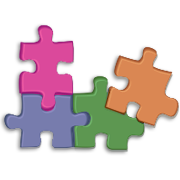
**Top tips for talking with your 4 year old child**

**By now your child will probably be using longer sentences and is beginning to use more words and understand more of what you say. Your child’s speech can be understood by most people. Here are some ideas to help him/her understand and say more.**

* Create quiet times in the day when you talk to your child. As you play together and carry out household jobs, turn off the television and music so that your child can concentrate and listen more easily.
* Share books with your child. Encourage your child to join in or retell the story from the pictures.
* Ask simple questions about a story e.g. “What is the man doing?”, “Where is the cat?”, “Why is the boy happy?”

**T**alk to your child about what they are interested in.

**A**lways make time to talk to your child.

**L**istening and looking help learning.

**K**eep praising your child’s listening and talking.

• Enjoy jigsaws and table top games together. Show your child how to take turns. Encourage him/her to finish one game before starting another.

• Hide and seek games will help your child to learn words like “behind” and “in front”. He/she will need to hear these words and see what you mean many times before he/she will really understand. Can your child hide behind or in front of different places? Can he/she hide a toy behind the chair etc.?

• You can play listening games during everyday activities to encourage your child to follow longer instructions, for example, “Put the biscuits and crisps on the table”.

• Encourage your child to use longer sentences by expanding what your child says. E.g. Your child says “boy kicking ball”, you say “Yes the boy’s kicking the big ball”.

**Top tips for talking with your 3 year old child L**

**By now your child will probably be joining words together. He/she may be spending longer with their favourite toys. Here are some ideas to help him/her understand and say more.**

• Do not always ask for things by name. Ask by what you use them for e.g. “Find me something to read”, “Show me something to eat”.

• Encourage your child to use longer sentences by expanding what your child says. E.g. Your child says “Mummy socks”, you say “Mummy’s big socks”. Encourage by repeating words correctly e.g. your child says “dat”, you say “That’s right a cat”.

• Are there enough opportunities for your child to play with other children of the same age? This will encourage him/her to share, play together and to talk about what they are doing. Encourage activities that need imagination e.g. dressing-up, old pots and pans for ‘cooking’, boxes to make ‘Hiding places’.

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**Speech Sound Development:**

**Approximate Ages of Sound Use**

These percentages show at what age 50% and 90% of children usually use the sounds listed.

**Sounds 50% of children 90% of children**

**most vowels** 1½ - 2 years 3 years

**p, b, m, n, t, d, w**  1½ - 2 years 3 years

**k, g, f, h, y** 1½ - 3 years 4 years

**ng, s** 1½ - 3 years 5 years

**l** 3 - 3½ years 6 years

**sh, ch, j, z, v** 3½ - 4½ years 6 years

**r, th** 4½ - 5 years 7 years

**Speech Sounds Advice**

1. Avoid correcting your child’s speech sound mistakes or making them say it again. Doing this tends not to work and may knock their confidence. Simply repeat the word back to them in a natural way. E.g. **Child:** “Mummy it’s a **nowman**.” **Parent:** “Yes it’s a big **s**nowman.”

2. Be positive about your child and show interest in **what** they talk about instead of **how** they say each word. If over-corrected, a child loses confidence and may talk less or become embarrassed about the way they talk. The more confident and talkative a child is, the more they will be practising and improving their talking skills.