

Communication & Language for

Toddlers & Pre-Schoolers





Toddlers 1-2 years



Fun Facts

- This is the age that children begin trying to hold a conversation.
- Children at this age are beginning to follow simple instructions. Try it!
- Some children this age can identify familiar words and objects e.g., cup, bed, hat.
- Children will begin to join in with actions from familiar songs and begin to listen to simple stories.
- Children of this age will listen better when you are talking about their interests e.g., cars -What are your child's interests?
- Children from 18 months to 6 years will learn about 8 new words every day.

Messages

“If I struggle to say a word, then repeat it back to me clearly and slowly so I can listen and learn.”

“Talk to me whilst I’m playing and name the toys I use, so I can learn to say their names. I learn best when I know what a word means before I say it.”

“Explore books with me! I will learn lots of new language from this (don’t forget to show me the pictures and let me turn the pages).”

“Give me time to respond after talking to me, I might need 10 seconds or more to process what you said...”

How you can help...

Take your child on walks. The more they see the more words they will learn. Say what you can see and where you are going to help expand your child's vocabulary.

Reading books aloud to your child is a fantastic way for them to learn new vocabulary. As your child gets older, adapt this activity to their needs. This could be longer books with more words, rhyming books, or books with more complex characters etc.

SING SING SING! Your child will benefit from singing songs with actions, such as 'wind the bobbin up' or 'head, shoulders, knees, and toes.' This will help to develop their speech, understanding, early phonics skills, and listening/attention skills.

Socialise. Your child's speech and their personal, social, and emotional development will be supported by them being around other children of a similar age.

Pre-schoolers 3-5 years



Fun Facts

- This is the age where children begin to develop their writing skills and letter recognition. Children might enjoy doing a lot of talking at this age, and they may start gaining more confidence in different social situations.
- 3–5-year-olds will be working hard to expand their vocabulary by using nouns, adjectives, and verbs in simple sentences. For example, they may say ‘watch me jumping’ or ‘I can run fast.’
- Children of this age may ask lots of questions e.g., “what’s that?.” This is all a part of their learning and helps them to understand the world around them. The more children understand the more they can communicate!

Messages

“If I look like I’m not listening, I might need you to call my name or tap me on the shoulder before talking, this is because I am so focused on what I am doing I might find it difficult to hear you straight away.”

“Reading me books at this age will help me develop my understanding of how words and sentences are structured. I might also like to learn about the words that rhyme, and the simple words or letters that I might recognise myself, like those that are in my name!”

“I might recognise and respond to familiar sounds, like the doorbell or the phone ringing and tell you what these sounds are.”

“My listening skills are getting better, and I might work well in a small group with some of my friends or familiar adults.”

How you can help...

Model good listening skills and use language that makes them think, such as 'I wonder if...' or 'What if...', this will support your child's communication and language development.

Use different voices and make different sounds when playing with your child. For example, when playing with cars, making sounds like "vrooom," and "Chuga-Chuga" for a train. This will encourage them to practice making different sounds and allow them to explore the different ways they can communicate.

Play alongside your child - especially when role playing! Your child might act out familiar events such as shopping or cooking. Try to expand on their play, for example, if your child is pretending to place things in a trolley or basket, you could expand this by asking whether they have a shopping list, if not, you could make one!

If your child struggles with the pronunciation of some words, which is quite common at this age, then repeat the words back to them clearly and slowly. It is important that you avoid telling them that they have gotten it wrong and instead praise their attempt. By beginning feedback with 'yes that's right' or 'well done', you can provide a child with positive praise, before modeling what the words should have sounded like. For example, if a child picks a yellow toy from a pile and says "look lellow" you know that they are trying to say 'yellow' so praise them for this, and then let them hear the word clearly after. You could say, "well done, that is right! YEL-LOW" - emphasize the word clearly that you want them to hear.

Follow us on Facebook to be the first to hear about our workshops:

f Early Years Communication & Language Workers



For further information on local groups and events please follow your local area's Facebook page:

f Blaby, Oadby & Wigston Children & Family Wellbeing Centres

f North West Leicestershire Children and Family Wellbeing Service

f Hinckley & Bosworth Children & Family Wellbeing Centres

f Charnwood Children and Family Wellbeing Service

f Harborough Children and Family Wellbeing Service

f Melton Children & Family Wellbeing Service

Remember to check your eligibility for Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE). For more information and to check whether you qualify for 2 year funding, visit the website below:

[Leicestershire.gov.uk/funded-childcare-places](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/funded-childcare-places)

You can also use the following website to see what help you can get towards Childcare costs:

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk