



How to support children with Language Disorder II

Building children's language ability is truly like planting a tree. It needs to be nurtured appropriately until it is established as a sapling. The following are some guidelines that we have to pay attention to before the start of language training.

Create a well-arranged environment

Calm and neat environment can reduce distraction. Turn off television and mobile phone before we begin the training.

Praise positive behaviour

Parents should acknowledge the children's effort during training. Parents can make good use of simple games such as rock-paper-scissors or playing cards in order to reinforce children's active participation during training.

Give more time for your child to respond

Parents should give more time for children to respond. Observe their reactions. If they do not understand what you say, you may help them by giving appropriate cues, repeating or rephrasing what you say, thereby facilitating their language learning.

Active involvement and participation

Parents can attract children's attention and interaction by using slightly exaggerated tones or making interesting body movement. Most importantly, parents' active involvement during the activity is indispensable to make the children learn from you.



Suggestions for improving children's language skills

Parents can improve children's verbal language ability through a variety of daily activities and games. The following are some practical tips to improve children's language development:

A. Vocabulary

- ✧ Use precise vocabulary when talking to children in order to expand their vocabulary repertoire. For example, you may say, "fix the window wipers" instead of saying "fix these".
- ✧ Encourage children to raise questions about the meaning of word, e.g. "What does fix mean?"
- ✧ Encourage children to tell you what they see no matter they are at home or go out with you.
- ✧ Play vocabulary games with children. Parents start off by saying a word (e.g. apple) and ask the children to think of a word that belongs to the same category (e.g. orange). Take turns to do so until the list runs out.

B. Sentence

- ✧ Depends on the language ability of children, you may use more complicated sentences to talk to them

e.g. Instead of saying "Your grandma is going to the doctor."

You may say:

"I am going to take your Grandma to the doctor at Mongkok tomorrow."

"When you are having your swimming class tomorrow, I will take your Grandma to the doctor."



✧ Play a silly sentence game. Here are the steps:

i) Say a silly sentence, e.g. "I am *drinking* an apple."

ii) Ask children to correct the sentence and see if they get it right.

iii) Ask children to make a "silly" sentence for you.

✧ Provide more opportunities for children to listen to complicated commands in the daily life.

e.g. "Please tidy up your toys first. Then bring me the magazine on the dining table. After finishing all these, you can have your orange juice."

✧ Encourage children to use different kinds of connectives in daily conversation.

Some examples:

Cause and Effect: "because", "so", "therefore"

Contrast: "however", "but"

Addition: "and", "also"

Sequencing: "firstly", "then", "afterwards", "finally"

✧ Ask "If...then..." questions to enhance children's thinking and problem solving skills.

e.g. "What will you do if there is no more food in the refrigerator?"

"What shall mommy do if mommy loses my wallet?"

You may ask children to use conditional sentences to respond to your questions by using a sentence completion cue e.g. "If there is no..."



C. Narrative skills

- ✧ Ask questions that require explanations of details or require children to tell sequences.

e.g. *"Why is it not good to watch TV while doing homework?"*

"How to play hide-and-seek?"

- ✧ Spend at least 10 minutes every day to talk to your children. You may ask:

"How was your day?"

"What games did you play at school?"

"Who made you smile today?"

"Who is your best friend and why?"

You may also share with them how your day was as well.

- ✧ Develop a "READING HABIT" in the children

Choose books that are funny and enjoyable. While reading the books with them, you may ask questions like:

"Guess what is going to happen next?"

"What is he thinking? Why do you think so?"

"How does he feels? Why do you think so?"

- ✧ Create stories with them by playing "Add-On Stories". Here are the steps.

- One person starts a story (e.g. Yesterday, I went to the beach...)
- Each person takes turns to continue the story.
- Keep on doing so until the story comes to an end.



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