

Is your child listening?

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Tips for increasing your child's vocabulary:

- Change the language of your daily routine. For example, instead of saying "It's time to clean up," try to introduce other words that help describe this routine, such as organize, collate, and arrange.
- Bond with your child through language. Do this by having conversations during car rides about where you are going, and what you are seeing along the way. Other examples include talking about things that float while washing dishes, and seasonal words while raking leaves.
- Tell your child about your day, different people you encountered, funny things that happened, and anything interesting that might have happened.
- Play board games such as 20 Questions, Scrabble, Password, and Pictionary.

Protect Your Child's Hearing:

- Limit your child's exposure and close proximity to very loud noises for sustained periods of time (more than a minute). Some examples are lawn mowers, hair dryers, fireworks, motorcycles, engines, instruments, and music. Listening to loud sounds for sustained periods of time can cause noise induced hearing loss. Read the decibel level when purchasing appliances and machines, and have your child use ear protection if the decibel level is over eighty five. Have your child's hearing tested if you suspect a hearing loss.

Teaching Your Child Good Listening Skills

- Encourage good listening skills by establishing a purpose for the communication, always have good eye-contact, and try to speak about an interesting topic. Try not to stop what is being said for interruptions unless there is a question about it. Offer both nonverbal and verbal responses, divide listening and talking roles. Ask your child to repeat what you have already talked about, but do so without drilling.

Auditory Processing tips:

- **What is auditory processing?**
- Auditory processing is the ability to take in and make sense of individual speech sounds rapidly and efficiently enough to comprehend spoken language.

- **What are the symptoms of possible auditory processing difficulty?**
- Children with auditory processing difficulty typically have normal hearing and intelligence. Symptoms include:
 - having trouble paying attention to and remembering information presented orally
 - having trouble following multistep directions
 - having poor listening skills
 - needing more time to process information
 - having trouble developing vocabulary and understanding language

Protect Your Child's Voice:

- Don't allow your child to engage in prolonged yelling, screaming, cheering, or singing. Have them avoid talking over loud machines, motors, music, or even people. Seek a medical evaluation by an ENT if your child has frequent laryngitis, or has a consistently hoarse voice.

Cooking With Kids:

- A great speech home activity is cooking or baking with your kids. Following a recipe is great for practicing following oral directions, remembering, and sequencing. Children will also be practicing thinking ahead, organizing, and following through.

Playing games:

- Playing games such as Scrabble, Charades, Twenty Questions, Memory, Outburst Junior, and Predicting Outcomes will assist your child in becoming more confident in his or her ability to communicate thoughts, ideas, and opinions. Problem solving skills and social skills are also strengthened during family game fun.

Language in the home:

- Your language is the model for your child's speech and language. Encourage conversations that are age appropriate and polite. Social graces such as "please" and "thank you" help your child gain respect in the classroom and in life.

Using the internet:

- A great **speech website** is Quia. Have your child click on a game and play it orally for articulation practice. The games include Matching, Concentration, Word Search, and Flashcards.