

Making Sounds Meaningful

Children learn best through **repetition, play, and meaningful interaction**. By consistently modelling sounds and giving them purpose, adults help children understand that communication is powerful and rewarding.

Children need to learn that sounds are meaningful and play an important role in communication. Sounds are not just for enjoyment—they help children express their needs and wishes and connect with others.

Developing Meaning from Babble

- Gradually give meaning to children's babbling by linking it to real words.
 - For example, if a child says "ba," model the word "ball."
- Introduce words that match the sounds the child is already making.
- Accept all early attempts at words to build confidence and motivation.

Encouraging Vocalisation

- Place greater emphasis on **sounds rather than gestures**.
- Avoid immediately responding to gestures without encouraging a sound.
- Model the sound clearly and give the child time to copy.
- Reward vocal attempts by responding quickly and positively when the child uses sound to communicate.

Using Sounds in Play

Animal Sounds

- Pair animal names with their sounds:
 - "The cow goes *moo*"
 - "The dog says *woof*"

Sound Effects

- Use sounds during play to make it engaging and meaningful:
 - "Bang bang" (hammering)
 - "Splish splash" (water play)
 - "Shhh" (putting teddy to bed)
- Encourage the child to copy and join in.

Using Intonation and Emotional Sounds

- Introduce sounds linked to feelings and situations:
 - “Aaah” (cuddling)
 - “Oh dear” (something dropped)
 - “Uh-oh” (anticipation)

Music and Instrument Sounds

- Associate sounds with instruments:
 - Trumpet: “oompah oompah”
 - Triangle: “ting-a-ling”

Interactive Games and Routines

Giving and Taking Games

- Use simple turn-taking games (rolling a ball, passing objects).
- Model simple words like:
 - “Ta” or “thank you”
- Encourage the child to imitate.

Posting Games

- Use repetitive phrases such as:
 - “All gone” when an object is dropped into a box

Songs and Rhymes

- Play familiar games like:
 - Peek-a-boo
 - “Round and Round the Garden”
- Pause before the final word to encourage the child to fill the gap.