

## WHY IS COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILD SO IMPORTANT?

Children are constantly learning about the world so communicating with them helps them to **build their vocabulary** and aid their **understanding** of the world.

Children learn new words through **hearing them** in naturalistic everyday settings. This means it is helpful for your child to learn new words in the home environment.

Techniques can be easily incorporated in **conversations** and **everyday routines** to support their language development and to understand the meaning of words.

### Creating a supportive home environment:

- Remove any **distractions**
- Ensure there is time **without disruptions** for you and your child
- Talk at an appropriate **speed**
- **Ask questions** and encourage your child to speak by providing opportunities as frequently as possible

This handout provides simple and easy ideas which parents and carers can incorporate into daily routines. There are lots of opportunities in everyday settings to have conversations with your child which help to build their vocabulary and improve their language development.

**Bath time** If your child says “duck” or points to a toy, you can help by responding with “Yes, that is your duck. Where else have you seen ducks before? What noise do ducks make?”. This is effective as it is encouraging the child to **engage in a conversation** and therefore become familiar with using new words.

**Getting Dressed** Picking out clothes together and describing what your child is doing whilst getting dressed helps with their **vocabulary** and also **sequencing**. For example, “can you choose a top that is pink and then your jumper”. This is checking your child is understanding what you’ve said and can respond in the right order.

**Mealtimes** Offer choices for your child such as “What do you want to drink? Milk or juice” this exposes them to vocabulary and gives an easy opportunity to practice the word they just heard. Also, you could ask your child to identify by descriptions such as ‘Find something orange long and crunchy’ this aids their understanding of vocabulary.

