

Speech Sounds – Parent/Carer Advice Sheet

As part of typical development children learn to say different sounds at different time (see expected ages of speech sounds below). All children develop differently but a rough guide is that by the age of 6 years a child can produce all sounds clearly. Some children learn to say sounds at a slower rate (Speech delay) and some children learn to say sounds in a different order than is expected (Speech disorder). Both speech delays and disorders can affect the child's ability to make themselves understood.

Expected ages of speech sounds

1 ½ - 2 years: m n p b t d w

2 - 2 ½ years: plus h – ng

2 ½ - 3 years: plus f s y

3 - 3 ½ years: plus k g sh ch l

3 ½ - 4 ½ years: plus j v z

4 ½ years +: plus th r

Strategies to aid children's speech sounds

- Repetition and modelling

Repeat back the word as it should be said. Don't correct the child but give an opportunity for him/her to hear how the word is said.

E.g. **Child:** "Tup"

Adult: "Yes, it's a *cup*"

Children need to hear how a word is said again and again so provide plenty of opportunities for this.

E.g. **Child:** "Where my *dock*?"

Adult: "Where's your *sock*? Here's your *sock*. You wear a *sock* on your foot. Look at your red *sock*. My *sock* is black."

- Emphasise sounds

Emphasise the correct sound using simple clear speech.

Sometimes children talk too quickly - model how they should talk by slowing your speech stressing the correct sounds. Some children find it helpful to see the key sound written down. Draw attention to the key sound when reading stories.

- Praise

Praise the child explaining why he / she has done well

Eg. 'I like your 'sss' sound at the beginning of that word'

- Mime and Gesture

If the child finds it difficult to get his/her message across, encourage him /her to show you, use gesture etc.

Ask questions to clarify eg 'Are you talking about ...?'

- Sound Awareness Skills

Some children also have difficulties with literacy skills and will benefit from work on sound awareness skills. This could involve working on any or all of the following:

Syllable structure e.g. elephant = e-le-phant = 3 claps/3 syllables

Identifying initial sounds

Listening for sounds in the middle and end of words

Rhyme e.g. hat sounds like cat

Blending sounds the sounds e.g. s+e= see

Listening for the difference between sounds (discrimination) e.g. bat bs pat

Useful websites and resources

www.talkingpoint.org.uk
