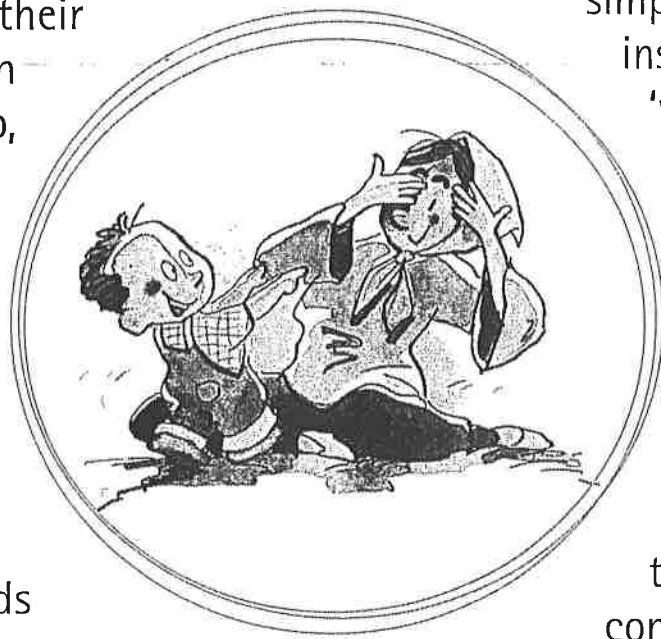


## Tips for Talking: children aged 18 months - 2 years

By now, children will be trying out new activities and exploring their environment more actively. They may not always like being directed by adults!

Children will develop language skills at different rates, but at this stage typically children will be:

- Using a small number of sounds in their words – often these are p, b, m and w. Children will also often miss the ends off words.



- Copying sounds and words.

- Understanding more simple questions and instructions, like 'where is your shoe?', 'show me your nose!'
- Using more single words – maybe as many as 20-50 words – these will also become more recognisable to others.

- Concentrating on activities for a longer time than before, like playing with a particular toy. Concentration is a key aspect of learning language.

## Tips for Talking: children aged 18 months - 2 years

Here are some simple ideas to encourage children's language development at this stage:

- Talk about everyday activities, like putting away the shopping. This helps children to connect language to the world around them.
- To help children to understand, use objects and gestures to help your child's understanding. Or give your child two or three alternatives: 'do you want teddy or the car?', 'is this your nose or your foot?'
- Looking at pictures in books together and describing what is there. This is just as good as actually reading the story. 'Lift-the-flap' books can help to encourage concentration.
- As well as repeating back what your child says, you can also start expanding what they say: if your child says 'juice' you could say 'more juice', 'juice please' or 'juice gone'. This shows your child how words can be put together, making short sentences.
- Children learn speech sounds gradually – saying the whole word back to a child is the best way to encourage language rather than correcting them. Make sure your child can see your face when you are talking to them – this helps the child to watch and copy the movements that your lips make as you say sounds and words.
- Often children can be frustrated when adults don't understand them – this can lead to tantrums. Encourage your child to use gestures for objects or actions. Try to be patient, and wait for them to finish what they are saying or trying to show you.



If you have concerns about your child's speech or language at this stage, let your Health Visitor know. She can make an appointment with a Speech and Language Therapist for you.

**talking point** Talking Point is run by



Helps Children Communicate  
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working with



and



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