

Why Should We Learn Words from a Child's Home Language?

What Are Core Words?

Core words are every day, useful words that children use to express what they want or need.

Example: 'More', 'Stop', 'Help', 'Eat', 'Play'

Why Home Language Matters

If a child is still learning English, they may use core words in their home language. Understanding these important words helps us support them better.

Tip: Ask parents to share key words their child uses at home - especially words linked to routines, emotions, and family traditions.

Working Together with Families

Partnering with parents to learn and use these words helps children feel:

- Welcome and understood.
- More independent and in control.
- More confident.

Let's talk! Try using the child's home language for greetings, routines, and comfort words.

How Core Words Support Development

Using familiar words helps children:

- Make an impact on their world.
- Feel good about accomplishing something.
- Build relationships with you, other members of staff and their peers.
- Increase their levels of self-esteem and independence.

Linked to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Need	Example words
Basic human needs	Mummy, Daddy, more, food, eat, drink, nappy, toilet, sleep, play, dirty, wash, clean sick, ill, hot, cold
Safety and security	Help, go, stop, wait, come, look, yes, no, again
Relationships	Hello, bye-bye, show me, happy, sad, please, thank you
Achievement	You did it! Done! Finished!

Try This: Use these words during play, snack time, and transitions to help children feel safe and understood.

Final Thought

Learning and using words from a child's home language isn't just about communication, it's about connection. It helps children feel seen, valued, and ready to thrive.