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## Suggestions For Helping Your Child Learn to Talk

### When To Start

Do the first activities as long as your child enjoys them. Add new activities as he/she grows older.

### Birth

- Help your baby learn how nice voices can sound.
- Sing to your baby. You can do this even before your baby is born. Your baby will hear you.
- Talk to your baby. Talk to others when your baby is near. Your baby will not understand the words, but will like your voice and your smile. Your baby will enjoy hearing and seeing other people, too.
- Plan for quiet time. Your baby needs time to babble and play quietly without TV or radio or other noises.

### 3 months

- Help your baby see how people talk to each other.
- Hold your baby close so he/she will look in your eyes. Talk to your baby and smile.
- When your baby babbles, imitate the sounds.
- If your baby tries to make the same sound you do, say the word again.

### 6 months

- Help your baby understand words (even if he/she can not say them yet).
- Play games like Peek-a-Boo or Pat-a-Cake. Help your baby move his/her hands to match the game.
- When you give your baby a toy, say something about it like, "Feel fuzzy Teddy Bear."
- Let your baby see himself/herself in a mirror and you ask "Who is that?" If he/she does not answer, say his/her name.
- Ask your baby questions like, "Where's Doggie?" If your child does not answer, show him/her where the doggie is hiding.

### 9 months

- Help your baby "talk" by pointing and physically using his/her hands.

- Show your baby how to wave "bye-bye." Tell your baby "Show me your nose." Then point to your nose.
- He/she will soon point to his/her nose. Do this with toes, fingers, ears, eyes, knees, and so on.
- Hide a toy while your baby is watching. Help your baby find it. Share his/her delight at finding it.
- When your baby points at or gives you something, talk about the object with him/her.

## 12 months

- Help your child to say the words he/she knows.
- Talk about the things you use, like "cup," "juice," "doll." Give your child time to name them.
- Ask your child questions about the pictures in books. Give your child time to name things in the picture.
- Smile or clap your hands when your child names the thing that he/she sees Say something about it.

## 15 months

- Help your child talk with you.
- Talk about what your child wants most to talk about. Give him/her time to tell you about it.
- Ask about things you do each day--"Which shirt will you pick today?" "Do you want milk or juice?"
- When your child says only one word, like "ball," repeat it with a little extra--"That's Baby's ball."
- Pretend your child's favorite doll or toy animal can talk. Have conversations with the toy.

## 18 months

- Help your child put words together and learn how to follow simple directions.
- Ask your child to help you. For example, ask your child to put his/her cup on the table.
- Teach your child simple songs and nursery rhymes. Read to your child.
- Encourage your child to talk to friends and family. A child can tell them about a new toy, for example.
- Let your child "play telephone. " Have a pretend telephone conversation.

## 2 years

- Help your child put more words together. Teach your child things that are important to know.
- Teach your child to say his/her first and last name.
- Ask about the number, size, and shape of things your child shows you. If it is worms, you could say; "What fat wiggly worms! How many are there? Where are they going?" Wait, watch, and listen to the answer. Suggest an answer if needed: "I see five.... Are they going to the park or the store?"
- Ask your child to tell you the story that goes with a favorite book.
- Check your local library for programs for toddlers.
- Do not forget what worked earlier. For example, your child still needs quiet time. This is not just for naps.
- Turn off the TV and radio and let your child enjoy quiet play, singing, and talking.

This information should not be used as substitute for the medical care and advice of your child's physician. Health related topics found on the Andorra Pediatrics web site should not be used for diagnosing purposes or be substituted for medical

advice. As with any new or ongoing treatment, always consult your professional healthcare provider before making any changes in treatment or beginning any new treatment. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office.