

5 Golden Rules for Communication

Actions Speak Louder than Words

Use actions, facial expressions and tone of voice to help children understand and make new words stand out.



Mime having a drink from a cup to your child for **“drink”** whilst saying **“you want a drink?”**

Model and Extend

Whatever stage a child is at, repeat what they do or say and add one word.



For example, your child points to a car, you say **“car”**. Your child says **“car”**, you say **“red car”**. They say **“red car”**, you say **“yes, big red car”**

Eye to Eye

Get down on the child’s level so you can see their face and they yours.



Sit on the floor with your child or sit your child on your knee.

10 Seconds



Wait 10 seconds, watching and listening to give the child a chance to take a turn.



Count to ten slowly in your head.

A or B

Offer choices as often as possible throughout the day. Show and name the alternatives.



For example, **“Do you want apple or banana?”**

Amazing facts

A baby will respond differently to different voices. They recognise their Mum’s voice from birth and can work out where a sound is coming from just 10 minutes after being born. Babies can also tell the difference between a happy voice and an angry voice from 6 weeks.

Sharing stories and singing nursery rhymes help to develop the connections in children’s brains. These grow at the fastest rate up to two years old and the brain reaches 60 percent of its adult size by baby’s first birthday.

Children use the same muscles for chewing and swallowing as they do

for talking so moving to free flow cups and different textures when your child is ready for weaning will help their talking.

Learning more than one language has many benefits for young children. For example, they have more brain connections and activity in the areas of the brain related to memory, attention and language. These have long term benefits for learning and life chances.

If you want more information or advice about any areas of communication, please contact your Health Visitor or the Start Well team.

For more information or support, please contact:

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