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Talk With Me
Early Language Services

ENCOURAGING LANGUAGE EVERY DAY (1-2 YEARS)

Play

- **Play peek-a-boo:** (hide with your hands or behind a piece of furniture or a blanket). You can also hide your child's eyes or show them how to pull the blanket off. This encourages turn taking.
- **Hide and Seek:** Choose a few items/toys from around the house (dolls, blocks, dinosaurs, etc). Hide them around the room. When the child finds a toy, say where it was hidden (in the bag, behind the couch, etc.). Words like "into", "next to", "behind" will help them with following directions as they grow.
- **Ready, Set, Go:** Put your child in a swing, wagon or stroller. Say "go" and push your child. After a few seconds, stop/pause. Wait to see if he/she says "go" to get you to keep on pushing. If he doesn't, say "go" and continue.
- **Learning Body Parts:** Pat to different body parts (on you or your toddler) and name them as you go. Continue touching different body parts as long as the game is fun. Try making big kissing sounds or, try blowing tickly raspberries as you go.
- **Walk the Animal Walk:** Show your child how to walk different ways (you can carry them if they aren't walking yet). See if they will imitate you walking:
 - Heavily like an elephant (stomp)
 - Silently like a mouse (tiptoe)
 - A little clumsily like a duck (waddle)
 - Jump like a kangaroo
 - Hop like a frog (on all fours)
- **Tube Talk:** Use an empty paper towel or toilet paper roll to make a variety of noises and sounds: Hold one end of the tube to your mouth and talk to your child and encourage them to do the same.
- **Fun with Balls:** Gather balls, a box and something to make a ramp:
 - Show your child how to drop the ball into the box and then tip them out again. Use words like "in", "out", "empty". You can also count as you put the balls in.
 - Set up your ramp with your child at the bottom. Roll the ball down the ramp and say "fast", "slow", "roll", "big", "small", "here it comes!".
- **Scrub-a-Dub:** Collect small plastic toys (cars and trucks, farm animals, dinosaurs, etc.). Set up a large bowl with soapy water. Let your child explore the water and "wash" the animals (you can also have a bowl with dirt/mud). You can add tools like sponges, cloths and toothbrushes for them to wash with. Use words like "warm/cold", "wet/dry", "scrub", "dirty/clean", "wash", "splish/splash".
- **Knock it Down:** Build a tower with building blocks or cups, (anything stackable). Knock it over, then cheer and clap. Let your toddler have a turn knocking it down. Say things like "up", "on", "down", "oops!", "uh-oh", and "again".

Arts and Crafts

- **Paint in a Bag:** Place a piece of heavy paper in a large ziploc bag. Add a few puddles of paint. Seal the bag and tape around all sides—you can tape the bag to a table or on the floor. Let your child have fun spreading the paint around. Cut and peel off the bag and hang the masterpiece to dry. Use words like “smoosh”, “spread”, “push”, “wow”, and “pretty”. Talk about the colours as they mix to make new colours.
- **Fun with Stickers:** Get some construction paper and stickers and let your child enjoy putting the stickers on. Peeling the backing off of stickers is a great way to work on fine motor skills. This is a good time to practice asking for help as they often struggle with peeling. Talk about the stickers as you play. Use words like “peel”, “sticky”, “push/pat”, etc.
- **Scribble Time:** Allow your child to choose one piece of paper and one crayon out of a choice of two (children often spend more time scribbling if you allow them only one crayon at a time). Allow your child sufficient time to create their “drawing”. Be sure to make your own drawing alongside your child.
- **Maracas:** Fill plastic bottles about 1/2 full with rice, uncooked pasta, popcorn, bells, etc. Seal the cover using a hot glue gun. Put on some music and let your child play along with their new “maracas” or make your own music!



Singing and Dancing

- **May I Have this Dance:** Dance and sing with your toddler to all kinds of music. Give your child a ribbon and then move to the music. Describe what you are doing as you move (up, down, around, behind, fast, slow, shake).
- **Sing your favourite songs** in a new way:
 - Change the rhythm (faster, slower)
 - Change your voice
 - Add body movements/actions
- **Sing Songs** that encourage gestures like “Itsy, Bitsy Spider” or “If You’re Happy and You Know It” or try this one:

Clap Along With Me (Tune of “Row Your Boat”)

Clap, clap, clap your hands, clap along with me.
Clap, clap, clap your hands, clap along with me.

Replace the first line with the following and change speed of clapping: Clap a little faster now, clap along with me/ clap a little slower...

Explore

- **Sensory Bins:** Get a basket/bin and fill with uncooked pasta or rice. Hide toys under the pasta/ rice. Let your child use a shovel/spoon to find the toys. Name the objects as your child find them. You can also let your child help choose what toys to hide.
- **Talk a Walk:** Take your toddler for a walk around the room. Comment on the things that catch their attention and interest. This works great outside too!
- **Fun with Forts:** Cover a table with a sheet/blanket to make a fort . Encourage your child to explore the new space and add to it (you can add pillows, lights, books, flashlights, etc.).