

WHY MY CHILD COMMUNICATES

Some children are naturally sociable and natural communicators – others are not, and that's fine. Parents with shy, quiet, or more self-directed children will have to think and be more creative in engaging in conversations – but it will be worth it.

Step back and think about why your child communicates with you.

- What motivates my child to communicate?
- What are they interested in?
- If there are not many things which generate conversation times, think about creating regular routines to build these in.

Identify situations and times when your child communicates more easily.

- What facilitates my child's communication?
- What makes it easier in these situations? Can these features be transferred into others?
- How can I adapt or support the situation in order to encourage them to join in or initiate conversations?


Consider the links between HOW my child communicates and WHY.

- Are there patterns? Do they communicate in a specific way in certain situations?

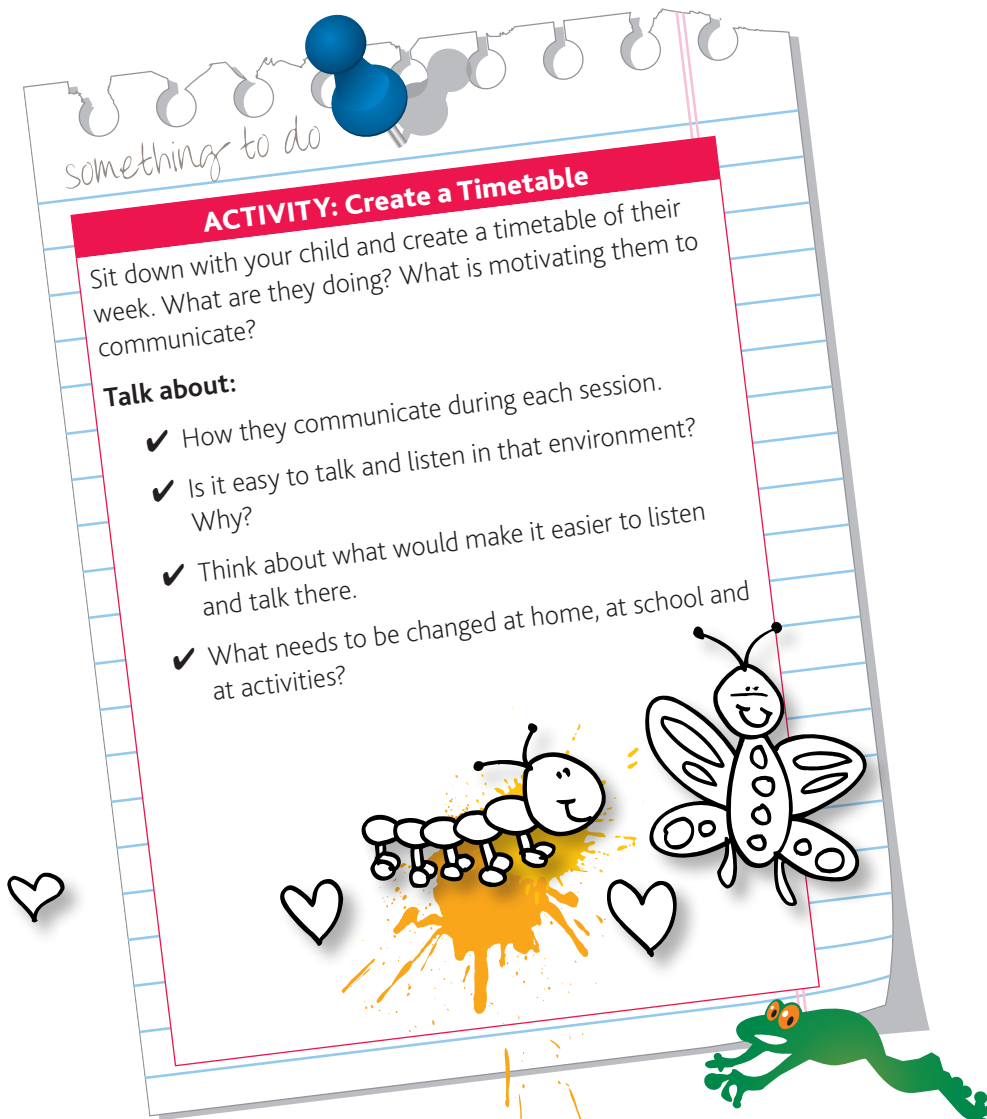
Ultimately how you communicate will reflect your child's current language needs but it will also influence your child's language learning. Your child will learn from how you communicate with them. In reality this means that if the 'how' you communicate with your child involves more sign and very little speech your child is not seeing 'how' to communicate in any other way than to sign to you. Go back to your hopes and dreams, if you want more spoken language the 'how' you communicate is as important as how your child communicates.



What inspires or motivates my child to communicate?



Remember: How can I use what motivates my child to communicate to move them towards my long term dreams for my child's language learning?



something to do

ACTIVITY: Create a Timetable

Sit down with your child and create a timetable of their week. What are they doing? What is motivating them to communicate?

Talk about:

- ✓ How they communicate during each session.
- ✓ Is it easy to talk and listen in that environment? Why?
- ✓ Think about what would make it easier to listen and talk there.
- ✓ What needs to be changed at home, at school and at activities?

WHO DOES MY CHILD COMMUNICATE WITH?

Now your child is at school and they are involved in different clubs and activities, spend some time thinking about who they communicate with. It will be far more people than you think!

Look for groups, what are they linked with?

- What motivates your child?
- How does your child communicate?
- Family?
- Age?
- Daily routines? e.g. school
- Your environment? e.g. neighbours
- Your family interests? e.g. sports, religion

Remember: By identifying your child's opportunities to communicate with others, you can plan and prepare to help them achieve more independence in their use of spoken language.

Discuss and set challenges within specific situations.

- I will use spoken language to take a message to the office which is not written down for me.
- I will ask my brothers / sisters what they want in their sandwiches. I will tell my mom and help her make them.
- I will tell my activity leader (e.g. cub scouts) what I did at the weekend.
- I will hand in my trip money and form without my parents beside me.

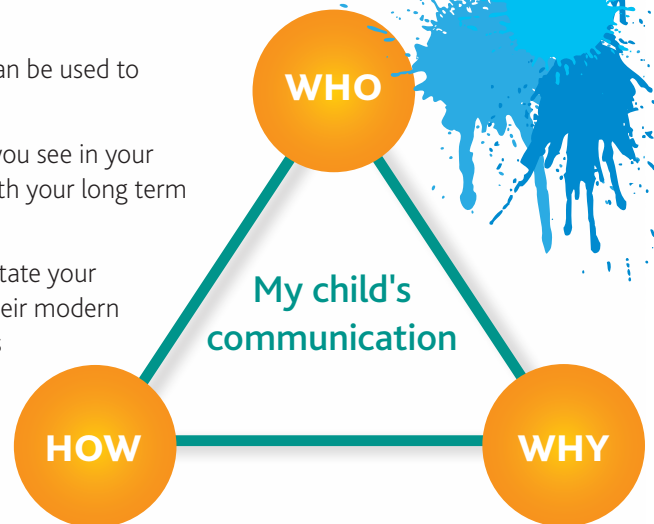
HOW, WHY, WHO?

All three influence each other and one can be used to strengthen or develop the others.

Step back and think about the patterns you see in your child's communication style. Link this with your long term dreams for your child's communication.

LEAPing On with Language aims to facilitate your child's spoken language learning using their modern hearing technology. Our goal for them is that they will be able to use their spoken language to fully engage with peers and adults, and to fulfill their potential academically. To this end you must ask yourself:

- How do they communicate, with whom, and why?
- Do they use their best spoken language?
- How can the patterns you have identified be used to extend their communication?
- What motivates your child? If they love football, enroll them in a hearing football team where their desire to play will motivate them to speak to the other team members.
- How much time do they spend communicating using spoken language? Are you happy with the balance of time they are using their spoken language?



The Why and Who can be used to positively impact upon the How.

Adjust the how, why and who to work towards your dreams.

something to do

A Practical Resource

Cochlear Implants for Deaf Children:
Progressing through the Primary Years

Published by The Ear Foundation
Means, Reasons, Opportunities: Chapter 2 p.17-20



Instructions often involve several sequencing words e.g. First, Second, And, Then, At the end, After that, Before X, After Y.

Remember: When telling a story you need to be ordered and logical. They must have a beginning – middle – end.

ACTIVITY: Re-telling Stories - narrative

Your child's reading book will often have a fairly simple story structure. After they have read to you, ask them to tell you the story in their own words. Check that your child uses a beginning, middle and end to their account.

ACTIVITY: Re-telling Stories - puppet show

Pull out the sofa and go behind it. Start with very familiar stories e.g. Billy Goats Gruff. You can buy finger puppet sets for specific stories or use small toys you already have.

ACTIVITY: Re-telling Stories - using three or five story cards

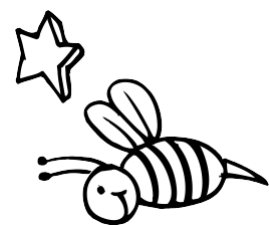
Choose a simple story with a simple beginning, middle, end structure or a repetitive framework.

Start with three cards:

- 1) At the beginning of the story _____.
- 2) In the middle of the story _____.
- 3) At the end of the story _____.

Example: *Some Dogs Do*, by Jez Alborough (Walker Books 2004)

- 1) Sid is walking to school and suddenly he starts to fly.
- 2) When he gets to school he tells his friends and his teacher that he flew to school. Nobody believed him. They asked him to show them, but he couldn't fly anymore.
- 3) When he got home his dad saw him. He was very sad, but then his dad told him a secret. His mom & dad can fly too.



Increase to five cards:

- 1) What is the setting for the story _____.
- 2) What is the first important thing that happens which sets the story off _____.
- 3) What happens next because of this _____.
- 4) What are the consequences of the different events _____.
- 5) How do the characters feel _____.

Example: *Some Dogs Do*, by Jez Alborough (Walker Books 2004)

- 1) Sid was walking to school, it was a sunny day and he was feeling happy.
- 2) Suddenly Sid started to fly!
- 3) He told all his friends and his class teacher that he had flown to school. Nobody believed him.
One dog asked him to show them all.
Sid tried to fly again, but he just fell over, 'flop'.
He had to walk all the way home again feeling very sad.
- 4) When he got home his dad noticed that he was very sad.
His Dad showed him his secret. Mom & dad can fly too.
- 5) Sid was delighted.
The whole family started to fly together, he was not making it all up!

Ideas of books with shorter text and pictures

- *Room on the Broom* Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler (Macmillan Children's Books)
- *Gruffalo* Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler (Macmillan Children's Books)
- *Duck in the Truck* Jez Alborough (HarperCollins Children's Books)
- *Captain Duck* Jez Alborough (HarperCollins Children's Books)
- *Some Dogs Do* Jez Alborough (Walker Books)
- *Not So Loud Oliver* Tony Maddox (Orchard Books)
- *Bear Snores On* Karma Wilson & Jane Chapman (Simon & Schuster Children's Books)
- *Charlie & Lola* Lauren Child (Puffin Books)

Ideas of books with longer text and pictures

- *Aesop's Funky Fables* Korky Paul (Puffin Books)

Watch a DVD together, talk about it in general or use film cards to add some fun and structure.

