TOP TEN TIPS TO

HELP ME LEARN TO TALK

(Part 1)



Barnet Early Years SEND Advisory Team is committed to supporting early year's settings to move to more inclusive environments for children with a variety of special educational needs and disabilities. This Document has been produced by Barnet Early Years SEND Advisory Team

Top Ten Tips to help me learn to talk (Part 1)

1. **Get My Attention**
   I need to use my *attention and listening*, so I can *understand* and learn to *talk*.
   (see Communication Pyramid). Face me at my level, call my name, encourage eye contact if possible and comfortable for me and avoid any background distractions.

   The next TWO KEY STRATEGIES take practise for adults to use consistently during interactions with a child.

2. **Give Me Plenty of Time**
   I take a while *to process* the words *you have used* AND the words *I can use*, before I speak, so *give me extra time* when I am telling you something. Have a *special time* every day to play, share picture books or talk with me.

3. **Minimise Questions**
   Avoid "testing" me with questions, (e.g. "What's this?" "What colour is that?"), I need to learn about natural language.

4. **Respond More**
   It helps if you ***wait and listen, then respond to me***, rather than always taking the lead. If ***you are tuned into what I am showing interest in***, it helps me to start talking independently.

5. **Comment**
   After waiting for a few moments, ***occasionally make a simple comment about what I am doing*** while I'm playing, at snack time, or if you notice something that I'm interested in.

6. **Keep it Short and Simple**
   Model short and simple language (***key words/phrases***).

7. **Add a Bit**
   To extend my language, repeat what I say and ***add a word or two***.

8. **Encourage New Words**
   Emphasise new words, ***show me*** what they mean and ***repeat*** them often in different situations throughout the day. Give me ***reasons to use my words***, e.g. rather than doing things for me, or getting what I want for me before I ask, wait a little for me to try to say something. Even if you know what I would like, giving me two options encourages me to say the word.

9. **Give Me Lots of Encouragement**
   Your ***attention, smiles, reassuring praise and responses*** all give me the confidence and motivation to talk. Avoid correcting me or asking me to repeat after you.
   …and remember

10. **Make Learning Language Fun!**
    Nursery rhymes, action songs or making an obvious, funny mistake with a word (when appropriate), make learning language fun.