

Encouraging Speech and Language

Tips for Encouraging Speech and Language



Talk, Talk, Talk

- ◆ talk about everything
- ◆ narrate their play
- ◆ narrate your and their actions
- ◆ comment on things in the environment
- ◆ label items and actions
- ◆ engage in conversations
- ◆ model language whenever possible



Follow Their Lead

- ◆ imitate the sounds that the person makes and encourage them to imitate you
- ◆ tune into the person's interests
- ◆ engage in the person's preferred activities, and use as much language as possible (e.g., if a person loves blocks, play with them and label colours, narrate stacking them, count blocks, prompt them to requests for blocks)



Create Language Opportunities

- ◆ contrive situations (e.g., give the person paper with no marker and ask what they want)
- ◆ take turns during play, and prompt the person to request for items
- ◆ encourage using language to get what they want (e.g., if you know the person wants a cookie, then hold up a cookie, and encourage the person to use the word, then hand them the cookie)



Pause and Prompt

- ◆ when opportunities for language arise, pause for 3-5 seconds to wait for them to use language
- ◆ if there is no response, model the language to prompt imitation (e.g., if the person has a bowl of soup with no spoon, hold up a spoon, wait 3-5 seconds, then model saying "spoon")
- ◆ provide praise for their response or attempt at saying the word, and provide the item



Activities to Encourage Language

- ◆ read a variety of books
- ◆ explain pictures, and provide your own narration
- ◆ sing songs
- ◆ read the same books or sing the same songs repeatedly, and encourage them to fill in words

