

# GETTING READY FOR FIRST WORDS

DEVELOP SKILLS IN THESE FIVE AREAS TO PROMOTE SUCCESS WITH SPOKEN LANGUAGE



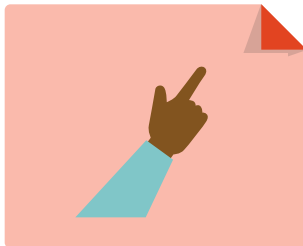
## Social Motivation

Children need to be engaged and interested in order to learn. Follow their lead and build off of their interests. Notice the ways they are trying to communicate and respond accordingly. Imitate the actions and sounds they produce in play to get them to notice you and take interest in you.



## Play Skills

Play includes how a child interacts with both the people and objects in their environment. Teaching children how to use objects in play helps them develop conceptual knowledge in order to start making connections about the meaning of words. Additionally, playing in a way that bounces the interaction back and forth creates a foundation for understanding the reciprocal nature of communication



## Intentional Communication

Early communication skills include coordinated eye gaze, vocalizations, and gestures. Children need to understand the power of communication through practice with these earlier forms in order to develop spoken communication.



## Language Comprehension

Children must understand words before they are able to use them. Talk, read, and sing to your child frequently to help them start making connections about the meanings of words. Talk about the things they want and what catches their attention. Use a sing-songy voice and model a combination of single words and short phrases.



## Imitation of Actions and Sounds

Children learn to imitate actions in play and simple sounds (raspberries, animal sounds, vehicle noises, and exclamations like "eck!") before they are able to imitate spoken words. Sing nursery songs and encourage your child to do the hand motions with you. Try pairing actions in play with silly sounds and see if they'll copy you.