

## Tips to develop your child's language skills

**Spend a lot of time communicating with your child**, even during infancy! talk, sing, and encourage imitation of sounds and gestures! Avoid 'baby talk'! Always use **real words** with your child!



### Talk!

- Give detailed **descriptions** of what you or the child is seeing or doing
- **Comment on daily routines** like hand washing, eating, on objects or events
- **Talk while demonstrating** the different ways an object may be used
- During playtime or mealtimes, introduce **new vocabulary** by explaining what new words mean and using them in different contexts Name **foods** at the grocery store, or in your kitchen
- Explain **what you're doing** as you cook a meal or clean a room or plant flowers in your yard
- Talk about what you have **already done** (a trip, a visit, a movie seen, a party) and **ask questions** about these
- Point out **objects** around the house, your garden or the Mall
- As you drive, point out **sounds** you hear



### Read!

Read to your child daily!

- Use an **expressive, animated voice** when reading. If appropriate, use voices for the characters and imitate sounds or facial expressions
- Always discuss what the characters of the story are doing
- Ask **questions** ("Who", "What", "When", "Where", "Why", and "How" questions).
- For new words, say the word to the child and ask him/her to repeat it
- **Define** new words or provide **synonyms** for new words



## Sing!

Singing develops vocabulary and teaches the rhythm of language!

- Sing simple songs with gestures and have children act out parts of the song that involve body movements ('The wheels on the bus' or 'Twinkle, twinkle little star')
- When singing well-known songs, pause to let children fill in the blanks (e.g., "Twinkle, twinkle, little....")



## Which is the best way to become Bilingual?

There are a number of ways to teach children to speak more than one language. You can do the following:

- **Use two languages from the start.** Many children grow up learning two languages at the same time. Each parent can speak the dominant language (if different nationalities)
- **Use only one language at home.** As a parent, you should **always speak your native language to your child.** This way, you can ensure that the native language will be learned correctly. Your child can learn the second language when he or she starts school.

### And some final tips:

**Limit television and computer game time!** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children younger than 2 not watch television at all, and that 2 years and older should view no more than two hours of quality programming a day!

**Treat Ear Infections thoroughly!** Children of these ages are more prone to ear infections which can put them at **risk for temporary hearing loss and, consequently, speech and language delays.** Follow your pediatrician's prescribed antibiotic treatment closely and follow up with your doctor to make sure the infection has cleared!

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