

Speech, Language and Communication in the Early Years

From big strategy to local practice

**Carol Payne, Deputy Chief Executive
Speech and Language UK**

speechandlanguage.org.uk

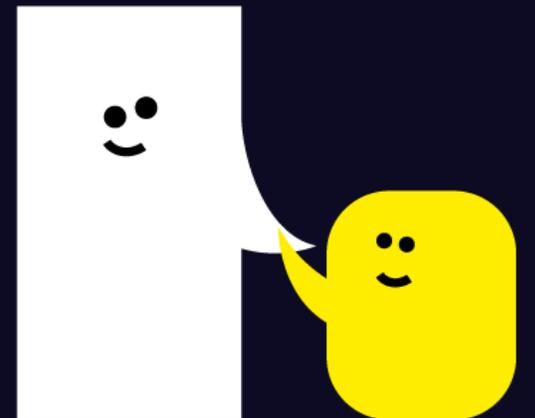
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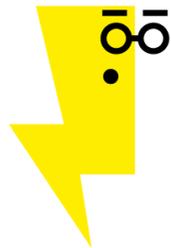


What we'll cover

- A bit about the work of Speech and Language UK
- Why talking and understanding words are important
- Speech, language and communication in the Early Years – the current context
- Supporting parents
- Communication supportive practice with a focus on outdoor spaces
- Introducing Early Talk for childminders

A bit about Speech and Language UK

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Our vision, mission and charitable cause

Our vision

Every child who is facing challenges with talking and understanding words can look to the future with confidence.

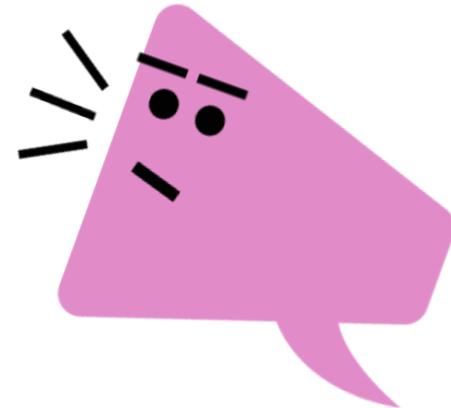
Our mission

We give children and young people the skills they need so they aren't left behind, waiting to be understood.

We do this by creating tools for schools and nurseries, giving advice and guidance to families and putting pressure on politicians.

Our charitable cause

For two million children in the UK, learning to talk and understand words feels like an impossible hurdle. Without the right help this can destroy their world.



What does Speech and Language UK do?



Design innovative
tools



Provide
training



Advice and
guidance for
families



Push for
policy
change



Run two
special
Schools to
generate
new
practices

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Why talking and understanding words are important

Speech, language and communication skills help us to:



To make friends



To learn



To have good mental health



To get a job

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**In children,
language skills
underpin
everything...**



learning



**reading and
writing**



friendships



play



maths



**self esteem
and mental
health**



behaviour

The 2 million in more detail

One in ten children have a long-term challenge with talking and understanding words.

That's 2 or 3 in every classroom!

Norbury et al. (2016)

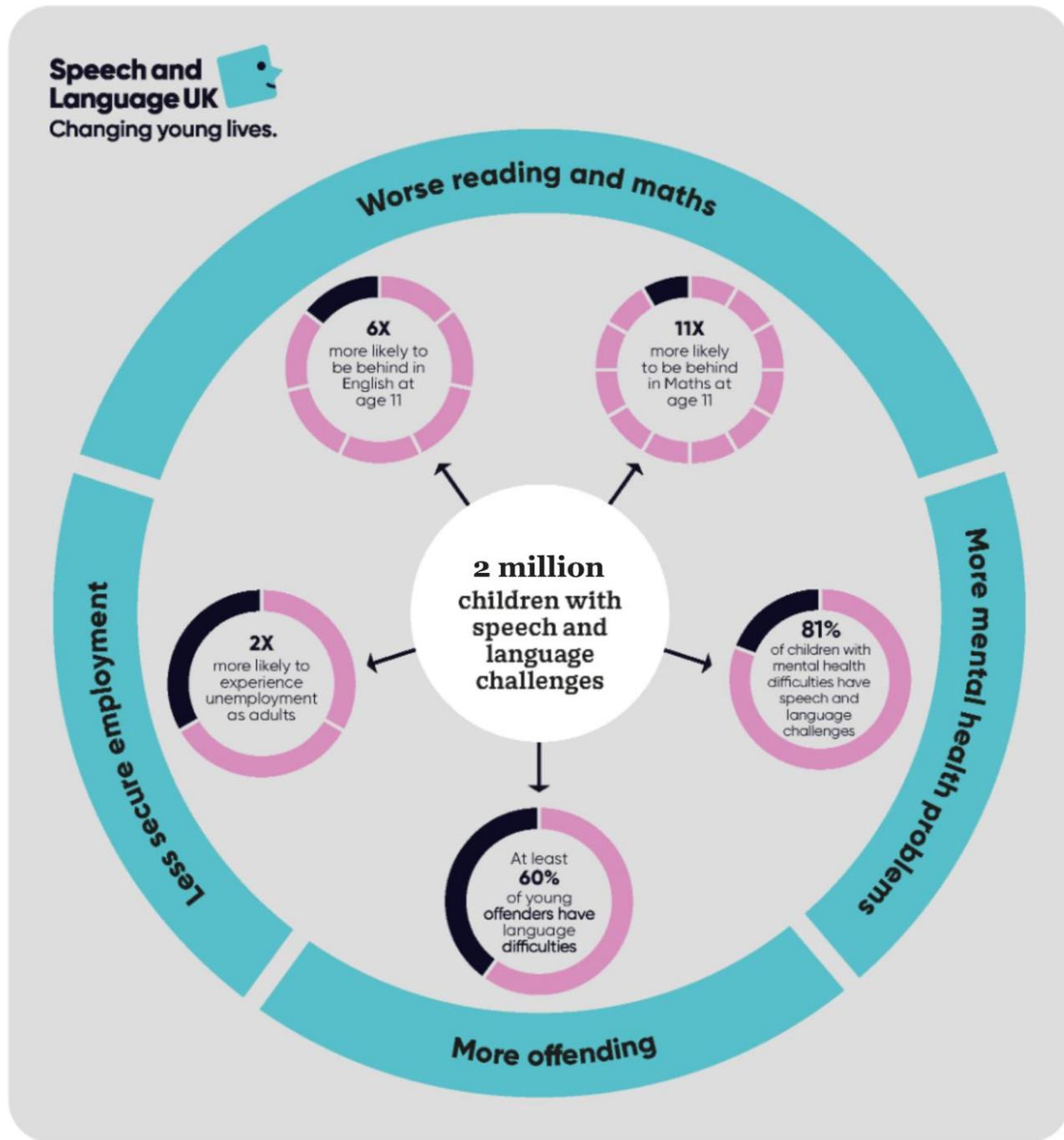
In some disadvantaged areas, one in four children have challenges talking and understanding words.

Dockrell et al. (2012)

The most common type of need among pupils with SEN support are speech, language and communication needs.

Department for Education (2022)

Consequences of not supporting children with speech and language challenges



Speech, language and communication in the Early Years

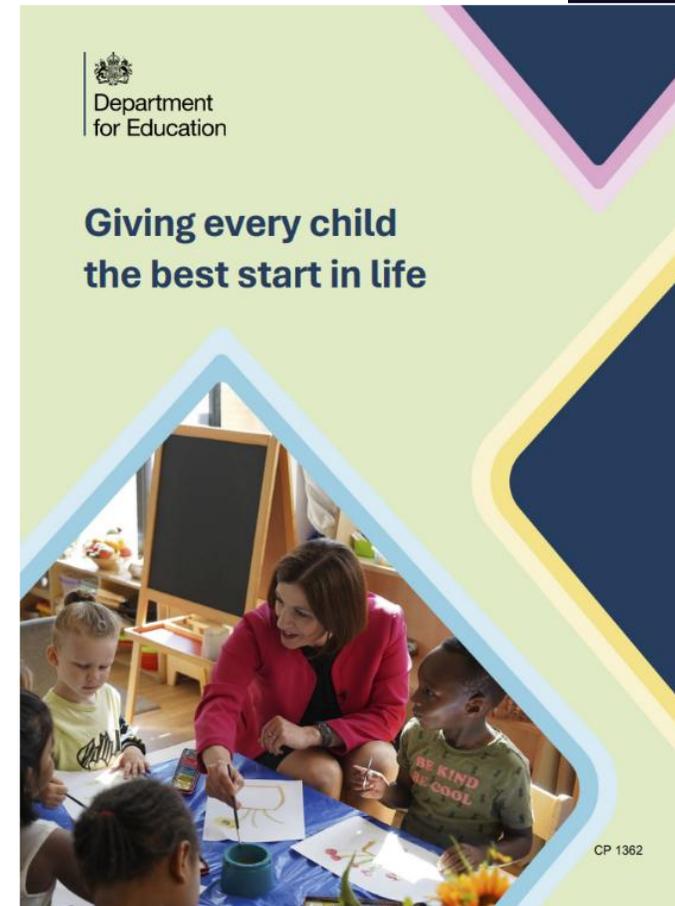
The current context

New Government early years strategy

What does it say?

"What a wise parent would wish for their children, so the state must wish for all its children." R H Tawney

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Evolving the strategy



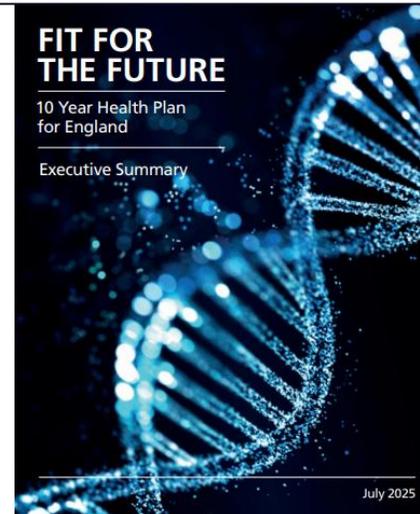
- Better support for Families
- More accessible early education and childcare
- Improving quality in early years and reception



Ambitious goal of 75% of children achieving GLD by end of Reception year

- Hospital → Community
- Analogue → Digital
- Sickness → Prevention

Government's Opportunity Mission



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Unpacking the guidance

Supporting families

Workforce
Development

Strategic Thinking



Department
for Education

**Giving every child
the best start in life**

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Unpacking the guidance



Supporting families

Workforce Development

Strategic Thinking



"**Parents** need **information** and **advice** about child development to help their children to thrive."

"**Parents** will be able to join **courses** to boost their confidence and help their children with **language** and **emotional development**."



Family pages

Universal

Parents need information and advice about child development to help their children to thrive

[Home](#) » [Help for families](#) » [Ages and stages](#)

Ages and stages

Our guide to the typical stages of speech and language development in babies, children and young people.



[Ages and Stages page](#)

[Home](#) » [Help for families](#) » [Resource library for families](#)

Resource library for families

Our team of speech and language therapists have written these helpful info pages, based on our most frequently asked questions from families.



[Resource library for families page](#)

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Family advice films

Universal

Parents need information and advice about child development to help their children to thrive

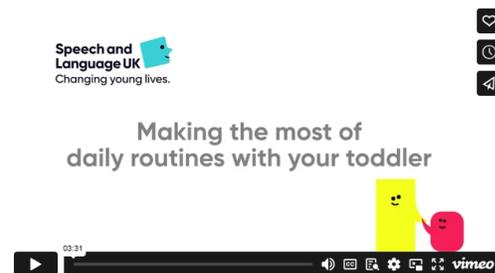
Sharing books with your toddler



Sing songs and rhymes with your toddler



Making the most of daily routines with your toddler



[Talking with your Toddler webinars and films](#)

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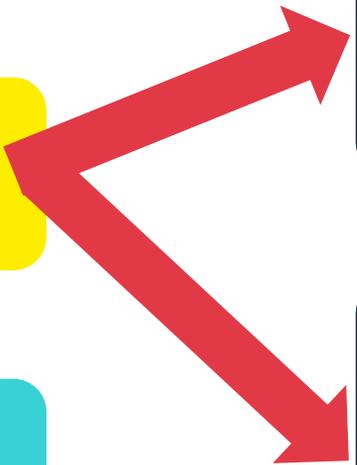
Unpacking the guidance



Supporting families

Workforce Development

Strategic Thinking



"We know that outcomes for children depend on maximising the impact of every **adult-child interaction**"

"**Boosting [...] early language skills** we will introduce early language leads in local areas to give on the job training to early years educators"

Unpacking the guidance



Supporting families

Workforce
Development

Strategic Thinking

"We want to see health, children's and family services, nurseries, childminders, schools, charities and businesses **connecting** and **collaborating** to deliver this shared mission."

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Communication Supportive practice

Communication supportive practice

“We know that outcomes for children depend on maximising the impact of every **adult-child interaction**”

Let's get practical

- Thinking about some universal strategies for supporting talking and understanding words
- Thinking about Ages and Stages

Universal Strategies for supporting talking and understanding words

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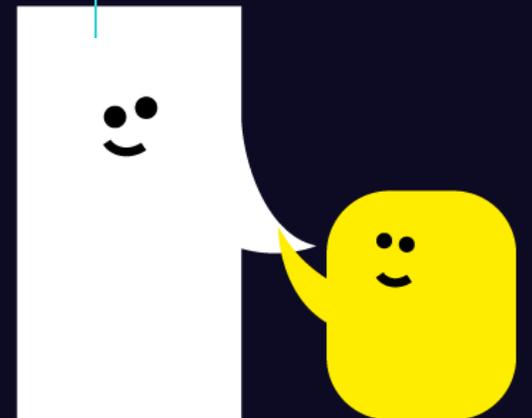


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The 10 Key Strategies...

Follow the child's lead	Be at the same level	Adjust language	Wait	Model
Expand	Offer choices	Introduce new vocabulary	Comment rather than question	Have fun!



Supporting language out and about

Things to think about through this short clip

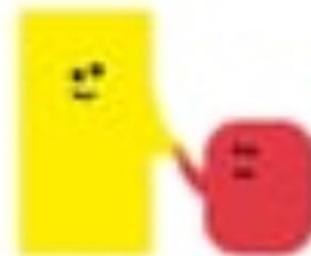
- What strategies do you see the childminder using?
- Think about a strategy that you could do more of when you're outside.
- Think about an activity you recently did outside and how you encouraged talking and understanding.

Video clip – out and about

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Out and about



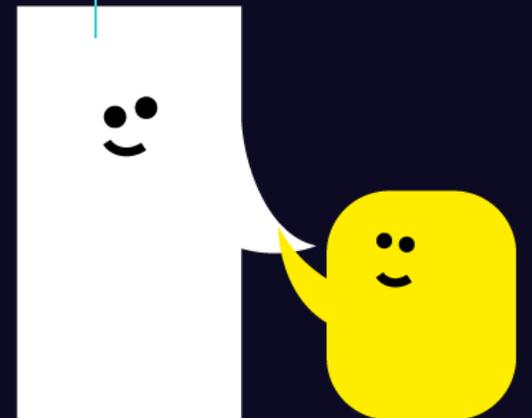
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The 10 Key Strategies...

Follow the child's lead	Be at the same level	Adjust language	Wait	Model
Expand	Offer choices	Introduce new vocabulary	Comment rather than question	Have fun!



Focus: Commenting not Questioning

Helpful phrases...



I wonder...
I imagine...

...what would happen if, ...why, ...why we can't, ...how you made this.
...you feel happy, ...the dolly is hungry, ...that was a fiddly job!



I notice...
I can see...

...the ramp makes the cars travel very fast... that cup can't hold all that water
you chose blue for this part, ...you had to be careful building this...you gave the dolly medicine



I love the way...
My favourite part is...

...you placed that so carefully,...you're caring for your baby gently
...the way used the acorns as eyes...when you turned into the wolf



I need some help here...
I can't find a way to...

...this poor puppy is sick, ...to stop Amy feeling left out
...make this balance, ...mix a green colour, ... move these heavy boxes



Wow, that looks...
You have...
Tell me more about...

...super interesting, ...like you have worked hard
...used a lot of colours, ...built a very tall tower, ...so many conkers!
...what your creation can do, ...how the animals are feeling, ...what's gone wrong

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Focus: Commenting not Questioning

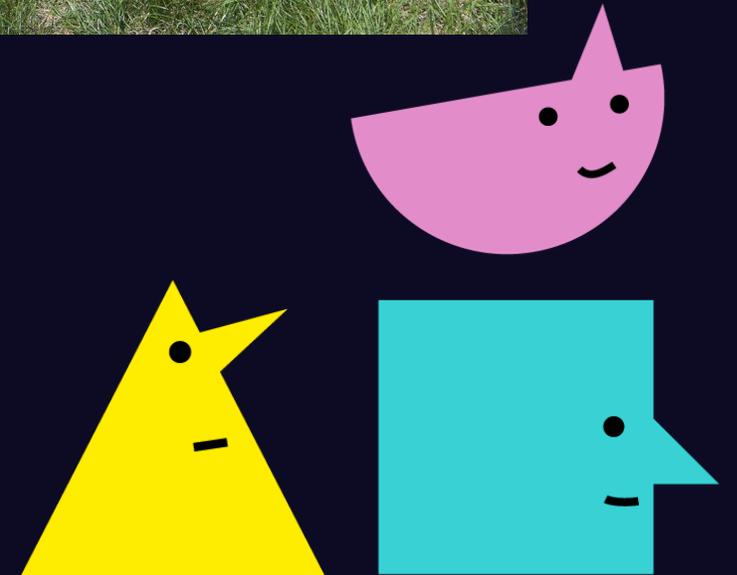
Harder than it sounds!

Leo is outside. He fills up a wheelbarrow with logs and begins to push it up a small hill. It tips a few times as it hits lumps in the grass. He throws out most of the logs and replaces them with piles of leaves. He tries again and after a few attempts he makes it to the top. He tips out the leaves and considers how he will get back down again.



Make a list of the comments you could make as you interact with Leo. Select one or two questions you may use and consider why they are good questions to ask.

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Ages and stages activity

Speech and language development checklist

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Tips for families: Supporting development of speech, language and communication skills

	0 - 6 months	6 - 12 months	12 - 18 months	18 months - 2 years	2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
	Talk to your baby when doing things together – changing nappies, feeding or taking them out.	Help your baby to listen by turning off any background noise when talking to them.	Copy your toddler's actions, sounds and words back to them.	Add to what your child says by adding a word or two (e.g. they say 'bat'; you say 'yes, the cat's sleeping!').	Pause often to give your child time to say or do something – count to five in your head before you say something else.	Make comments about what your child is doing rather than asking them lots of questions.	Follow your child's lead – sit at their level and talk about what they are interested in.

Typical development: Babies/children develop skills at different rates, but at this age, most will ...

	0 - 6 months	6 - 12 months	12 - 18 months	18 months - 2 years	2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years
Understanding	... turn towards a sound when they hear it (e.g. a favourite rattle).	... understand familiar words like 'bye-bye', 'up', 'Daddy', 'milk'.	... understand some simple questions and instructions like 'where's teddy?' and 'kiss Mummy'.	... understand simple action words (e.g. 'kiss teddy') and questions like 'where is your shoe?'.	... understand longer instructions, such as 'make teddy jump' or 'put dolly's cup on the table'.	... listen to storybooks with pictures and talk about the story.	... listen to and follow requests without having to stop what they are doing.
Talking	... make sounds (like gurgling and babbling) to themselves and to get attention.	... babble strings of sounds, like 'na-na' and 'go-go'.	... say up to 20 single words (such as 'cup', 'daddy', 'dog'), even though they may not be very clear yet.	... start to put 2 or more words together such as 'more juice' or 'bye nanny'.	... put more than 3 words together to make short sentences, such as 'me want more juice' or 'he took my ball'.	... talk about something they have done or seen in the past, or something they will do in the future.	... say most words clearly so that people who don't know them can understand them at the time.
Social skills	... watch their parent/carer's face when they talk to them.	... enjoy fun-games like 'peekaboo' and show that they want to play again.	... copy a lot of things adults say or do, like saying 'hi', waving bye-bye or clapping.	... enjoy pretend play with their toys, such as feeding teddy.	... start to be interested in other children's play and want to join in.	... start conversations with family members and other people.	... choose their own playmates and play make-believe games, such as pretending to be Spiderman.

Think of one or two children in your setting.

Find their age band on the card in your pack and think about whether their talking and understanding are like the description.

Discuss the differences



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**More practical resources which
help childminders and parents**



Progress Checker

Universal

Parents need information and advice about child development to help their children to thrive

Child's progress checker

Progress checker navigation: Attention and listening (active), Understanding, Talking, Social communication.

Question 1 of 2

My baby can tell where a voice is coming from. For example, they turn to look towards someone who is talking on the other side of the room.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

[Progress Checker](#)

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Advice Line

free callback service

Targeted

Parents need information and advice about child development to help their children to thrive

For **parents** with questions about a child's talking and understanding words

Both **phone calls** and **email replies** offered

Online booking system

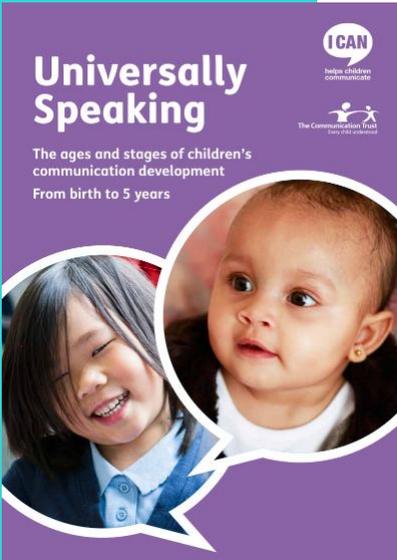
Provides **advice**, free **resources**, **signposting** to other services



[Advice line booking page](#)

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Other useful resources and links



[Universally Speaking](#)

Resource library for educators

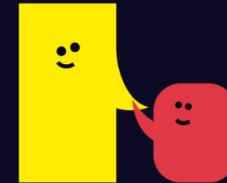
Check out our range of free resources for educators and professionals, designed to help you support the two million children facing challenges with talking and understanding words.



[Resource library for educators](#)

An introduction to speech, language and communication

Our online short course is free and a great place to start learning about children and young people's speech and language development.



[Introduction to Speech, Language and Communication](#)

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Developing a training programme on talking and understanding words specifically for childminders

Early Talk

Early Talk for Childminders, the story so far....

What have we done?

- Childminder Focus group
- Redeveloped training materials and format of the training
- Developed the Childminder Learning Log to accompany the training
- Created films featuring childminders

Our childminder testers' role is to:

- Trial the new training
- Complete the Learning log
- Provide feedback after every stage of the training



Early Talk Training

Supporting Communication and Language

Unit 1

What is communication and language?

Unit 2

Opportunities and interactions

Unit 3

The physical environment

Unit 4

Supporting children with Speech and Language Challenges

- Rooted in the EYFS and Welsh guidance so it relates directly to childminders' everyday work and practice
- Gives an opportunity to reflect and put learning into practice

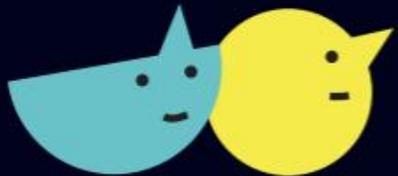
Early Talk training structure



Early Talk

Early Talk for Childminders in Wales
Supporting Communication and Language

Childminder Learning Log



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eLearning



Live webinar

Learning log

- Link between eLearning and live webinars
- Course information
- Activities resources and notes page
- Key messages
- Toolkit resource notes page
- Audit templates
- Diagrams and models

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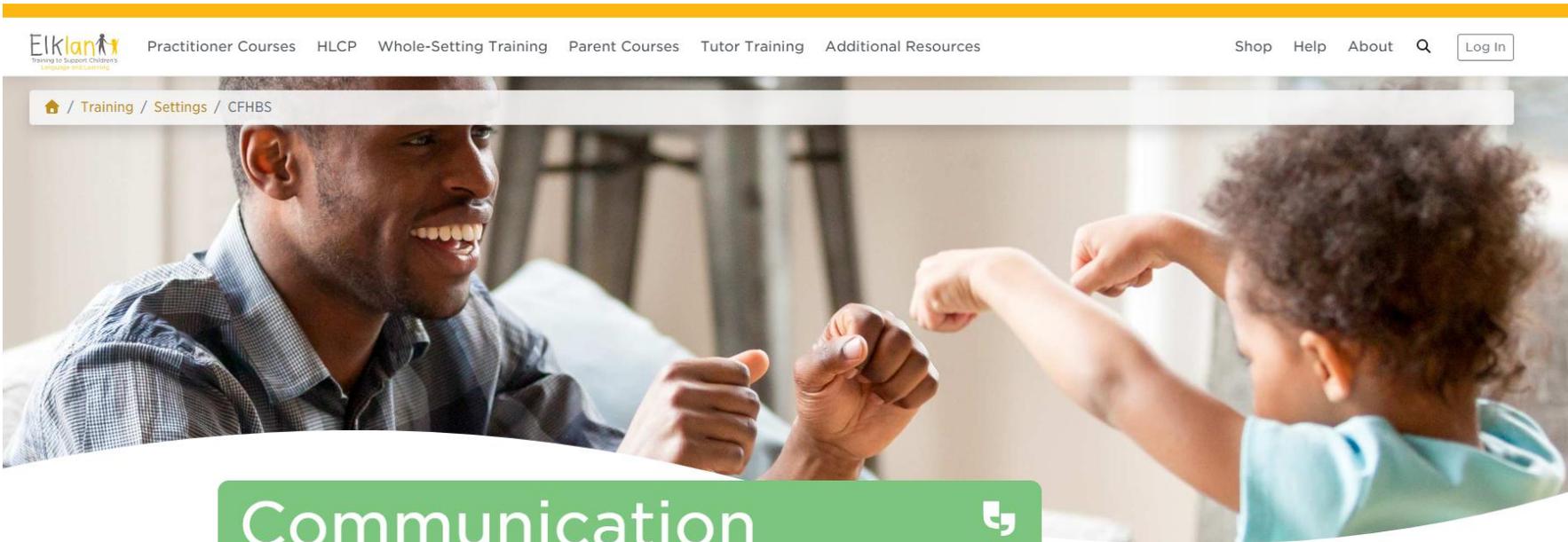
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Early Talk Toolkit

- 5 x First Words Poster
- 5 x Ages and Stages of Development Poster
- 5 x Top Techniques Poster
- 1 x Babbling Babies Activity Cards
- 1 x Toddler Talk Activity Cards
- 1 x Chatting With Children Activity Cards
- 2 X Ready Steady Talk Book
- 1 X Progress Check: Communication and Language Book



For those wanting to delve deeper



Communication
Friendly Home-Based
Settings

<https://www.elklan.co.uk/Training/Settings/CFHBS/>

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