

## Practice strategies

stage	Listening and Attention	Understanding (Receptive Language)	Talking (Expressive Language)	Social Communication
0-11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow the baby's lead by repeating vocalisations, mirroring movements and showing the baby that you are 'listening' fully.</li> <li>- Provide resources that stimulate babies' interests such as a shiny bell, a mirror, bubbles, musical instruments, sensory bags, treasure baskets.</li> <li>- Reduce distractions such as background noise e.g. TV or music</li> <li>- Follow child's lead, talk about what has their attention</li> <li>- Encourage playfulness, turn taking and responses, including peek-a-boo and rhymes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Playfully help babies to recognise that they are separate and different from others, for example, pointing to own and baby's nose, eyes, fingers</li> <li>- When you come into a room, call the baby's name and give them time to respond by stopping and listening, turning towards you or vocalising. Reward them with your attention when they respond.</li> <li>- Tell, as well as read, stories, looking at and interacting with young babies.</li> <li>- Let children handle books and draw their attention to pictures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Engage in playful interactions that encourage young babies to respond to, or mimic, adults.</li> <li>- Encourage babies to take turns. When they make a sound, smile and make a sound back. Then wait for the baby to make another sound (keep looking and smiling at them). These are the first stages of a conversation.</li> <li>- plan to have 'conversations' with young babies</li> <li>- When having a 'conversation', give babies plenty of time to 'reply'.</li> <li>- Talk to babies about the patterns and marks they make.</li> <li>- Tune in to the different messages babies are attempting to convey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Being physically close, making eye contact, using touch or voice all provide ideal opportunities for early 'conversations' between adults and babies, and between one baby and another</li> <li>- Make facial movements e.g. stick out tongue and give baby time to watch and respond.</li> <li>- Respond when baby uses voice, gesture, eye contact and facial expression to make contact by listening, watching, copying and taking turns.</li> <li>- Encourage them to 'ask' for more, e.g. shake a rattle and wait for them to show you they want more by looking at you, making a noise, reaching towards the toy.</li> </ul>
8-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interpret and give meaning to the things young babies show interest in</li> <li>- Follow young babies lead as they explore their surroundings, people and resources</li> <li>- Play alongside child. Copy what child is doing</li> <li>- Encourage and reward any return to an activity</li> <li>- Sing action rhymes such as 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' or clap and sing about something that you are doing, such as "We're getting Mina ready for bed".</li> <li>- Dance or march in time with music and encourage the child to feel the beat.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talk to babies about what you are doing, so they will link words with actions, for example, preparing lunch</li> <li>- Name things child is looking at, handling or interested in, using single words</li> <li>- Use non-verbal communication such as pointing and gesture to help child understand meaning of words</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share the fun of discovery and value babies' attempts at words, for example by picking up a doll in response to 'baba'</li> <li>- give a child alternatives: 'do you want teddy or the car?' and respond to any form of communication to indicate their choice (e.g. pointing or attempting the word) by saying the word as you give it to them.</li> <li>- Don't correct children's attempts at words, but simply repeat what they are trying to say correctly.</li> <li>- As well as repeating back what children say, you can expand what they say: e.g. if a child says 'juice' you could say 'more juice', 'juice please' or 'juice gone'.</li> <li>- Respond to children's attempts at words by commenting on them, for example, when a child says "dogon", you say "Yes, the dog's gone home. He might come back later".</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Play turn-taking games such as rolling a ball or pushing a car back and forth between adult and child.</li> <li>- Play 'Ready, steady ... (wait for eye contact) ... go games' e.g. when blowing bubbles, pushing a car towards the child, waiting at the top of the slide etc.</li> <li>- Ensure that the key person is available to greet a young baby at the beginning of the session, and to hand them over to parents at the end of a session, so that the young baby is supported appropriately and communication with parents is maintained.</li> <li>- Respond to what babies show you they are interested in and want to do, by providing a variety of activities, stories and games</li> <li>- Respond when children point or look at something by naming the thing they are pointing or looking at. Give them the object if appropriate and play with it together</li> </ul>
16-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage young children to explore and imitate sound. Talk about the different sounds they hear</li> <li>- Play alongside child and wait for him to include you in his play. Reward any attention to a shared activity</li> <li>- Sing nursery and actions rhymes</li> <li>- Look at pictures in books together and describe what is there. This is just as good as actually reading the story. 'Lift-the-flap' books can help to encourage attention.</li> <li>- Use different voices to tell stories and encourage young children to join in wherever possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognise young children's competence and appreciate their efforts when they show their understanding of new words and phrases.</li> <li>- Involve child in daily activities, naming and describing objects as well as talking about what things are used for and what you or the child are doing using action words.</li> <li>- Occasionally ask them to get something or find something you name.</li> <li>- Try to avoid using negatives e.g. instead of 'don't run off' try saying 'walk nicely'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to expand children's utterances e.g. if a child says 'dog jump' you can say 'yes the dog's jumping high'</li> <li>- Respond appropriately to children's questions and model the correct grammar e.g. if a child says 'Where teddy?' you can say 'Yes. Where is teddy?' as you help look.</li> <li>- Sensitively demonstrate pronunciation and ordering of words in response to what children say, rather than correcting them.</li> <li>- Plan to talk through and comment on some activities to highlight specific vocabulary or language structures e.g. 'You've caught the ball. I've caught the ball. Nasima's caught the ball.' This approach is helpful in encouraging all children's language skills.</li> <li>- Discuss with young children what marks represent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Show genuine interest and be willing to play along with a young child who is beginning to pretend.</li> <li>- Give your full attention when young children look to you for a response.</li> <li>- Help young children to label emotions such as sadness, or happiness, by talking to them about their own feelings and those of others.</li> </ul>

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22-36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Call the child's name first before giving an instruction</li> <li>- Encourage repetition, rhythm and rhyme by using tone and intonation as you tell, recite or sing stories, poems and rhymes from books.</li> <li>- Enjoy listening to and identifying sounds in everyday situations</li> <li>- Clap syllables together in familiar words such as names and favourite foods</li> <li>- Find opportunities to tell and read stories to children, using puppets, soft toys, or real objects as props</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talk about what is happening, who is doing what and where things are or belong during daily activities and when looking at pictures.</li> <li>- Often use describing words during daily activities e.g. size, texture, shape, temperature, appearance, colour, number, emotion words etc.</li> <li>- Use pictures to support understanding.</li> </ul> <p>Involve child in following a Visual Timetable to support understanding of a sequence of actions e.g. the routine of the session or completing a task such as hand washing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talk about things which interest young children and listen and respond to their ideas and questions.</li> <li>- Value non-verbal communications and those offered in home languages. Respond by adding words, gesture and other visual cues to support two way understanding.</li> <li>- Talk about what you're going to do, where you're going and what you have just done.</li> <li>- Use talk to describe what children are doing by providing a running commentary: "Oh, I can see what you are doing, you have to put the milk in the cup first".</li> <li>- Draw attention to marks, signs and symbols in the environment and talk about what they mean</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help children begin to negotiate with one another using language e.g. if they want to join in a game or if another child has a toy they want to play with, talk about what they could say and model it for them</li> <li>- Encourage children to learn one another's names.</li> <li>- Support children's symbolic play, recognising that pretending to do something can help a child to express their feelings.</li> <li>- Provide opportunities for children to talk with other children and adults about what they see, hear, think and feel.</li> <li>- Ensure that children have opportunities to join in. Help them to recognise and understand the rules for being together with others, such as waiting for a turn.</li> <li>- Create areas in which children can sit and chat with friends, such as a snug den.</li> </ul>
30-50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Choose stories with repeated refrains, dances and action songs involving looking and pointing and songs that require replies and turn-taking such as 'Tommy Thumb'</li> <li>- Ensure you have child's attention before giving an instruction</li> <li>- Use whole group strategies such as music playing or all hands on heads to gain children's attention.</li> <li>- Sometimes work with children in small groups. Practise and praise 'good sitting', 'good looking', 'good listening' and 'good turn-taking'</li> <li>- set up a listening area where children can enjoy rhymes and stories</li> <li>- Create an attractive book area where children and adults can enjoy books together.</li> <li>- When singing or saying rhymes talk about the similarities in the rhyming words. Make up alternative endings and encourage children to supply the last word of the second line e.g. 'Hickory Dickory boot, the mouse ran down the...'</li> </ul>	<p>Talk about where things go e.g. at tidy up time – using 'under, on top, behind' play games in which children have to put things or find things in certain places. Talk about where things/people are in pictures using these position words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Play games in which children follow instructions of increasing complexity e.g. 'walk <u>under</u> the <u>slide</u>, find a <u>stone</u> &amp; put it in the <u>bucket</u>'</li> <li>- When introducing a new activity, use mime and gesture to support language development. Showing children a photograph of an activity helps to reinforce understanding.</li> <li>- Give children clear directions and help them to deal with those involving more than one action, for example, "Put the cars away, please, then come and wash your hands and get ready for lunch".</li> <li>- Introduce children to books and other materials that provide information or instructions. Carry out activities using instructions, such as reading a recipe to make a cake.</li> <li>- Support children in recognising and writing their own names</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support children in using a variety of communication strategies, including signing, where appropriate.</li> <li>- Talk to children about what they have been doing and help them to reflect upon and explain events, for example, "You told me this model was going to be a tractor. What's this lever for?".</li> <li>- Provide practical experiences that encourage children to ask and respond to questions, for example, explaining pulleys or wet and dry sand.</li> <li>- Introduce, alongside books, story props, e.g. pictures, puppets and objects, to encourage children to retell stories and to think about how the characters feel.</li> <li>- Show interest in the words children use to communicate and describe their experiences.</li> <li>- Prompt children's thinking and discussion through involvement in their play.</li> <li>- Set up shared experiences that children can reflect upon, for example, visits, cooking, or stories that can be re-enacted.</li> <li>- Help children to predict and order events coherently, by providing props and materials that encourage children to re-enact, using talk and action</li> <li>- Make books with children of activities they have been doing, using photographs of them as illustrations</li> <li>- Write poems and short stories with children, scribing for them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talk with children to make links between their gestures and words, e.g. 'Your face does look cross. Has something upset you?'</li> <li>- Encourage children to express their needs and feelings in words.</li> <li>- Encourage children to choose to play with a variety of friends, so that everybody in the group experiences being included.</li> <li>- Encourage children to talk about their own home and community life, and to find out about other children's experiences.</li> <li>- At the start of the day, talk to the children about what you're going to do, the people they will see and the places they will visit. Remind them at the end of the day what they have done.</li> <li>- During everyday routines, ask children to tell you what happens next in a sequence of activities and what objects or toys you will need to get ready so that they can show you how much they know about the order of events.</li> <li>- Provide stability in staffing and in grouping of the children.</li> <li>- Provide time, space and materials for children to collaborate with one another in different ways, for example, building constructions.</li> <li>- Provide a role-play area resourced with materials reflecting children's family lives and communities.</li> </ul>
40-60+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Value children's contributions and use them to inform and shape the direction of discussions.</li> <li>- explain it is important to pay attention when others are speaking. Give children opportunities both to speak and to listen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use stories from books to focus children's attention on predictions and explanations, for example, "Why did the boat tip over?".</li> <li>- Encourage children to sort, group and sequence events in their play, using words such as: first, last, next, before, after, all, most, some, each, every.</li> <li>- Encourage children to predict possible endings to stories and events, sensible, ridiculous or funny.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage children to experiment with words and sounds, for example, in nonsense rhymes.</li> <li>- Ask children to think in advance about how they will accomplish a task. Talk through and sequence the stages together.</li> <li>- Encourage children to raise questions and suggest solutions and answers.</li> <li>- Plan fun activities and games that help children create rhyming strings of real and imaginary words e.g. 'Maddie, daddy, baddy, laddie'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage conversation with others and demonstrate appropriate conventions: turn-taking, waiting until someone else has finished, listening to others and using expressions such as 'please', 'thank you' and 'can I ...'</li> <li>- Show children how to use language for negotiating, by saying 'May I...'</li> <li>- 'Would it be alright ...?' 'I think that ...' and 'will you ...?' in your interactions with them.</li> <li>- Provide opportunities for talking for a wide range of purposes e.g. to present ideas to others as descriptions, explanations, instructions or justifications and to discuss and plan individual or shared activities.</li> <li>- model language appropriate for different audiences e.g. a visitor.</li> </ul>