



READY TO LEARN EVERY DAY!



Speaking and Listening:
A short guide for parents



READY TO LEARN

NAHT and Family Action have based the advice in this leaflet on the latest research about what helps children to speak and listen well.

EVERY DAY!

Your child: speaking and listening



It is important to help your child with speaking and listening because:

- Your child's ability to speak and listen well will be a good foundation for their future learning
- If they are good speakers and listeners they will do better at reading and writing
- If they can communicate well with others, it will help them to make friends more easily
- They will become more independent and be able to learn about the world
- Your child will learn to express their feelings and not become frustrated so easily

At school younger children will learn to:

- Think about what they say and choose the right words
- Speak fluently and confidently
- Listen to instructions from the teacher
- Listen to their classmates before speaking and take turns



As they get older they will:

- Join in group discussions and make useful points
- Present to an audience, expressing their opinions clearly
- Take part in decision-making and debate
- Learn how language varies in different situations



Your child: what you can do to help

Put listening to your child first:

- Show your child how to be a good listener by listening to them and others
- Be patient: don't interrupt or finish their sentences for them
- Give your child your attention: don't check your mobile phone at the same time as they are talking to you
- Show you're listening: ask questions about what they say, ask their opinions
- Listen to your child reading aloud regularly

Be a clear speaker:

- Speak confidently, using the right words and set an example by talking in full sentences
- If English is not your first language, the most important thing is that you speak your own language confidently and well
- Use clear, simple directions for tasks and behaviours
- When your child follows directions, show you notice: praise them for listening to you



Get involved every day:

- Discuss their day with them when you see them after school
- Try to have a family meal together as often as possible
- Encourage your child to talk about their views and interests with others
- Ask them about their homework and get involved with it
- Switch off television and laptops well before bedtime: chat or read a bedtime story together instead



Have fun speaking and listening together

- Play family games together, like I Spy, Charades, Chinese Whispers and Articulate
- Nursery rhymes, songs, jokes and puppets are an important way of helping younger children learn language
- Re-tell familiar stories and have fun making up your own
- With older children, read books and poetry aloud together
- Discuss and debate issues in the news

And look at these websites for a few more ideas:

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/songs

www.ican.org.uk

www.literacytrust.org.uk

www.britishcouncil.org

www.talkingpoint.org.uk



Family Action provides practical, emotional and financial support to over 45,000 vulnerable children and families every year. Registered charity in England and Wales no. 264713
www.family-action.org.uk



NAHT is a professional association and trades union with members in all phases of education. We represent 28,500 school leaders in their quest to develop great schools and improve the lives of children.
www.naht.org.uk