen, pay attention, interact, play and understand what's being said are the fundamental building blocks of communication.

This pack explains more about these important skills and contains lots of activities to help you and your child. This can help them learn, make friends and have fun.



Pre-School Activities

Set aside some time to play the activities contained in this pack with your child. Some activities take just a couple of minutes, others longer.

Have a look through the cards first and choose activities that you can do in the time you have. Make sure you have to hand any of the things needed – some need simple toys, others just you!

Decide whether you will be doing just one activity or more and tell your child before you start playing.

Set out the chosen cards and get your child to choose one of them. You can do this in a fun

way by laying the cards on the floor and throwing a beanbag or soft toy and whichever it lands on is the activity you will do together.

Play the games whilst talking and listening with your child about the activity.



Play

Play is a really important part of children's learning and development.

Children learn all kinds of skills through play; they learn how things work, how to interact and share with other children, how to play with different toys and to enter a world of imagination.

Playing enables children to test things out in a safe way, to learn about emotions and to talk with others.

Children often love adults to play with them. It's great if you can follow their lead and join in the fun.

Play

Puzzles

Do a simple jigsaw puzzle with your child. If you don't have any puzzles, you can make your own by cutting up a picture from a magazine into 4 to 6 pieces – can your child put them back together to make the picture?



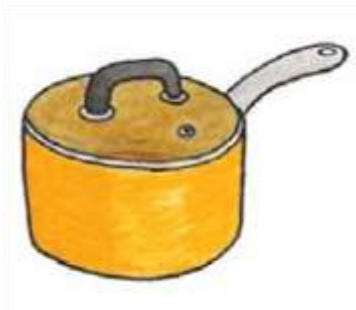
Play

Treasure box

You and your child could make up a treasure box along a theme.

You could get some pots and pans, pretend food and some soft toys and get ready for a picnic.

Or get some old jewellery, an eye patch and a treasure map and get ready for a pirate adventure!



Play

Make your own car

Turn a cardboard box into a car - draw on wheels or stick on paper plates, use silver foil for headlights, put a cushion inside to make the seat - now where will your child go on their adventure, who will they take with them?



Play

Shopping

Keep old packaging such as egg boxes, cereal packets, juice bottles, tissue boxes etc - your child can make their own shop and sell things to other people.

Try toy shops, clothes shops - talk about what they need and where to get it from.



Understanding

Understanding is key to talking and learning.

Children need to understand what single words mean and when words are joined together into sentences, conversations and stories. This takes time and children go through phases where they ask lots of questions.

This is a good thing as they're trying to find out how things work and understand the world around them.

Adults play an important role in answering the many questions children have and in checking out whether children understand.

Set up a pretend shop.

Understanding

Have 4 or 5 things in your shop – they can be toys or real things from your cupboards.

Ask your child to go and buy...

The beans and the milk.

The apple, the cheese and the yoghurt.



Posty

Make a postbox out of an old cardboard box, with a hole cut in it.

Understanding

Your child can be a posty – have 4 or 5 toys to choose from. Ask them to collect different ‘parcels’ for posting.

“Can you post the spot book?”



Instruction time

Children need to wait for you to say “go”. When you do they can run around, but must stop when you say “stop” and clap your hands.

Understanding

Play in different ways by having children listen to an instruction, such as “Hop around and stop when I clap” or “Jump on the spot and stop when I bang on the drum”.



Puppets

Do what I say - use any puppet or even an old sock. The puppets give simple instructions for the child to follow:

“Go and touch the chair”

“Jump up and down”

Understanding

“Find something you can eat”

“Touch your head and rub your tummy”



Interaction

We communicate and interact with each other in different ways; learning the skills of interaction is really important for having good conversations.

We need to learn when to talk and when to listen, how to take turns, how to notice if someone is not listening or bored with what we're saying. We need words to do this, but also skills in looking, listening and noticing people around us.

Children learn from adults by watching how they interact with other adults and with children.

Interaction

Taking turns

Play any simple game where you need to take turns.

Take turns to add a brick to a tower you're building... take turns to play a simple board game like snakes and ladders... take turns to throw a ball...



Interaction

Story time

Share a story either from a book or make up a story or tell stories about when you were young.

Your child could make up their own stories about their toys, which you could join in with.

Or get your child to tell their own stories using pictures– what do they think might happen next...?



Interaction

Get down to their level

Conversations with a child are easier if you are on the same level. It might mean sitting or lying on the floor to talk and play.



Interaction

Talk about what is happening

Watch a TV programme together and talk about it afterwards. When they are playing, comment on what they are doing.

Wait for children to talk first then expand on what they have to say.



Listening

Listening is an essential skill for talking and learning.

Everywhere we go there are different noises around us. Sometimes children need a bit of quiet time to help them tune into talking rather than the other noises going on around them.

Adults need to show children the way – when we listen to children, they learn what to do in order to be good listeners.

Collect lots of things that make a noise, such as:

Crinkly paper

Noise making toys

Listening

Pots and pans

Musical instruments

Books with noise buttons

Explore! Listen and talk about them.



Spot the mistake

Sing a simple rhyme or song, but make a mistake – can children spot the mistake?

Incy wincy spider climbing up... a tree (should be spout)

Listening

The wheels on the... train go round and round
(should be bus)

Twinkle twinkle little... hat (should be star)



Go games - wait for go

Build a tower of bricks. Your child waits for you to say “Go” before they can knock it down.

Have a race – ready steady go...

Push a car to each other – ready steady go...

Dance around – ready steady go...

Listening

Roll the ball – ready steady go...



Where is that noise?

Listening

Get a toy or play music on a CD player or phone or mp3 player.

Hide the noisy object somewhere in the room – can your child find it?

