

Some suggestions for fostering language development:

1. Say/read nursery rhymes so your child can hear the rhythm and flow of language.
2. Sing simple songs together to encourage vocal use, teach concepts, and expand vocabulary. (i.e. Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes)
3. Use body language in everyday communication to support multi-modal communication. (i.e. shrug your shoulders, shake your head)
4. Name and describe objects you and your child are looking at together. You can ask your child to help you come up with descriptive words (i.e. What color is it? How does it feel? Soft or hard? [Giving them a choice of words reinforces vocabulary and decreases the language demand.])
5. Model correct pronunciation and grammar. You don't need to always correct them; just repeat what they say with the corrections. Children are like sponges – they soak up what they hear repeatedly!
6. Expand on your child's sentences to be more descriptive/clear/grammatical. This validates his/her efforts and provides a model, which supports and encourages language growth.
7. Talk during play. The more language models your child hears, the more he/she will want to talk and will know about language.
8. Ask open –ended questions instead of yes/no questions. This encourages your child to produce language rather than answering yes or no. If he/she has difficulty, you can provide two choices. (i.e. what do you want to eat? Spaghetti or pizza?)
9. Focus on the positive! Children's attitudes often reflect their parents' attitudes!
10. Listen to your child! – Give them your full attention to show that they are an equal communication partner.
11. Look at books/read together. This supports language development in so many ways! You don't need to read the pages word for word, but talk about the pictures, make connections to your child's life (i.e. in the book the boy has a red ball; say to your child "Oh look, there is a red ball like yours! What do you do with your ball? What does he do with his?"
 - If your child is working on a specific sound, you can look for that sound/letter throughout the book and practice saying words with that sound.