

TALK

CHILDREN 0 - 1 YEARS



BABY TALK

From what age does it make sense to start talking to babies? Why?

Babies are naturally social. They can recognize the voices and faces of their family members almost from Day 1, and love to “communicate” when awake.

Babies will watch and listen to you talking very attentively. Even though they may not respond in words, they will respond to your speech with facial and body movements and sounds.

These “conversations” between parents and babies help them develop socially and emotionally and prepare for “real talking”.

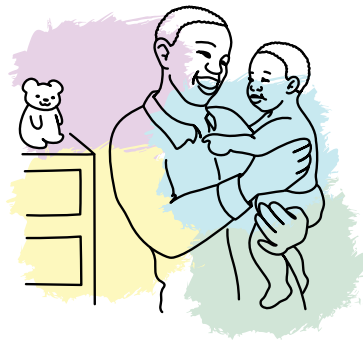


TALK



Try this in the group & then at home!

1. Watch your baby. Copy their facial expressions and their sounds. If they are quiet, be the first to make a sound.
2. Wait for them to respond. Then, copy them or repeat the sound again.
3. Do this "talking game" during bath or feeding time, when changing their nappy, or when resting.



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CHILDREN 0 - 5 YEARS

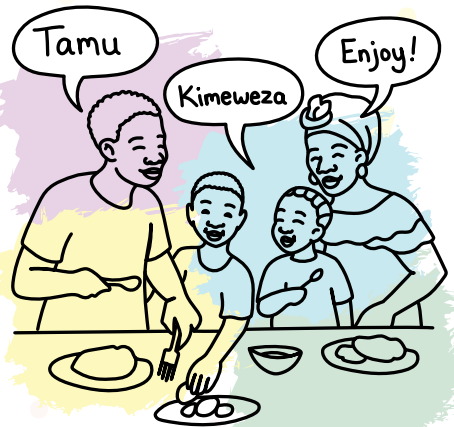
2. Many Languages!

How many languages do you speak to your children?

Children learn languages very easily. The first year of life is especially important for learning languages.

Babies who hear many languages when young find it much easier to understand and speak more than one language as they grow up.

Talking to children helps them learn languages better as compared to learning from a computer or TV.

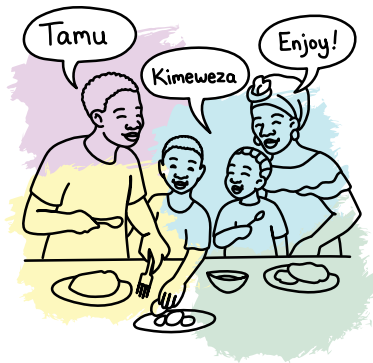


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Try this at home!

1. Talk and sing to your baby in as many languages as you know (e.g., Swahili, Kikuyu, Dholuo).
2. Parents, siblings, grandparents, and others can do this too, especially if they know other languages.
3. With older children, try speaking in different languages during meals. For example, speak your mother tongue at breakfast and another language at dinner.
4. Remind them what language you're using so they don't get confused!



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CHILDREN 0 - 5 YEARS

3. I READ TO MY CHILD

How old can a child be to enjoy looking at books and listening to you read?



Try this in the group!

- Listen to your facilitator read a children's story to the group.
- What did you notice about the reading?
- Now, pick a book and try reading a story with your child. You can read your way or try some things that you just observed.

TALK

The Why

You can start reading books and telling stories to your child in the first days of life. Reading to children develops their language and builds new brain connections. Children who are read to or told stories every day in their early years, do well at school.

Make reading books a routine, for example, read a book together just before bedtime.

As you read:

- Change your voice, make pauses, and use gestures as you read or tell a story.
- Stop and ask questions: What is this? Where are they going? What will happen next?



Try this at home!

- Find a children's book at home or any book that has pictures.
- "Read" the book or talk about the pictures before going to bed.



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CHILDREN 0 - 2 YEARS

4. SING AND TOUCH!



Try this in the group!

Encourage babies to explore their different body parts (their hands and feet) during playtime.

Sing songs about body parts (such as the head, shoulders, knees, and toes) or a song where you touch or shake gently some body part as you sing.

Or make up your own song!

TALK

The Why

Babies start to become aware of their own body in the first year of life. They start to understand that they have hands and feet. You will notice your baby touching, moving, and looking at their hands and feet.

Singing "body songs" and moving in different ways helps babies understand more about their body.



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CHILDREN 2 - 5 YEARS

5. SING ALONG



Try this in the group!

Sing a song with your child and encourage them to join with actions, finger movements, and clapping. Local songs like "Lala toto lala", "isukuti", and "Muto Muhande" are wonderful examples. You can also make a new song with your child.

Invite your family and relatives to sing their favourite songs for the child.

TALK

The Why

Singing to young children helps them develop language skills. Singing songs and making playful actions may help children learn language(s) easier (e.g., "isukuti").

Singing can also reduce stress and help children adapt to important daily routines (e.g., "Lala toto lala").

Singing traditional songs during celebrations can connect children and family.



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CHILDREN 0 - 2 YEARS

6. Nature Talks



Try this in the group!

Walk with your baby outside. Watch their eyes and talk about what they look at or point to (e.g., "Look at that the green mpaga plant! Look at the bright blue sky!").

TALK

The Why

Babies are excellent listeners. They begin to understand language long before they can speak.

Children who hear lots of words when they are young have a bigger vocabulary and become better communicators in the future.

Families can help babies learn language by talking to them from an early age.

Talking about what babies are looking at or doing helps them learn!



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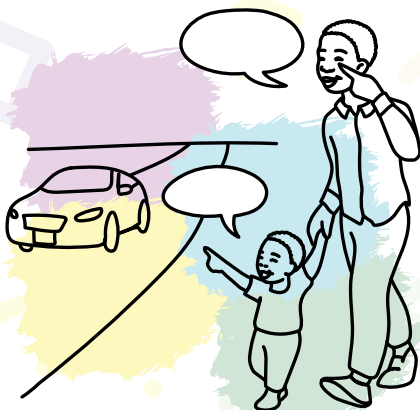


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CHILDREN 1 - 2 YEARS

7. ADD WORDS!



Try this in the group!

Try and add words on to what your child says to you.

For example, if they say "cat", you can say: "Yes, a big grey cat!" Or if they say "uji", you can say: "Mama is making uji."

If they just say "ba" or "na", you can still add to it!

Let your child hear you repeat the word they say and the words you added.

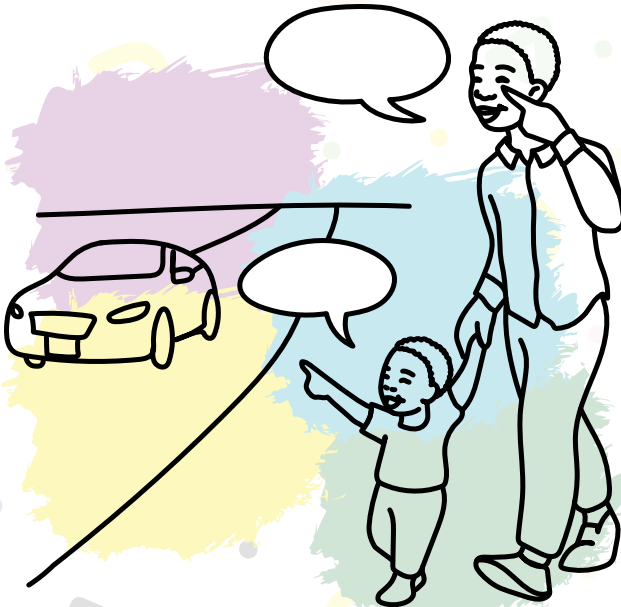
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The Why

Children's vocabulary and use of new words grow if you help by adding extra words to what your child says.

"Adding on" is done by using a word your child says ("mama") and adding 1-2 words to it ("mama is going to work"). Add different words, like descriptions (big, hot), and actions (give, go).

"Adding on" teaches children how their own words can be put together and used in longer sentences.



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CHILDREN 3 - 5 YEARS

8.

GUESS WHAT I SEE



Try this in the group!

Pick an object that you can see. Ask your child to guess what it is. For example:

- "I see with my little eye... Something round that is making sounds" (a clock)
- "I see with my little eye... Something beginning with S" (a spoon).

Try to pick a different object or a different letter of the alphabet each time you play.

TALK

The Why

By 4-5 years of age, children can say most sounds and words correctly and should be understood by everyone.

Children who have difficulty saying different sounds may have trouble communicating their needs and wants. They may feel frustrated because they can't be understood, be less confident speaking, and have difficulties at school.

You can play language games with your child like "Guess what I see" to help them.



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TALK

CHILDREN 3 - 5 YEARS



SHOW AND TELL



Try this in the group!

Tell the child about your favourite fruit (or animal, or activity). Describe its colour, size, shape, smell, etc.

Then, ask the child to tell you about their favourite fruit (or animal, or activity).

Help the child by asking questions: what is its shape, colour, size. Thank them for sharing!

TALK

The Why

Playing "Show and Tell" helps children practice and develop their language and communication skills.

It also allows them to tell others about things that interest them (such as sports, animals, cars).

Finally, "Show and Tell" helps children build their confidence to speak in public, plan what to say, and ask and answer questions.



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CHILDREN 3 - 5 YEARS

10. Traditional stories



Try this in the group!

Tell your child a traditional story that you grew up hearing or learned later. Use funny voices and movements as you tell a story.

Then ask the child to tell you their own story. It can be the same story or a different one. Encourage and praise the child.

TALK

The Why

Traditional stories are good for teaching children values without them even noticing. Different animals and characters take certain actions and then must deal with good or bad consequences of their decisions.

Tell traditional stories as you go to bed. If during the day something happens that reminds you of the story, tell the child: "Remember what the elephant did? What happened then?"



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CHILDREN 3 - 5 YEARS

11. I can write!



Try this in the group!

Tell the child you will be a doctor. Say you will write a prescription (on the paper) for the child to get some vitamins in the clinic. Write 2-3 words and give the paper to the child.

Now ask the child to be a doctor. Ask them to write you a prescription. Encourage scribbling or "pretend writing." Ask your child to tell you what they have written.

At home, show your child how you write things, like a shopping list. Encourage the child to pretend to write their list. Show interest in what they write.

TALK

The Why

Writing is a complex skill that begins with a toddler scribbling lines and circles.

Preschool children often engage in "pretend" writing, for example, by making marks that look like letters.

If children see siblings, parents, or other adults writing in daily life, they will be more motivated to try and "write."

Pretend writing should be encouraged as it prepares children for "real" writing.



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CHILDREN 3 - 5 YEARS

12. THIS IS ME!



Try this in the group!

Ask your child to draw themselves and then tell you about themselves. What do they look like? What do they like to do? What are their favourite foods? Who are the people they love? Encourage them by asking questions.

To motivate your child. You can draw yourself and tell your child about yourself, what you like, and the people you love. 😊

TALK

The Why

Every child is an individual. Children are different in many ways—how they look, how they act, what they like and dislike, and what they are good at.

Children grow up to be happy and self-confident if adults show them that they are valued and loved as they are. Children should learn to tell their own stories about who they think they are.



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CHILDREN 3 - 5 YEARS

13.

WHAT LETTER IS THIS?



Try this in the group!

1. Write a big letter (such as "B") on paper or sand. Say the letter out loud and ask them to say it too!
2. Ask your child to say some words that start with the "B" sound. Give them clues. For example: "What starts with B? Bed... boy... what else?"
3. Ask your child to look around for objects that begin with the letter ("B" is for ball). Help them find things.

At home, try a new letter each day!

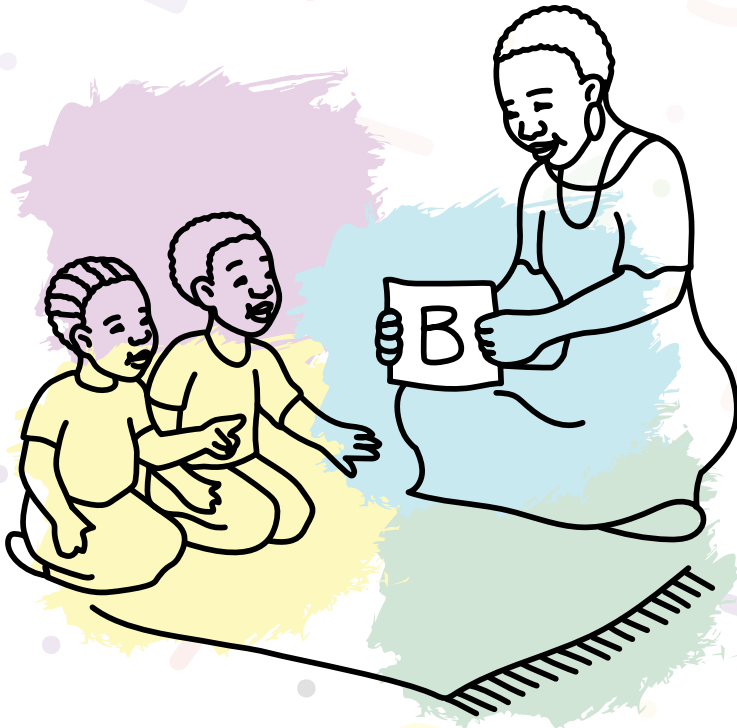
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The Why

Children learn to understand and use spoken language naturally and easily.

But learning to read written language (letters, words) requires more help from adults.

Learning the letters of the alphabet is an important skill for future literacy. Playing fun letter games can help children learn the alphabet.



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CHILDREN 0 - 5 YEARS



MAKE A BOOK

The Why

Books are not always easy to find. Fortunately, you can make your own books at home!

Having books at home helps children learn how to hold a book and turn pages, and convinces them that reading is enjoyable (and not a chore).

Books with pictures stimulate children's curiosity. They can be with or without text and you or the child can make their own story about the pictures.



TALK



Try this at home! (Bonus)

BABIES: Make a cloth book from plain and light-coloured material. Draw simple pictures of different faces on the fabric pages (happy, sad, surprised, serious, or angry). You can even stitch buttons for eyes and strings or grass for hair! 4 pages is plenty! Stich the squares together on the side. Tell stories, for example:

- This baby is happy, because he is going to see his grandma!
- And this baby is sad, because he is hungry.

3 TO 5 YEARS: Find with your child some pictures in newspapers, such as animals, foods, cars, people, or just interesting situations. Select 5 to 8 pictures.

Paste them on squares cut from the boxes. Ask the child if you should write something under.

Join the "pages" together by key ring or by string. Take turns talking about each picture.



TALK

15. FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS



Try this at home! (Bonus)

1. Think of a simple instruction to give to the child, something that has 2-3 steps (for example: find my bag, get my phone, and bring it to mama).
2. Call the child and look into their eyes.
3. Use a friendly voice and break the task into steps.
4. Praise them when they listen well and do the task!
5. Later, try a more challenging task!

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The Why

Following instructions is an important skill for daily life.

Children need to learn to listen and follow instructions so they can participate at home and school.

Learning to follow instructions will also help them in adulthood.



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CHILDREN 3 - 5 YEARS

16. MY FAMILY HISTORY



Try this at home! (Bonus)

Tell your child a story about someone in your family or about the place where you grew up. If you have a photo, show it to them.

Then ask the child to tell you their own story. It can be about something that happened to them or a story they know (like the Elephant and the Hare).

TALK

The Why

Our identity is created by learning about where we live, who we live with, and where our people come from.

Storytelling can help children develop connections to their family, home, community, and culture.

Children can, with time, start telling their own stories about who they are and where they come from.



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