



TOP TIPS!



Top Tips for supporting communication (children and young people)

1. Communication - (Effective communication gives children/young people the skills they need to build healthy relationships of their own)

Top Tip- Make time for One to One chats with each family member. Helping children and young people to feel valued and respected. Bedtime is a great opportunity for One to One chats to reflect on the day.

2. Non-Verbal Communication / Affection - (Remember that not all communication happens through words)

Top Tip - Pay attention to the feelings that children/young people may express non-verbally that they may not want to talk about but look for other methods of communication/affection. It is also important to be aware of the non-verbal communication that we send out to children/young people. For example, eye contact, body language, and tone of voice.

3. Open-Ended Questions - (Asking a child/young person open questions will allow them to freely express their opinion and a conversation can develop naturally.

Top Tip - Try to ask questions such as "Tell me about your day" rather than "did you have a good day". Children/young people who are asked open questions give more expressive and detailed answers. Allowing them the opportunity to explore and express themselves through communication. Closed questions can limit a child's conversational skills.

4. Encourage Active Listening - (Use facial expressions and body language to show engagement)

Top tip - When communicating with children/young people pay attention to your body language and engagement, teaching children/young people how to meaningfully listen to others will help them on their way to becoming effective communicators.

5. Children/young people learn from what they see and hear. (Remember mistakes are important for learning)

Top tip - Show them the right way, if children/young people make mistakes, its best to repeat back what they say rather than tell them it's wrong. Say it clearly with the right words, so they can hear how things should sound.

6. Time - (Give children/young people time to communicate)

Top Tip - Remember to use facial expressions and to just wait. We all need time to process what others have said. When communicating with children/young people use facial expression to show you are listening and happy to wait.

7. Join in with technology - (when your child/young person wants to engage with technology, join in with them.)

Top Tip - As technology is getting used more every day, embrace it. Join in on the games, websites etc. This will help your child/young person understand different means of communicating, if it is written, verbally etc.



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Fun games to help younger children with their communication skills.

Games to help eye contact:

Use of eye contact is an important social skill and a key aspect of communication. Eye contact allows the child to pick up on facial expression, gestures and how we are talking, including our mouth movements.

Peek-a-boo

Hide behind your hands or a blanket and peek out saying "peek-a-boo". Wait to see what happens and try again.

Songs

Sing songs like "Row, row, row your boat" or "Humpty Dumpty". At the end, wait for your child to look at you, then do it again.

Games to help copying:

Children learn language by copying what they hear and see. Games, which encourage copying, should help your child to improve observation and imitation skills.

Copying sounds

Listen to sounds your child says, copy them and they might copy you back.

Action songs

Sing songs with actions. Encourage your child to copy the actions. You could try: 'The wheels on the bus' or 'if your happy and you know it'.

Games to help turn taking:

Conversation involves taking turns. This begins early in a child's life when a care giver responds to sounds, which their baby makes. Taking turns in play will encourage your child to develop an understanding of the rules of turn taking, listening and waiting within communication.

Give and take

Have two toys. Give your child one toy and keep one. Show them your toy, put out your hand to get their toy back and give them your toy.