



Pathways to Success

Helpful Strategies for Parents and Caregivers of Young Children

Language Development

Parents and educators can help to support children's language abilities by **modelling** the sounds or word approximations they are making, **expanding** on children's comments, and using **self talk** or **parallel talk** throughout the day.

Try these ideas and watch how your child's language abilities develop.

- **Modelling** means to repeat the child's comment and add a few words.
For example, if your child says, "ba...ba." You can model, "Ball! Roll the ball!"
- **Expansion** means to add information to a child's comment.
For example, if your child says, "baba!" You can add information to his comment and say, "More bubbles? Here come the bubbles! Pop the bubbles!"
- **Self Talk** means to talk about what you are doing as you are doing it.
For example, as you are baking a cake, say things like: "Let's pour the flour in, now let's pour the sugar in, let's mix, mix, mix! Let's pour the milk in..."
- **Parallel Talk** means to talk about what the child is doing while involved in an activity.
For example, as a child plays with trucks, parallel talk can include comments such as, "You picked the red truck! The truck is going up the slide! Oops, it fell down! Let's try again!"

Be sure to get down to the child's level, talking face to face to allow you to better read facial expressions. And don't forget to pause and wait for a response! Try counting to five slowly in your head after asking a question.