

## Chatting with children, helping them learn



### Back and forth interaction

- Respond to your child's babbles and interests – this shows you are joining in and helps them feel heard.
- Look at your child while talking – it shows you are interested and helps them stay engaged.
- Pause after speaking – this gives your child a chance to take their turn and learn how conversations work.

### Playing together

- Create a quiet, comfortable space to play – try turning off the TV, put your phone away, and help your child focus on you.
- Make play fun and engaging for both of you – choose a time when you feel positive and follow your child's mood and interest, whether it's five minutes or an hour.
- Explore different types of play – try messy play or visit your local Child and Family Centre for new experiences to talk about together.

### Singing songs and rhymes

- Sing to your child – they will love it, no matter what your voice sounds like.
- Add some simple actions or use some props – it makes singing even more fun.
- Join a rhyme-time session at your local library – you will learn new songs that will help develop your child's speech and language skills.

## Sharing books

- Cuddle up and talk about the pictures your child is interested in – this builds closeness and helps them learn about their world.
- Name new things your child hasn't seen before – this helps grow their vocabulary.
- Bring stories to life with voices and expressions – this makes reading fun and encourages a love of books.

## Daily routines

- Talk about what you're doing – your child will hear lots of new words and learn lots about their world.
- Explain what happens next at routine times, for example nappy times, bathtime, at the shops – this will help your child begin to anticipate and understand the routine.
- Repeat words often – you will help your child to learn to understand the meanings of the words linked to the routine.

## Dummy usage

- Dummies can help babies settle and soothe – especially in the early months.
- Try limiting dummy use to sleep times after six months – this will support your child's speech development.
- Using dummies less during the day – this gives your child more chances to babble and talk.

