



Talk With Me
Early Language Services

ENCOURAGING LANGUAGE EVERY DAY (2-3 YEARS)

Learning New Words

- **Play hide and seek**—with people or toys: When the child finds a toy/person, talk about where it was hidden (in the bag, behind the couch, etc.). This is a fun way to teach your child positioning words (in, out, under, next to and beside) which will help them follow direction when they are older.
- **Body tracing:** Have your child lie down on a large piece of paper or the sidewalk and trace around their body. The you can add eyes, nose, and mouth OR allow your child to colour/decorate their outline any way that they want.
Variation: If your child doesn't want to lie still, start with tracing just their hand/foot, or trace your hand/foot instead.
- **Read a book again:** Children often have favorite books that they love to have read to them over and over again. Although you may find the same story boring, your child needs to hear those same words said that same way many times before they really know what they mean.
- **Scavenger hunt:** You can look for colors, letters, toys, items outside (like rocks and leaves), etc. At first make the scavenger hunt easy enough to keep your child interested. Hide only a few things and put them in plain view. They will still learn important skills.

Tip: Be specific

Use the actual words for objects, actions.

Taking Turns/Social

An unwillingness to share is normal for a 2-year old, but it won't hurt to practice.

- **Set up a dress up area:** You can use old clothes or Halloween costumes. Let your child play dress-up with other children their age.
- **Playing next to friends.** Offer some play activities that don't require sharing items. Art projects, making music (where each child has an instrument), sand or water play are all options where you can play next to a friend (keeping conflicts to a minimum).
- **"My Turn, Your Turn," game:** Practice taking turns. When you're making pancakes, for instance, say "my turn" as you stir the batter, then hand the spoon to your toddler and say "your turn." Or you can set a timer and explain that when the bell rings it's time for someone else to have a turn with a toy.
- **Someone's snoring** Lie on the floor and pretend to fall asleep, making exaggerated snoring noises. Suddenly "wake up" and act startled.



Categorizing

Grouping Similar Things Together

Talk about how things are alike and different.

- **Sort laundry:** bonus if you match socks
- **Go on a color hunt:** a rainbow toy hunt
 - Look around your house for toys of a certain color.
 - Use a marker, toy or paint chip to help your child as they look.

Note: Arranging toys into an actual rainbow, is optional.



<https://handsonaswegrow.com/colors-a-rainbow-toy-hunt/>

Play

Make-believe:

- Play house: act out routines like eating breakfast/lunch/dinner, dressing, caring for baby
- Going to the grocery store: make a list with your child and then walk around the house pretending to put items in your cart
- Restaurants: you can pretend to be the cook, waiter and customers
- Driver: you could be a bus driver, firefighter, police officer, etc
- Baker: talk about what ingredients you would need to bake a cake, pretend to stir the batter, put it in the oven, decorate and finally eat!

Sing

Add new songs to your repertoire: bonus if they include body parts and/or new actions.

Some examples of songs are:

- Open and shut them
- If you're happy and you know it
- Head, shoulders, knees and toes
- Hokey pokey

Listen

- Make something together. Make cookies, a picture, a craft, or build with toys. Talk about what your "plan" is for the "project" (what you want it to look like and what you will do with it once it is finished) and go over any directions.
- Practice listening skills by **walking the animal walk**
 - On your hands and knees like a little dog
 - Heavily like an elephant
 - Silently like a mouse
 - Waddle like a duck
 - Lifting your head up as high as you can like a giraffe
 - Jumping like a kangaroo

Add-on: Write each "animal walk" on a piece of paper or a popsicle stick and place them in a jar. Let your child pick what you'll do next.

- **Simon Says:** Start out with simple directions—"Simon says, touch your toes"—then graduate to silly, more complex routines ("Simon says, tug on your left ear, then your right ear"). And don't forget to drop "Simon says" every now and then!
- **Variations:** You can also encourage your child to jump, skip, catch something, and more.
- **Stop! Go!** Play games that involve starting and stopping, such as "Red light, green light."