


TIPS TO TALK, SING, AND POINT

With Your Infant (0-12 months)

Talk to them. Include your baby in everyday routines by talking to them during activities like changing and bathing. Describe what you are doing.

Use a playful voice. Smile and look into your baby's eyes. Exaggerate the sounds of words. Notice which ways of talking keep their attention.

Follow their interests. Talk about the things your baby looks at or reaches for. Name them and describe their features.

Go back and forth. When your baby makes a sound, show excitement on your face and in your voice. Respond with words. See how long you can keep the "conversation" going back and forth.

Sing. Your baby's favorite songs might be ones that repeat words or have rhyming sounds.

Point to objects. Point to objects and name them—especially things that interest your baby like body parts and familiar objects.

With Your Toddler (12-36 months)

Step by step. As you go about daily activities, talk about the steps involved. "First, we wash our hands with soap and water. Then we dry off with a towel."

Use your hands. Name and talk about the things your child points to. Encourage your child to point ("Where is the ball?").

Listen and respond. Show your toddler that you are interested in what they have to say. Respond to their gestures and comments. If you aren't sure what they mean, make your best guess.

Expand on what they say. For example, if they point to a dog and say, "Da," you can reply, "Yes, dog. That's a dog. It's brown and soft."

Ask questions. Get your toddler to think. Ask questions that start with "Who," "What," or "Why." For example, "Why do you think the boy is sad?" Show interest in their answers.

Sing. Sing songs and recite nursery rhymes from your childhood, from books, or make up new ones. Your toddler may especially enjoy the ones with rhyming sounds or hand motions. Try singing the same song whenever it's time for a special activity like bath time.

With Your Preschooler (36-60 months)

Ask questions. Ask your child questions about things that interest them. Show interest in their answers and follow-up to keep the conversation going. See if you can go back and forth 2-3 times on the same topic.

Review the day. Ask your child about their "high" and "low" for the day. What moments stood out to them?

Expand on what they say. When your child mentions something, expand on what they say and introduce new words related to that topic.

Fill in the blank. When you sing your child's favorite songs, leave out words for them to fill in. Or you can say the wrong word and see if they catch you.

All about me. Help your child learn their full name, address, and phone number. You can teach it to the tune of one of their favorite songs.

Use Any Language

All languages help children's development. It's great if your child grows up speaking more than one language! Speak to your child in whatever language you are most comfortable.