



## VERBAL SKILLS

Children develop skills at different rates, but by 3 years usually children will have developed the following plus other early communication skills:

- Listen to and remember simple stories with pictures.
- Understand longer instructions, such as 'make teddy jump' or 'where's mummy's coat?'
- Understand simple 'who', 'what' and 'where' questions.
- Put 4 or 5 words together to make short sentences, such as 'want more juice' or 'he took my ball'.
- Ask lots of questions. They will want to find out the name of things and learn new words.
- They sometimes sound as if they are stammering or stuttering. They are usually trying to share their ideas before their language skills are ready. This is perfectly normal, just show you are listening and give them plenty of time.



### How to Support Your Child

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### Things to look out for

For some children, developing communication skills can be very difficult. It is important to seek advice if:

- Your child points or shows what they want rather than says it.
- They only say single words instead of joining words together into short sentences.
- They are slow to respond to your instructions.
- They rely on being shown what to do rather than being told.
- You cannot understand most of what they say.

- Adding words to children's sentences can show how words fit together. For example, if your child says 'dolly hair' you can say 'brush dolly's hair'.
- Often children enjoy helping. Sharing daily jobs gives a chance to talk about objects and actions.
- Use puppets and pictures to help children listen to stories. Don't be afraid to tell a story more than once. Repetition helps children to understand and remember words.
- Give your child the correct example for sounds and words. This helps if they are having problems saying a certain word or sound. If you correct them or make them say it again, you can make them feel anxious. Simply repeat what they have said using the right words and sounds. With time they will be able to do it themselves.

