

# HOW CAN WE HELP IN THE HOME? KS3 & KS4

## Strategies to Support Understanding / Comprehension / Receptive Language Skills

### What is Receptive Language?

Receptive language is how a child / young person (CYP) understands and knows the meaning of words, sentences & conversation.

As children get older, their understanding continues to develop. They begin to understand more abstract ideas (e.g. days of the week, time, past tense), difficult words (e.g. bigger, biggest, before, after) and longer instructions.

Children need to continue to develop their understanding to help them communicate and learn at school.

### Strategies to use at home:

- Make sure the CYP has stopped what they are doing before giving an instruction.
- Many CYP with language comprehension difficulties are strong visual learners. Use visual support in the home wherever possible, (e.g. an instruction time line for the structure of the day, visual timetables, gestures, facial expression, written material with key words etc.) This will encourage the CYP's independence and confidence and support their developing language.
- Think about the difficulty of the words you are using (e.g. the CYP may not understand words like "before" and "after")
- Pause between chunks of information (e.g. "go and get your coat" **PAUSE** "go and get your P.E. kit" **PAUSE** "go and wait in the car")
- Give instructions in the order you want the CYP to follow them (e.g. "brush your teeth...then go to bed" **NOT** "before you go to bed brush your teeth")
- Give the CYP time to think about the instruction

- Check that the CYP has understood the instruction (i.e. ask what they need to do). Be aware of the language you are using with the CYP and think about how you could simplify it when you need to. Complex and/or longer material will be harder for the CYP to follow
- Encourage the CYP to ask questions if they have not understood
- It will be helpful to teach the CYP a strategy for indicating that they have not understood. Some CYP may not always be aware that they have not understood and will need to work on this. Many CYP are very reluctant to say that they don't understand. Encourage them to use an agreed signal when they need help
- If the CYP does not understand the instruction first time, repeat it. This will allow time for the CYP to process the material. If they still do not understand and you consider that they have had enough time to process the instruction, rephrase it, using as simple language as possible
- If the CYP is unable to understand then repeat the instruction while you help them to carry out the task
- Learn to watch for the signs that the CYP does not understand. They may stop paying attention or listening, or their behaviour might deteriorate.
- When helping the CYP with homework check that they understand the words and what to do. It may help to write down instructions one at a time as you discuss them.

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

[walsall.slt@nhs.net](mailto:walsall.slt@nhs.net)

In the subject line please state **FAO the Virtual School SLCN Support** to ensure that your message is actioned by the relevant team.