

HOW CAN WE HELP? Early Speech Skills



Some everyday ideas about how to help children develop their early speech skills

- Children can experience difficulties using the right sounds. They may change sounds or miss out sounds, For example they may use a 't' instead of a 'k/c' so that 'cat' is pronounced as 'tat'. These children may or may not have other language and/or learning difficulties.
- Do not ask the child to repeat sounds or words they have said incorrectly. This may be too hard for them and can be unhelpful.
- Provide a model for the child of the correct way to say a word, (e.g. child says, 'I live in a hout'. Then you say, 'Yes, you do live in a housee'.)
- Focus on what the child is saying rather than how they are saying it. The important thing is to understand the overall content of what the child is telling you.
- Encourage the child to talk by discussing everyday situations with them, (e.g. a trip to the shops.) This will give the child opportunities to practise different sounds.
- Don't pretend to understand everything the child says. The following may help you understand:
 - Asking the child to show you what they mean
 - Give choices of the possibilities, (e.g. 'Was that at school or at home?')
 - Asking the child to tell you more information. This may help you understand the gist of what they are saying.

If you require any further support/advice please contact via the following email

Walsall.slt@nhs.net

In the subject line please state **FAO the Virtual School Speech and Language Therapy Support team** to ensure your message is actioned by the relevant team.