Siarad Gyda Fi
Talk With Me

Tips and activities to help your little one learn to talk

Your child's brain is amazing! It's constantly growing and making new connections.

When you talk and play with your little one, you light up their mind and help their brain to grow – giving them the best possible start in life. The little things you do with them will make a big difference, now and in their future.

Is your child aged 0-5? **'Talk with me'** has lots of expert tools and advice to get them talking.

On our website and Facebook page, you'll find:

- Fun tips you can use day to day
- Free resources (like this booklet!)
- The chance to connect with other families in Wales. Visit **www.gov.wales/talkwithme** and follow **@Siarad gyda fi – Talk with me**

Scan me with your phone's camera!

Our website

Our Facebook page

#TalkWithMe
Tag us in your social media posts to share your little one's talking journey! We'd love to see their progress.

10 tips to help me learn to talk

1. Start talking to me before I am born
2. I can learn our language and culture from you
3. Our best place is face to face
4. Sing me a rhyme at any time
5. Let's talk and play every day
6. Let's look at books together
7. Talk with me about what we can see
8. Let's turn 'screen time' into 'you and me time'!
9. Add a word to what you have heard me say (big!)
10. I love to talk with everyone!

Your little one's talking journey

When your little one begins to play with sounds, they may...

- Make noises like "bababa"
- Watch your face when you talk to them and enjoy games like peekaboo!

When your little one begins to "chat" with you, they may...

- Start to use words anytime now! These might not sound like adult words, but you'll know what they mean
- Enjoy watching what you do and taking turns making noises with you

When your little one uses around 20 words, they may...

- Use lots of babble and "talk" during play. Their words may not sound quite right, but you'll understand them
- Pretend as they play with things, like drinking out of a toy cup

When your little one uses 50 words or more, they may...

- Understand longer sentences, like "your shoes are upstairs"
- Put words together to make sentences, like "teddy gone" or "Daddy's ball"

TOP TIP

Try adding a word or two to what you have heard them say. If they say "cat", you can say "the cat's sleeping"

When your little one uses longer sentences, they may...

like "I saw Nana" or "I'm gonna get a toy car"

- Begin to understand question words like "who?", "what?", "where?"
- Enjoy playing games with other children and know all about taking turns

When your little one starts asking lots of questions, they may...

especially "why...?"

- Begin to understand colour, number, and time words, like "show me three fingers" and "we are going tomorrow"
- Use words which can be understood by people who don't know them well. They might still find it hard to make some sounds, like "l", "y", "sh", "ch"!

When your little one understands long sentences with more information, they may...

like "let's look for the car keys before we put our shoes on"

- Get most of the sounds in words right, though longer words like "computer" may be difficult!
- Use language in lots of different ways and talk about their feelings, to persuade others or to disagree

TOP TIP

Talk with your little one about what they are doing rather than asking lots of questions – this can make children feel pressured to talk. For example, try naming objects rather than asking "what's this?"

Talking together every day

You can turn your daily routine into lots of opportunities for talk and play! Take a look at some of our ideas below.

Time to get dressed

As you help your little one get dressed, comment on what you're doing. For example, you could say: "arms in", "legs in", "socks on".

Then try something silly! You could put your little one's socks on their hands instead of on their feet, and see what they say and do next.

This is a great way to help your little one learn new words.

Story time

Look at picture books together and talk about what you see – you don't need to follow the words on the page! Notice what your child finds interesting and try taking turns in conversation.

When you let your little one take the lead, you help them grow in confidence.

It doesn't matter if your little one can't use words just yet. If they babble, babble back!

Time to brush your teeth

Get face to face as you help your little one brush their teeth. Try breaking instructions into smaller chunks, one step at a time. For example: "let's run the tap", "now let's squeeze the toothpaste".

They love it when they can predict what you're going to say next!

Meal times

Get on your child's level and use gestures for eating and drinking. This helps them 'match up' words and actions.

Try asking simple questions too. You could hold up cartons of juice and milk, and prompt your little one to point: "juice or milk?"

Remember to give them plenty of time to answer. By using more comments than questions, you lower any pressure your little one may feel to speak.

Bed time

Do you enjoy sharing lullabies or rhymes with your little one? This helps them understand rhythm and boosts their listening skills! You can make this extra fun by throwing in some actions too.

Games to help your little one's talking

Water play

1

Fill a tray with a small amount of water, small containers, and a couple of toys. You could reuse plastic yoghurt pots and your little one's favourite bath toys.

2

Get on your little one's level and notice what they enjoy doing. What sounds do they like to make?

3

Follow their lead, copying and describing their sounds and actions. For example, you could say "wash" or "spill"! This helps your little one connect what they do and what you say.

Treasure hunt

1 Grab small, everyday objects from around your home, and hide them in places your little one can reach.

2 When your little one brings you the object, name it! You can help introduce them to new words, and show them how you use that object around the house.

3 You could create a collection of objects which start with the same sound, like a "boot" and "bowl".

Ready, Steady, Go!

1 Sit opposite your little one and roll a ball back and forth together. Say "Ready, Steady, Go!" before you roll it to them.

2 Once your little one is familiar with these actions, try pausing before "go". See if your little one prompts you to roll the ball. When they do, say "go!" and roll it to them.

3 You can use "Ready, Steady, Go!" while out and about too. This is a great way to practise listening skills while having lots of fun.

Gloop!

1 Pour cornflour into a bowl or tray. Add water until you create a thick paste, and then add some colouring drops if you can.

2 Does your little one enjoy dripping or scraping the gloop using a spoon? Follow their play and show them fun words like 'sticky'.

3 If they babble, babble back! You can help familiarise them with new words by describing what you see. For example: "the gloop is stuck on my hand!"

Make the most of household routines

Playing with your little one doesn't have to involve toys. They just want you! Try to involve them in household routines and get chatting along the way.

Making the bed

Can your little one help you change the beds? Ask them to pass you the sheets or pull pillows out of pillowcases. How about playing a familiar game like peekaboo?

Washing the dishes

Follow your little one's lead as you wash the dishes together! Add new words to what you hear them say. If they say "cup", you could say "big cup".

Sorting the laundry

Try sorting the washing into different piles together, or let your little one help you unload the basket. For every question you ask, make four comments to help them join in at their own pace.

Putting away the shopping

Hand your little one light objects, like bread or pasta. Then name these objects and point to where they live in your kitchen. Your child watches and listens to you, so you're helping them learn new words all the time!

Sing a rhyme at any time...

Your little one loves when you get face to face to share rhymes and songs. Can you make up your own new rhymes, using the names of people and places they're familiar with?

Five Little Ducks

Five little ducks went swimming one day,
Over the hill and far away.

Mamma duck said: 'Quack, quack, quack, quack!'
And only four little ducks came back.

Four little ducks went swimming one day,
Over the hill and far away.

Mamma duck said: 'Quack, quack, quack, quack!'
And only three little ducks came back.

Three little ducks went swimming one day,
Over the hill and far away.

Mamma duck said: 'Quack, quack, quack, quack!'
And only two little ducks came back.

Two little ducks went swimming one day,
Over the hill and far away.

Mamma duck said: 'Quack, quack, quack, quack!'
And only one little duck came back.

One little duck went swimming one day,
Over the hill and far away.

Mamma duck said: 'Quack, quack, quack, quack!'
And all her five little ducks came back.

Even before birth, singing with your little one helps them feel calm, safe, and happy!

Scan me with your phone's camera!

Visit BBC Tiny Happy People's nursery rhymes and songs collection

Find more rhymes!

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Are you concerned about your little one's talking?

If you've used our resources and feel you need further support, there are lots of services across Wales to help your little one with their speech, language, and communication skills:

- Get in touch with your local Family Information Service:
www.gov.wales/find-your-local-family-information-service
- Speak with staff at your child's nursery; or
- Contact your Health Visitor for further advice

For further tips and advice to get your little one talking, visit:

www.gov.wales/talkwithme

With thanks to the Cardiff Flying Start SLC team for all their help with ideas for this booklet. Illustrations seen within this booklet were developed by Laura Wood (www.laurawoodillustration.com). To find further information for families, visit: www.gov.wales/children-families.