

# Early Years Advice and Guidance: Communication and Interaction

## Useful Links

**Universally Speaking** : [tct\\_univspeak\\_0-5.pdf](https://tct.univspeak_0-5.pdf) ([thecommunicationtrust.org.uk](https://thecommunicationtrust.org.uk))

**Small Talk**: <https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/professionals/tct-resources/>

**Top Tips**: <https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/professionals/tct-resources/>

**Listen Up**: <https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/professionals/tct-resources/>

**How children develop Speech and Language skills**:  
<https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/professionals/tct-resources/>

**I CAN's Talking Point**: <https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/>

**Hungry Little Minds**: <https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk>

**Gateshead Local Offer**: <https://gateshead-localoffer.org/>

If you have any concerns about speech, language and communication you should contact speech and language therapy.

QE Gateshead Children's SLT page: <https://www.qegateshead.nhs.uk/node/1541>



Communication is not just about talking; children need to develop a range of skills. They will need a variety of language rich opportunities to become a competent and effective communicator.



Children who have speech and language difficulties may have more difficulties than other children of the same age:

### Speech

'Jumbled' speech	'dun' for 'sun'
Difficult to understand the child	Show frustration when not understood and they may be reluctant to talk to friends and adults
Difficulty producing sounds	
Sounds are substituted in words e.g.	

### Using Words and Sentences

Poor vocabulary development	Difficulty finding the right words
Difficulty joining words together	Over-use of learnt and repetitive phrases e.g. here you go, there you are
Difficulty putting words in the right order	

## Understanding Words and Sentences

- Difficulty following spoken instructions
- Needs the adult to give lots of extra help to follow instructions e.g. pointing
- Difficulty responding to a question
- Might struggle to follow rules and routines
- Watches other children and follows what they are doing to help understanding

## Attention and Listening

- Fleeting interest in play and moves around areas quickly
- Difficulty sharing attention to an activity with an adult
- Difficulty moving their attention from play to listen to language

## Social interaction and Play

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| Lack of eye contact                          | Unusual tone of voice or volume  |
| Difficulty in making their needs known       | Majority of communication is through gesture and action e.g. pulling the adult by the hand, handing objects to the adult |
| Difficulty building relationships with peers |  |

## Supporting Speech and Language – Ten Top Tips

1. Gain the child's attention by moving face to face and saying their name **before** giving an instruction, making a comment
2. Use simple language and break down instructions into small chunks
3. Use gestures and provide objects, images and visuals to maintain a shared focus and support understanding
4. Give plenty of time for the child to process information and respond
5. Model language by using simple sentences and talking about what the child is doing
6. Repeat back the words a child mispronounces so they hear good examples
7. Follow the child's interests and their lead in play by copying their actions and sounds
8. Create a reason and opportunity for the child to communicate e.g. STOP and WAIT for them to indicate they want more of something enjoyable or hold objects within their view but out of reach
9. Hold objects at face level to encourage eye contact
10. Offer choices with objects e.g. "book or bubbles" – even when you know what they want!