

Parent Guide



@twinklparents

We're excited to share this activity with you. If you are interested in finding more engaging, fun and interesting activities for you and your children, then check out these links to different areas of the [Twinkl Parents](#) website.

games



crafts



puzzles



experiments



word searches



What is this resource and how do I use it?

This guide highlights the importance of opportunities for helping to support a child's communication skills. In this resource, you will find some helpful tips to help promote communication opportunities as well as some suggested activities.

What skills does this practise?

Speech and Language

Communication

Parent Guide

Further Activity Ideas and Suggestions

For more support with communication for your 5 to 7 year old, check out our [Parent Guide to Speech, Language and Communication in Key Stage One](#). These [games and activities](#) will also help with boosting communication skills.

Parents Blog



Twinkl Kids' TV



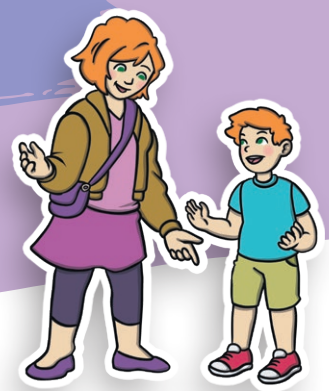
Homework Help



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Parents Hub

Creating Communication Opportunities



Creating communication opportunities at home is important for ensuring that communication is effective. It is important to purposely build in opportunities to communicate so that your child is exposed to many situations and can practise communicating for lots of reasons. Money and Thurman (1994) created the Means, Reasons and Opportunities Model to illustrate the key components of being an effective communicator, with opportunity being one key component of the model.

MEANS (How We Communicate)

NON-VERBAL

- signs
- symbols
- gestures
- body language
- facial expression
- pointing
- objects & pictures
- writing
- 'behaviour'

VERBAL

- volume
- intonation
- rate
- tone
- fluency
- words
- sounds

REASONS (Why We Communicate)

- attention
- greetings
- wants/needs
- request information
- give information
- protest/deny
- feelings
- choices
- preferences
- etc.

OPPORTUNITY (Where, When and with Whom We Communicate)

- partners
- times (e.g. dinner)
- places (e.g. at home or school)
- shared language
- shared interests

Money, D. and Thurman, S. 1994. Talkabout Communication. College of Speech and Language Therapists, (504), pp. 12-13.

Top Tips for Creating Opportunities



Find motivating topics.

The great thing about learning or playing at home is that you can tailor the activities to meet your child's interests. They will get so much more out of a topic if it is one that interests them.



Plan time to talk.

Planning in specific times when you can give your child your undivided attention will help enable them to communicate effectively without feeling rushed or unheard. Try to plan in a time each day where you can talk about your day and ask open-ended questions to help promote discussion.

Use pauses.

Pauses are a powerful way of creating an opportunity for your child to communicate. You can visually show your child that you are listening by giving them eye contact.



Ask questions.

Promote discussion by asking questions during games, activities or scenarios to give your child a prompt for talking. For example, you could ask, 'Why do you think...?' or 'What did...?'

Cooking or Baking

Activity

Encourage your child to help with simple tasks such as measuring ingredients, stirring or kneading dough.

Communication Tips

Ask open-ended questions throughout, such as 'What is the first step?' or 'What does it taste like?'

Daily Routines

Activity

Let your child help with daily tasks around the house such as doing the laundry, washing the pots or making the bed.

Communication Tips

Talk to your child about different jobs around the house and why they are important.

Around the House

Story Time

Activity

Read to your child or ask them to read to you.

Communication Tips

Ask your child questions about the characters, setting and events throughout the story. Encourage them to reflect on the story by talking about their favourite part or predict what they think will happen before you read the story. You could also encourage them to retell the story once they are familiar with it, including any key language from the story, such as 'Once upon a time...'

Nature Walks

Activity

Go for a walk around the local area with your child.

Communication Tips

Use senses to discuss what your child can see, smell, feel or hear.

Shopping

Activity

Ask your child to help you find the items that you need from the supermarket. You could give them a checklist to tick off as you go.

Communication Tips

Ask your child for their opinions on different items. You can also discuss the price and find which items are cheaper or better value for money.

On the Go

Journeys

Activity

On long journeys, play games to keep your child occupied, such as 'I Spy' or '21 Questions'.

Communication Tips

'I Spy' will encourage your child to take notice of their surroundings and improve vocabulary. You could also ask them to elaborate on what they are thinking of. '21 Questions' is great to encourage your child to ask questions.

Morning Routine

Activity

Use your child's normal routine, such as getting out of bed, brushing their teeth, getting dressed, eating breakfast and packing their bag for school to create talking opportunities.

Communication Tips

Encourage your child to talk through what they are doing and use time language, e.g. 'First, I will have my breakfast and then I will brush my teeth.'

Mealtime Conversations

Activity

At dinner time, go around the table and ask everyone to share one positive thing about their day.

Communication Tips

Model good sentence structure and then encourage your child to follow a similar format, e.g. 'My favourite part of my day was when...'. Encourage listening and turn-taking.

Time of Day Opportunities

Bedtime

Activity

Talk to your child about their day – what went well, what they are looking forward to tomorrow and if there is anything that they are worried about.

Communication Tips

Encourage open communication and leave pauses for your child to talk freely. Encourage them to use their emotions to discuss how they are feeling by asking 'How did you feel today?'

We hope you find the information on our website and resources useful. As far as possible, the contents of this resource are reflective of current professional research. However, please be aware that every child is different and information can quickly become out of date. The information given here is intended for general guidance purposes only and may not apply to your specific situation.



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