Building Your Child's Language
When your child is starting to put words together…

✓ **Talk about the things your child sees and does**

Throughout the day:
- When playing, label actions like *swing, jump,* and *run*.
- When getting dressed, label clothing like *sock, pants, shirt*.
- At snack-time, label actions like *"Eat the apple", "Open my juice."*

Repeat words over and over.

If your child points to something they want, **tell** them the word they need to use and **wait** for them to try to say it.

✓ **Expand what your child says**

Add **one or two words** to what your child says.
- If your child says *"Ball"*, you can say *"Kick the ball."*
- If your child says *"Moo"* you can say *"The cow says moo."*

Use different types of words including names of objects, actions, feelings, descriptions, and locations.

✓ **Wait**

Give your child a chance to talk by **waiting** for them to respond, start, or comment. For example, if a cup falls on the floor, wait for your child to respond with a look, sound, or word.

✓ **Beware of questions!**

Turn your questions into **comments**.
- Instead of asking *"What's this?"* say *"I see a truck!"*
- Instead of asking *"What colour is that?"* say *"It's a red ball!"*

Offer **choices**.
- Instead of asking *"What do you want to drink?"* ask *"Milk or juice?"*

✓ **Play with your child**

Playing with your child develops skills like listening, talking, turn-taking, vocabulary, and imagination.

Be face-to-face with your child.

Play like a child. Don't worry about following rules or playing with toys in a certain way. You don't need new and expensive toys. Just use your imagination and **have fun!**

Limit screen time (such as computer, TV, tablet). *The Canadian Pediatric Society* recommends **no screen time** for children under two years old, and no more than **one hour a day** for children 2 to 4 years old.

> **For more information**
> Contact your Speech-Language Pathologist
> or
> Your local Public Health Unit