

Section 1.9

Playing (with) and listening to different sounds

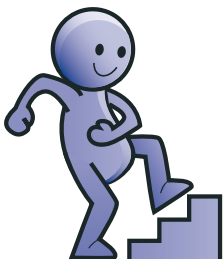


Why is this important?

Babbling is important for social interaction as it attracts the attention of those around and also stimulates children's own sound-making skills. Babbling and sound play encourage children to practise making and listening to different sounds.

What to do

- Whilst playing with a child, make the noises that the toys make. If the child copies you (or tries to copy you), give lots of praise and repeat the sounds again for him/her to hear.
- Use the following sounds during play or regular routines:
 - ★ 'Sshh' whilst the toy is sleeping.
 - ★ 'Mmm' whilst eating.
 - ★ 'Brm brm' whilst driving a toy car.
 - ★ 'Weee' whilst going down the slide.
 - ★ 'Oh no' if something falls.
 - ★ 'Aah' whilst cuddling the baby.
- Encourage the child to attempt animal noises when you're looking at or playing with animals (e.g. the cow goes 'moo'). Sing 'Old MacDonald had a Farm'.
- Encourage copying through repetitive songs and rhymes. Rhymes with actions such as 'Round and Round the Garden' and 'Wheels on the Bus' are often favourites.
- Whilst playing, copy the sounds that the child makes. If the child listens or looks at you and repeats the sound, you do the same. Make the turn-taking exchange go on as long as you can!



Step up

- Include sounds for objects which are similar (e.g. transport – planes, trains, cars).
- When engaging in a turn-taking game, make sounds (e.g. 'b-b-b') and then add in a new sound and see if the child can copy (e.g. 'b-b-b-s-s-s').

Step down

- Use lots and lots of repetition – children need to hear sounds and words many times before they start to copy them.
- Use actions to accompany the sounds (e.g. 'mmm' for rub your tummy; 'sshh' for put your finger up to lips and quieten your voice). Children may copy the action before the sound.

