



# TALK MORE!

Tune in to what interests your child and use lots of descriptive words to increase his vocabulary.

Use lots of loving words to grow a healthy brain!

Talk, read, and sing with your baby every day!

## *WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?*

*In order for your child to develop age appropriate Listening, Language, Speech, and Literacy skills, your child must hear 20,000-30,000 words every day!*



## Narration

**Self Talk.** When you're making that first cup of coffee in the morning, talk through each step! "Mommy can't wait for her coffee this morning! Mommy is opening the cabinet to get her favorite coffee mug. Mommy needs some water, turn it on! Do you hear that? Do you hear the water?"

**Parallel Talk.** When baby is lying in her crib, looking up at the zebra on her mobile, describe to her what she is doing, what she is seeing, and how she is feeling. "You're relaxing in your crib, aren't you? You're lying comfy on your back looking up at the zebra on your mobile. He is hanging there, smiling down at you!"

**Expansion.** When baby reaches for the car and says, "vroom, vroom," you respond with, "You want the car, don't you? Cars go "vroom, vroom!" They can move fast!"

**Serve and Return.** When your child makes a vocalization, whether it's a phrase, a word, a coo, or a gesture, respond to her and keep the conversation going. Strive for five back and forth turns and be your child's conversational partner!

**Use big words!** Don't be afraid of "Tier 2" words. Call a car without a top a "convertible." Call a helicopter with two rotors a "chinook."

**Use your home language!** Use the language you're most comfortable with to build strong language skills.

Check out what Georgia's Department of Public Health says about Talk More! at [talkwithmebaby.org](http://talkwithmebaby.org)



<sup>1</sup> Hart, Betty, and Todd R. Risley. Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children. Paul H Brookes Publishing, 1995.



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# LIGHT UP THE BRAIN!

We hear with our brain. The ears are simply the doorway to the brain. A child who is deaf or hard of hearing has a doorway problem. Hearing aids and/or cochlear implants break through the doorway to allow sound to reach the brain.

## *WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?*

*It is important for a child to wear her hearing technology to hear the 20,000-30,000 words each day she needs to achieve age appropriate Listening, Language, Speech, and Literacy milestones.!*



As human beings, we are hard wired to connect with others through communication. But... we must activate the brain.

We do this by opening the doorways to the brain and bathing it with our loving words.

A child needs to wear her Hearing Technology during all waking hours (10-12 hours a day). This should be established immediately (1-2 weeks) after technology is fit.

### Get into a “Hearing Technology” Routine.

Sample:

7:00 am	Baby wakes up (take aids out of dry aid kit and put into baby's ears)
10:00 am	Baby goes down for nap (put aids in dry aid kit)
11:00 am	Baby wakes up (put aids in baby's ears)
3:30 pm	Baby goes down for nap (put aids into dry aid kit)
4:30 pm	Baby wakes up (put aids in baby's ears)
6:00 pm	Bath time (put aids in designated box on bathroom counter)
6:15 pm	Bath time over (put aids in baby's ears)
7:30 pm	Baby goes down for the night (put aids in dry aid kit and turn kit on)

### What is your family's Hearing Technology Routine?

*Be sure to keep your child's Hearing Technology in working order.*

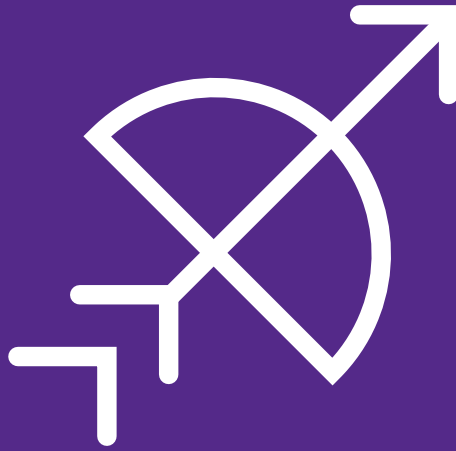
*Follow a recommended protocol for audiological assessment like the one found on the American Academy of Audiology's website:*

*[www.audiology.org/sites/default/files/publications/PediatricAmplificationGuidelines.pdf](http://www.audiology.org/sites/default/files/publications/PediatricAmplificationGuidelines.pdf)*

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# AIM HIGH!

What is the desired outcome for your child?

What language would you like him to use?

Who would you like him to be able to communicate with?

Where do you see him in the future?

When would you like to see your child reading?

Where we're headed tells us what we need to do today.

*WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?*

*Your belief in your child will drive his future outcomes.*



**A child with typical hearing learns one new word every 90 minutes!<sup>1</sup> That's 10 new words a day! A child who is deaf/hard of hearing, whose doorway to the brain has been opened (with appropriately fitted hearing technology), can too!**

Take a minute and think about it. What expectations do you have for your child?

At age 3, I would like my baby to be able to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

At age 9, I see my child \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When my child is 18, I can picture my teenager \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

As an adult, I can envision my son \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The following people can help my family ensure that my child reaches these goals: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Hall, Christopher J. An introduction to language and linguistics: breaking the language spell. A&C Black, 2005.



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# TUNE IN

Get into your child's world, get down on her level and see what she sees, participate in what she's doing.

Notice the significant, and the seemingly insignificant things, she notices.

Give her lots and lots of words to map onto what she is seeing, doing, and feeling.

## *WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?*

*Tuning in strengthens bonds, builds relationships, and keeps children motivated and engaged.*



- Baby brings you a truck. What do you do?—Tune in to his interest and talk about the truck! “Baby has a yellow dump truck! Look, the back moves up and down! Can you make the dump truck go? Look at the dump truck go!”
- Where does baby play?—Get down on the floor with her. Get close to her. When she touches your hair, talk about it, “Baby feels Mommy’s hair; it’s soft.” When she reaches for your nose, talk about it, “baby has Mommy’s nose; where is Baby’s nose?” and touch baby’s nose. When baby points her tiny fingers at your eyes, talk about it, “those are Mommy’s eyes. I can blink them!”
- Baby is in his stroller and looking at some boys kicking a soccer ball. What do you do?—Share your baby’s focus and give him words for what you’re both seeing. Say something like, “The boys are kicking a ball. They are playing soccer. Doesn’t that look fun!”
- Be careful... don’t become a “label maker.” A “label maker” names everything in baby’s environment with one word. One word labels lack meaning. Babies learn by hearing words over and over again in meaningful conversations.



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# I HEAR THAT!

Gain baby's attention and talk with him.

Always introduce the sound (say the word, shake the rattle, crinkle the paper, etc.) before you show the corresponding object.

Give baby words to make meaning from what he is hearing.

*WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?*

*This strategy shows baby that sound is meaningful!*



### Express to baby that sounds have meaning:

- When sitting on the front lawn, you hear a firetruck. Get baby's attention, point to your ear, and say, "Listen! A firetruck!" Pause and listen with baby. Say, "WOOooWOOoo! That firetruck was loud!" and then, "Mommy and Baby heard a firetruck!"
- While strolling through the zoo, you hear a loud, "ROAR!" Turn to baby with an excited look and ask, "What did you hear?!?" Pause, then say, "Daddy heard a lion! Did baby hear the lion too?"
- Get the water running in the tub. Bring baby to the doorway and cue him to listen, "Do you hear the water? It's time for a bath!" Then let baby see and feel the water running from the spout.

### Say It, then Show It...

- Start singing "Little Bunny Foo Foo" before you show bunny fingers on your hands.
- When reading "Brown Bear, Brown Bear," talk about what baby will see on the next page before you turn it.
- Talk about baby's favorite blue teddy bear before you pull it from behind your back and kiss baby with it!



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# ONE STEP AHEAD

Always know where your child is headed. Stay 'One Step Ahead' of where your baby is listening and talking. Offer her language that is just above where she is performing.

What ARE age appropriate Listening, Language, Speech, and Literacy milestones?

## *WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?*

*Staying one step ahead gives your baby an achievable model that she will strive to imitate.*



There are lots of great resources out there to guide you (CDC, GELDS)! Ask your Listening and Spoken Language professional to help you find one!

Where is your child performing?

Always communicate with baby 'One Step Ahead' (6 months to one year) of where baby is performing. For example, if baby is using one to two word phrases to communicate, be sure that you are 'One Step Ahead' and using three to four word phrases and simple sentences that include lots of descriptive words while talking with her.

Check out the GELDS (Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards) at [www.gelds.decal.ga.gov](http://www.gelds.decal.ga.gov), or the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) at [cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones](http://cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones) for age-appropriate checklists to be sure your child is hitting age appropriate Listening, Language, Speech, and Literacy milestones.



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# WAIT!

Give your child plenty of time to process your request or message (up to 8 seconds). You may be surprised with what he comes back to you with! If he doesn't answer, he gets the idea that there is space reserved just for his response!

To let him know it's his turn, give him expectant looks, lean in, raise your eyebrows, tilt your head, and pause.

## *WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?*

*Waiting gives your child time to process what you have said and create his answer.*



- You ask your baby, “Where are your shoes?” You look at him with an expectant look, lean towards him, and pause... you’re very aware of two things: 1.) He is not going to answer you. 2.) He has no earthly idea where his shoes are. Despite this, you say to him, “Oh, here are Baby’s shoes! They were in Baby’s closet all along” and you take him to his shoes.
- It’s first thing in the morning, you take baby out of his crib and lay him gently on the changing table to get him a fresh diaper. As you’re changing him you ask, “How did you sleep little man?” You look at him, tilt your head and raise your eyebrows as you pause and wait. Then you respond for him, “You slept for 8 hours straight last night, I’d say you had a FANTASTIC night’s sleep!”
- Auditory Closure—When reading a familiar book, or when singing a familiar song, like “Five little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed”, or “Twinkle Twinkle”, leave off the ending of a line, pause and wait to see if baby can complete the line.
- Use another adult as a model—Ask baby, “Where would you like to go this afternoon? To the park or to the library?” Pause, wait, lean in. If no response, ask Daddy the same question. Let Daddy respond, “I’d like to go to the park.” Then ask baby again!



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# SING!

Babies love songs! Familiar songs and made up songs!

Singing is a whole brain activity that increases memory!<sup>1</sup>

Singing is a pre-literacy activity!<sup>2</sup> It exposes children to rhyme and rhythm which are important for reading! It also develops self-expression<sup>3</sup>, auditory<sup>4</sup> and physical<sup>5</sup> awareness skills.

Using sing-song speech<sup>6</sup>, Parentese, makes language more interesting and easier to hear.



## Sing Familiar Songs

Pull out your favorites and sing! “Twinkle, Twinkle”, “Mary Had a Little Lamb”, “The Wheels on the Bus”, what else?

## Make Up New Songs

Time for Bed (to the tune of “The Farmer in the Dell”)

It's time to go to bed, It's time to go to bed,  
Baby, Me, and Daddy three, It's time to go to bed.

## Try This!

- Use Parentese, that repetitive, exaggerate, sing-sing speech, when talking with your baby! Like this, “How is my little, bitty sweet snuggly munch-kin?” OR when baby doesn't seem to hear her name, try Parentese, “BAAAAAAAbbbbiieeeee.”
- When baby doesn't pick out a key word in a sentence, acoustically highlight it, “Help Mommy find the blue bowl?”, “**The blue bowl**”, “You helped Mommy find the **blue bowl**! Thank you!”
- Try Auditory Closure—Start singing a song with which baby is very familiar. Stop before the last word... can baby fill it in?

<sup>1</sup> Vinoo Alluri, Petri Toiviainen, Iiro P. Jääskeläinen, Enrico Glerean, Mikko Sams, Elvira Brattico, *Large-scale brain networks emerge from dynamic processing of musical timbre, key and rhythm*, *NeuroImage*, Volume 59, Issue 4, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> “The effects of an early intervention music curriculum on prereading/writing.” *Journal of Music therapy* 38.3 (2001): 239-248.

<sup>3</sup> Hoskins, Carla. “Use of music to increase verbal response and improve expressive language abilities of preschool language delayed children.” *Journal of Music Therapy* 25.2 (1988): 73-84.

<sup>4</sup> Putkinen, Vesa, Katri Saarikivi, and Mari Tervaniemi. “Do informal musical activities shape auditory skill development in preschool-age children?” *Frontiers in psychology* 4 (2013).

<sup>5</sup> Venetsanou, Fotini, and Antonis Kambas. “Environmental factors affecting preschoolers' motor development.” *Early Childhood Education Journal* 37.4 (2010): 319-327.

<sup>6</sup> Leong, Victoria, et al. “The Temporal Modulation Structure of Infant-Directed Speech.” *Open Mind* (2017).



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# READ!

The MOST important thing we can do to prepare our children for reading and learning is to read aloud to them.<sup>1</sup>

More parent-child conversation occurs during read alouds than during any other activity.<sup>1</sup>

It's NEVER too early or too late to read to your child.<sup>2,3</sup>

Exposure to storybooks is the biggest factor in a preschooler's vocabulary (twice as many new words).<sup>4</sup>



**Reading is key for language and social-emotional development.  
Reading is a great way to bond with a child.  
Put him on your lap, get comfy, and read!**

Expose your child to fiction books, non-fiction books, picture books, ABC books, books that rhyme, books that have flaps, water-proof books, poetry, fairy tales, ANYTHING with printed words.

It may get boring for you to read the same book day after day... but it's so good for your baby! She gets to hear all of that rich language over and over, cementing language patterns and vocabulary in that growing brain!

Make an experience book! Make your own book! This is a book of pictures you cut from magazines or you take with your camera. These can be photos of your baby's favorite foods, family members, places she visits, or animals she saw on the family's last visit to the zoo! Look at the pictures and "read."

Link past experiences to events that happen in books. If you're reading a book about hay rides, help your child to remember that time that you went on a hayride at the Fall Festival last month.

Read aloud at least 20 minutes each and every day! It doesn't have to be all at once, feel free to break it up throughout the day.

On long car rides, play familiar recorded books.

Just as important as reading books, is telling stories! Share stories over the dinner table, reminisce about things that have happened in the near, and not so near past! Families who share stories have children with higher levels of well-being!<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Blakemore, Caroline, and Barbara Weston-Ramirez. *Baby Read-aloud Basics: Fun and Interactive Ways to Help Your Little One Discover the World of Words*. AMACOM Div American Mgmt Assn, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> DeCasper, Anthony J., and Melanie J. Spence. "Prenatal maternal speech influences newborns' perception of speech sounds." *Infant behavior and Development* 9.2 (1986): 133-150.

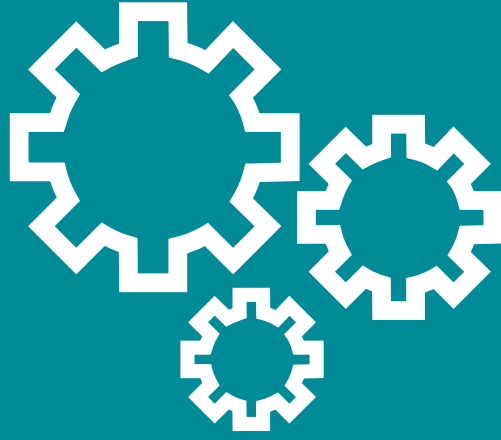
<sup>3</sup> Trelease, Jim. *The read-aloud handbook*. Penguin, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Massaro, Dominic W. "Reading aloud to children: Benefits and implications for acquiring literacy before schooling begins." *American Journal of Psychology* 130.1 (2017): 63-72.

<sup>5</sup> Bohanek, J. G., Fivush, R., Zaman, W., Lepore, C. E., Merchant, S., & Duke, M. P. (2009). Narrative interaction in family dinnertime conversations. *Merrill-Palmer quarterly* (Wayne State University. Press), 55(4), 488.



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# MAKE IT EASIER

There are lots of tricks and tools we can use to make listening easier for our children who are deaf/hard of hearing.

Distance and noise are the toughest hurdles for our children.



**Get Close**—If you can answer yes to both of these questions, you're on the right track! You're in the perfect position for your baby to hear each and every loving word you say to her!

1. Is your baby wearing his hearing technology?
2. Can you reach your baby?

Use remote microphone technology to make your voice easier to hear.

**Get Quiet**—In addition to the speaker, what do you hear? Can you turn it off? If so, do it!

- Run the dishwasher overnight when everyone is asleep.
- Do the laundry while baby naps.
- Turn the TV off and get down on the floor with baby and play.
- Turn the car radio off and sing your best “Twinkle, Twinkle”!

**Closed Set Questions**—Change your question into one that has a smaller set of answers.

- Open Set: What color would you like?
- Closed Set: Would you like blue or red?

**Acoustic Highlighting**—emphasize the sound or word that the child is missing.

**Whisper**—this makes hearing the consonants easier.

**Sing**—the variations in pitch and intonation make hearing sounds and words easier. The repetition of words makes them easier to hear.

**Give Clues**—give the category, then the color, then the sound it makes, then a word it rhymes with, then name an opposite... until the child comes up with the answer.

**The speaker can improve the saliency of her message by 40% by:**

- Using a slower rate (aim for 124 wpm... like Mr. Rogers)
- Pausing
- Using clear speech
- Making contractions audible
- Using sentences that are grammatically correct
- Using sing-song speech, Parentese



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