

### Practising Sounds in Sentences and Generalising

#### Top Tips

- These activities are for practising using sounds in sentences.
- The therapist will tell you which target sound(s) to practise and whether to practise at the beginning, in middle or at the ends of words.
- Take turns with your child. When it's your turn, occasionally say the wrong sound in the word and see if your child notices. This increases your child's awareness of the sound(s) in words.
- Give useful feedback about your child's productions: If your child produces the word(s) accurately, tell them (e.g. 'well done, you said X really clearly'). If there is an error, you could say, 'I heard X, can you try that one again?' or 'I don't think I heard the X sound, can you try that again?' If it is difficult, praise them for having a 'good try'.
- Focus on the specific sounds that the therapist has advised you to practise – there may be other sounds in the words that are 'tricky' but they may not be the focus of therapy at this stage.
- It takes time and effort to generalise new speech skills into conversation. If your child is thinking about the sounds, they are more likely to remember to use them. If they are concentrating on something else (e.g. a game or what they are trying to tell you), it is harder for them to remember and use their new sounds.
- Your child will need reminders to help them to use their new speech skills in everyday talking. It is not possible (or advised) to remind them every time they say a word/sound incorrectly.
- Structured talk time: Choose times of day when your child can specifically practise their new speech skills for up to 5 minutes (e.g. breakfast, bath time, during a calm game, story/reading time). Explain that you will be listening to their talking and encourage them to use their new sound(s). At the end, give them plenty of praise. Gradually, increase the number of times or length of time that this happens. This can help your child to remember their sounds more often.

- A reward chart can be a useful way of tracking how well they remember to use their sound(s). See if they can beat their score the next day!

### **Where to start?**

- Start by practising the words in a simple repetitive phrase/ sentence.
- Use 2-word phrases, e.g. big ..., little ..., more ..., funny ..., noisy..., smelly ..., good ..., old ..., new ..., heavy ..., eat ...
- Practise in short sentences, e.g. I can see ..., I want a ..., I want a big/little/old/new ..., Can I have ...?, I/Mummy/Santa/Superman bought a ..., I like/don't like the..., Where is my ...?, Put ... on the ..., Can you eat a ...?'
- As your child makes progress, increase the number of target words in each sentence.

### **Activity ideas**

#### **Silly sentences**

Choose some pictures and put them together to make a 'silly' sentence. You could swap the pictures to change the meaning of the sentence. You could put a counter or brick on each picture – your child wins the counter if they say the word accurately, and the other person wins the counter if the word is produced inaccurately.

#### **Think of a sentence**

Play a game where you have to 'win' a picture and make up a sentence using the word in the picture. You can use the games that were recommended for earlier stages of therapy (e.g. when your child was practising saying the sounds in single words).

#### **Memory games**

Play 'I went shopping and bought ...' (using the words that your child has been practising). One person starts by adding a word to the sentence. The next person has to repeat the sentence and add another item. Keep going until the list is too long to remember! Having the pictures on the table can be a useful way to remember the words in the sentence. You can change the sentence,

e.g. 'I went to the zoo and saw ...', 'I went for a walk and saw ...', 'On my way to school I saw ...', 'The monster ate ...', 'In my suitcase I packed ...'.

### **Once upon a time ...**

Spread the pictures face down on the table. Take turns to pick up 2 - 4 pictures and make a silly story using the words. Alternatively you could take turns to pick a picture and add them to a story until all of the pictures have been used, or until someone decides that a picture gives a good ending.

### **Giving instructions**

Tell each other where to put a picture (or an object), e.g. 'put the X in/on/under the box', 'hide the X in your pocket'.

### **Hide the spider**

Lay the pictures on the table. Draw a spider on a piece of paper. Take it in turns to hide the spider under a picture whilst the other person shuts their eyes. The person opens their eyes and has to ask 'is it under the ...?'. They turn the picture over to see if the spider is there. If it's not there, they ask if it's under another picture. When the spider is found, that picture is taken away. The game ends when there is only 1 picture left.

### **Add on**

Start with a short sentence. Take turns to repeat it and add words (e.g. the bear, the big bear, the big scary bear, the big scary bear is running, the big scary bear is running after me).

### **Musical pictures**

Lay some pictures face down on the floor. Play some music for your child to dance to. When the music stops, they have to jump on a picture, turn it over and say a sentence using the word.

### **Songs and rhymes**

Saying songs and rhymes that contain the sound(s) that your child has been learning are a good way of practising.

### **Story books**

If you would like this leaflet in large print, audio, Braille or in a different language, please contact your health professional

## Children's Speech and Language Therapy

Using books that contain words with the sound(s) that your child has been learning is another good way of practising. Once your child is familiar with the story, they can say the phrases/sentences that contain the word(s) that they need to practise.

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