

Sound Play

Why should we play with sounds?

Playing with sounds is an important part of your child's speech and language development. It allows your child to practise the movements used to produce the different speech sounds in words.

Children learn speech sounds gradually. They may not say all of the sounds used within English until around the age of 6!

Top tips for sound play

- Position yourself so that you are at your child's level and they can see your face. This will help them to see how your mouth is moving when you say the sounds.
- Using a pram /buggy that faces towards you (rather than away from you) is a great time to talk to your child and play with sounds.
- You could also use a mirror so that your child can see their mouth moving when they are making the sounds.
- Use actions and/or facial expressions to keep it fun.
- Respond to your child's vocalisations e.g. by smiling or copying what they have said. Pause before responding to encourage taking turns to make sounds.
- Make silly sounds e.g. blow raspberries, pop your cheeks, smack your lips. Pause and see if your child will copy you.
- Play with babbling sounds e.g. bee-bee-bee, mumumum, ner ner ner.
- Point out and copy noises in your environment e.g. phones ringing (bring bring), sirens (nee nor), cars (beep beep), planes (vroom vroom), door bells (ding dong).
- Try to use the same sounds in everyday routines (e.g. 'mmm' when eating food). Repetition will help your child to learn and join in with the sounds.
- Use a range of pitch (high and low) and volume in your voice when making sounds.
- Singing songs is a great opportunity for sound play e.g. 'the wheels on the bus', 'old Macdonald had a farm' etc.

Sound play activities

You can make sounds more real and fun by attaching them to objects, actions or events. You could use the following noises when playing with toys:

- 'mmm' for a motorbike
- 'b b b' when bouncing a ball
- 'ch ch ch' for a train
- 'p p p' when popping bubbles
- 'nnn' for an aeroplane
- 'd d d' for a drum

Animals noises are also a good way to practise early sounds. For example:

- 'moo' for cow
- 'baa' for sheep
- 'oink' for pig
- 'woof' for dog
- 'meow' for cat
- 'neigh' for horse
- 'roar' for lion
- 'sss' for a snake
- 'eee' for a mouse
- 'ooo' for a monkey

There are lots of sounds you could practise within everyday situations. For example:

- 'mmm' when eating food
- 'sh sh sh' when filling up the bath with water
- 'glug glug' when the water goes down the plug hole
- 'tick tock' for a clock
- 'nee nah' when you hear an ambulance/police car
- 'brr brr' when the phone rings
- 'whee' when going down the slide
- 'uh oh' when you drop something

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