Out and about

Encouraging communication - Out and about

Wherever you go, there is always an opportunity to help your child develop their speech and language. Children learn when they are relaxed and having fun.

Going shopping:

- Involve your child
- Make a shopping list together
- Your child needs to know what is expected of them when you go shopping. Have a few simple rules on how you expect them to behave e.g. staying close to you or sitting nicely in the trolley
- Talk generally about things you can see, hear and smell ‘oh, can you smell the bread, lets look for the cheese’
- Give your child an item to look out for in each aisle e.g. can you see the apples?
- Encourage your child to make choices e.g. ‘should we buy apple juice or orange juice?’
- Encourage your child to help at the checkout by giving them their own bag and a few items to pack. Talk about the things you are buying

The examples given are all about the supermarket but you can do similar things when going to other shops. You can talk about the different shops, what they are called and what they sell. You can talk about other things that you see on your shopping trip e.g. people or vehicles, to expand your child’s vocabulary.

Going to the park/playground:

- Plan your trip to the park by talking about how you are going to get there, what you might see, what you might do, what clothes you might wear e.g. ‘it’s cold today, let’s put our coats on,’ and what you need to take e.g. bread for the ducks, money or something to play with.
- Talk about the things you see and hear on your journey e.g. animals, transport, people. Talk about the things you might do at the park.
- At the park there are lots of opportunities to use language:
  - Name things you can see
  - Encourage your child to make a choice e.g. ‘do you want to play with the ball or go on the swings?’
  - Use action words to describe what is happening e.g. running, swinging, jumping, skipping, kicking, pushing
  - Play games that encourage your child to talk e.g. Ready Steady Go games on the swings, roundabout, running etc, encourage your child to say ‘go’
Other suggestions for outings
Don’t forget that every outing will be interesting for your child if you talk about where you are going and what you can see and hear.

• Going to the doctors
• Going to nursery
• Going to visit somebody
• Going on a bus or a train
• Going swimming
• Going to the library
• Going to the seaside

For further information please contact: Department of Speech and Language Therapy
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