

Information for parents

Talking to toddlers and pre-schoolers

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- Talk in sentences but keep them short and simple.
- Repeat key words or phrases several times, but each time in a slightly different way, for example, "Dinner is ready. Let's wash your hands for dinner. We're having chicken for dinner."
- Talk about what you are doing at the present time. "I am cutting up the fruit salad. Can you give me the apples?"
- Use the correct word for an object rather than the "baby" word. This way, your child will be hearing the same word spoken by everyone. "Thank you for putting away your toys".
- Respond to any words your child says, as this is the beginning of a conversation.
- Enlarge upon your child's conversation. If he or she says "Car" you can say: "Yes, I saw the big, blue car too."
- Stop every little while when you are talking so your child can say something or get a word in edgeways.
- Think about what interests your child and talk about those topics.
- Allow your child to have some quiet time when he or she can "talk" to himself or herself.
- Slow down the rate or speed of your speech. When your child is little you may need to speak just a little more slowly and you may need to stress key words by making them just a little louder.
- Check that you have understood what your child is saying. If you do not understand, ask a question to clarify the meaning behind what has been said.
- Give full attention to your child when he or she is speaking and make eye contact to indicate to him or her that you are listening to what is being said.
- Give your child something to talk about. A trip to the shops, a play in the park, a visit to the zoo, a day at childcare, are all things to talk about.
- End conversations on a happy and positive note.

For more Information

If you require further information please contact:

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