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## MACARTHUR CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENTAL CLINIC

# Tips on interacting to promote language development

**Join in and play!** Language development is promoted by parent-child interactions.

**Be face to face.** Your child may be making communication attempts through eye contact and facial expressions. Getting down on their level will help you to see these, as well as allowing your child to see your facial expressions.

**Observe, wait and listen.** Watch what your child is doing, wait for them to initiate a turn, and listen to what they are saying. If you anticipate your child's every need or want without asking, they will have no motivation to use words and gestures to get their message across.

**Cue for a turn.** Pause when it's your child's turn to participate and allow them the opportunity to join in. Say "your turn!" if they need an extra prompt to join in.

**Imitate your child's actions and words.** This encourages your child to perform new actions or try new things to get you to copy them again. It also encourages your child to imitate you, which assists in developing language.

**Praise all communication attempts.** Praising a behaviour encourages your child to do it again. If your child says a word, no matter how simple, make a fuss! You can clap, say "good talking!", or "yes, well done! It's a (repeat word that they said)".

**Remember:** Errors in speech are normal at your child's age (one to five years). It is important to praise all of their attempts to say words, regardless of how they are pronounced. The focus at this point is purely on increasing their vocabulary, not correcting their production. However, it is important that you repeat the word/s back to your child using correct adult production. E.g. Your child says "nana", you reply "yes, banana. Eat banana".

