



## Speech Strategies

Parents can support their child's speech development by helping them to hear the correct sound (auditory discrimination) and to produce the sound on its own (isolation).

Activities that these supports can be provided in are:

- Auditory discrimination = Listening, book reading and singing
- Isolation = Singing, imitation and play

### **Listening**

- At home = Model the word using the correct sound (e.g. "tup" - "Would you like your cup"). Initially emphasise the error sound to help your child to hear the target clearly, before continuing to model the sound normally.
- In speech therapy = Listening activities called minimal pairs are completed with children who are making phonological errors to help them to understand their error and hear the correct sound. The task asks the child to listen and discriminate between two similar sounding words (e.g. back/bag, teal/seal, tub/cub). Through repetitive practise, children learn the difference between the sounds, and they start making attempts to use the correct production.
- Most children will learn to discriminate between the sounds just by listening to your correct models without further prompting or support.

### **Reading**

- Books provide fantastic exposure to sounds and they help children to develop their phonological awareness skills (ability to recognise and manipulate words and sentences).
- Many books include letter matching (e.g. "**b** is for **banana**"), alliteration (e.g. "the **buzzing bees** are **busy** in the **beehive**"), and rhyme (e.g. the **cat** in the **hat**) all of which provide lots of sound learning opportunities.
- <https://booksharetime.com/> is a website that can suggest books based on your target.

### **Singing**

- Many of the classic songs include rhyme. Rhyme is a building block skill for phonological awareness which supports children to develop their sound knowledge.
- Many songs also include "word games", where they either break down words into sounds (e.g. B-I-N-G-O) or substitute sounds in words (e.g. Apples and Bananas). These "games" further boost sound awareness.
- <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/service-speech-pathology-my-mouth-music/> is a website which contains songs which target specific sounds.

## **Imitation**

- Imitation is a crucial aspect in skill development, as it allows children to learn new things quickly and efficiently by watching those around them.
- Babies will imitate facial expressions, sounds, intonations and volumes to help them to start to understand words.
- Toddlers continue to use lots of imitation as a way for them to understand how the components of language fit together and to work out what it all means.
- How much a child imitates is linked with how much the parents imitate them.
- Create a turn taking game where you imitate your child and then extend the interaction by adding new sounds.
- If your toddler is having difficulties imitating the sound, Speech Sound Metaphors by Adventures in Speech Pathology provides sound prompts to help you to elicit the correct sound (Included on final page)

## **Play**

- Playing involves:
  - Back-and-forth exchanges (e.g. my turn, your turn)
  - Cause-and-effect relationships (e.g. build a tower up, it falls down)
  - Joint attention (when two people are focused on the same thing)
- All these elements support sound learning as it encourages verbal attempts and supports purposeful communication.
- Include environmental noises throughout play and help your child imitate the sounds (e.g. lion = roar, car = vroom, food = yum). These sounds will later develop into words.
- Model sounds or words and see what they will imitate (e.g. ball = "ball" or "b-b-b").

## **Tips for your child**

If you are having difficulties understanding your child, encourage them to:

- Slow down – Slowing their talking down gives them a greater chance of producing the sounds correctly.
- Be confident - Use a loud and strong voice
- Take a deep breath or think before you speak – Gives them a chance to think about the sounds they are trying to say.
- Look at the person they are talking to.
- If you are still having difficulties understanding their attempts, encourage them to use visuals (show you what they are talking about to get context) or help them to use gestures to support their production.

## Suggested Activities

Sound	Books	Songs	Play
k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Come Down, Cat</li> <li>• Cat in the Hat</li> <li>• The Hungry Caterpillar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pat-a-Cake</li> <li>• Old King Cole</li> <li>• Three Little Kittens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ball game (catch, carry, kick)</li> <li>• Cooking (cook, cut)</li> <li>• Cars</li> </ul>
f	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hooray for Fish</li> <li>• Freddie and the Fairy</li> <li>• Finklehopper Frog</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shoo Fly</li> <li>• Five Little Monkeys</li> <li>• Five Finger Family</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farm play</li> <li>• Sensory play (feel)</li> <li>• Puppet feeding (Feed, food, fork)</li> </ul>
s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Squash and a Squeeze</li> <li>• Who Sank the Boat</li> <li>• Brown Bear, Brown Bear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Itsy Bitsy Spider</li> <li>• See-Saw</li> <li>• Skip to My Lou</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I spy (spy, see)</li> <li>• Doctors &amp; Nurses (sick, sore)</li> <li>• Memory game (same)</li> </ul>
sh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where is the Green Sheep</li> <li>• Sharing a Shell</li> <li>• Shark in the Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rock-a-Bye Your Bear</li> <li>• The Shimmie Shake</li> <li>• Shake Your Sillies Out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beach play (shells, shark, shore, ship)</li> <li>• Shape sorter</li> <li>• Baby Bath (shampoo, wash, shoes, shirts)</li> </ul>
l	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too Loud Lily</li> <li>• The Bad-Tempered Ladybird</li> <li>• Koalas Eat Gum Leaves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ladybug, Ladybug</li> <li>• Lucy Locket</li> <li>• Mary Had a Little Lamb</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hide and Seek (look)</li> <li>• Tea Party (lunch, like)</li> <li>• Tasting game (lick)</li> </ul>