



The Communication Trust
Every child understood

Session 1.4

Strategies and Support for Children with SLCN



Norwich
Opportunity Area

communicate

Independent Speech &
Language Therapy

Session aims

- Be aware of strategies to support all children's speech, language and communication development, including those with SLCN
- Identify strategies which can be embedded into your current practice

What affects speech, language and communication development? Research evidence shows...

- The **amount** of language children hear is important
The **more** they hear, the **more time** their parents spend talking with them and the **more types of words** they are exposed to, the more children use.
- **What adults say to children is also important**
Children seem to develop strong language skills when parents ask **open-ended questions**, ask **children to elaborate**, and focus on **topics of interest** to the child. **Responding to what the child is talking about** and **having familiar routines** also promote shared understanding.
- **Co operative interactions are very important**
Conversations about **how people feel** and **how that affects what they do**, are important in learning social communication skills.

When can you support speech, language and communication?

- Any time – all the time!
- In everyday routines and conversations
- In all activities, play and social times
- Set up specific opportunities/ activities
- 1 to 1 and in groups
- When children are talking with you or with other children

Key principles

- Listen to and value the contributions of children and young people
- Consider their level of development – where they are now and where next
- Model good communication
- Make language learning fun
- Work with parents and carers
- Include speech, language and communication in your planning
- Make the most of opportunities throughout the day
- Keep an eye and make a note

Supporting the speech, language and communication of young children

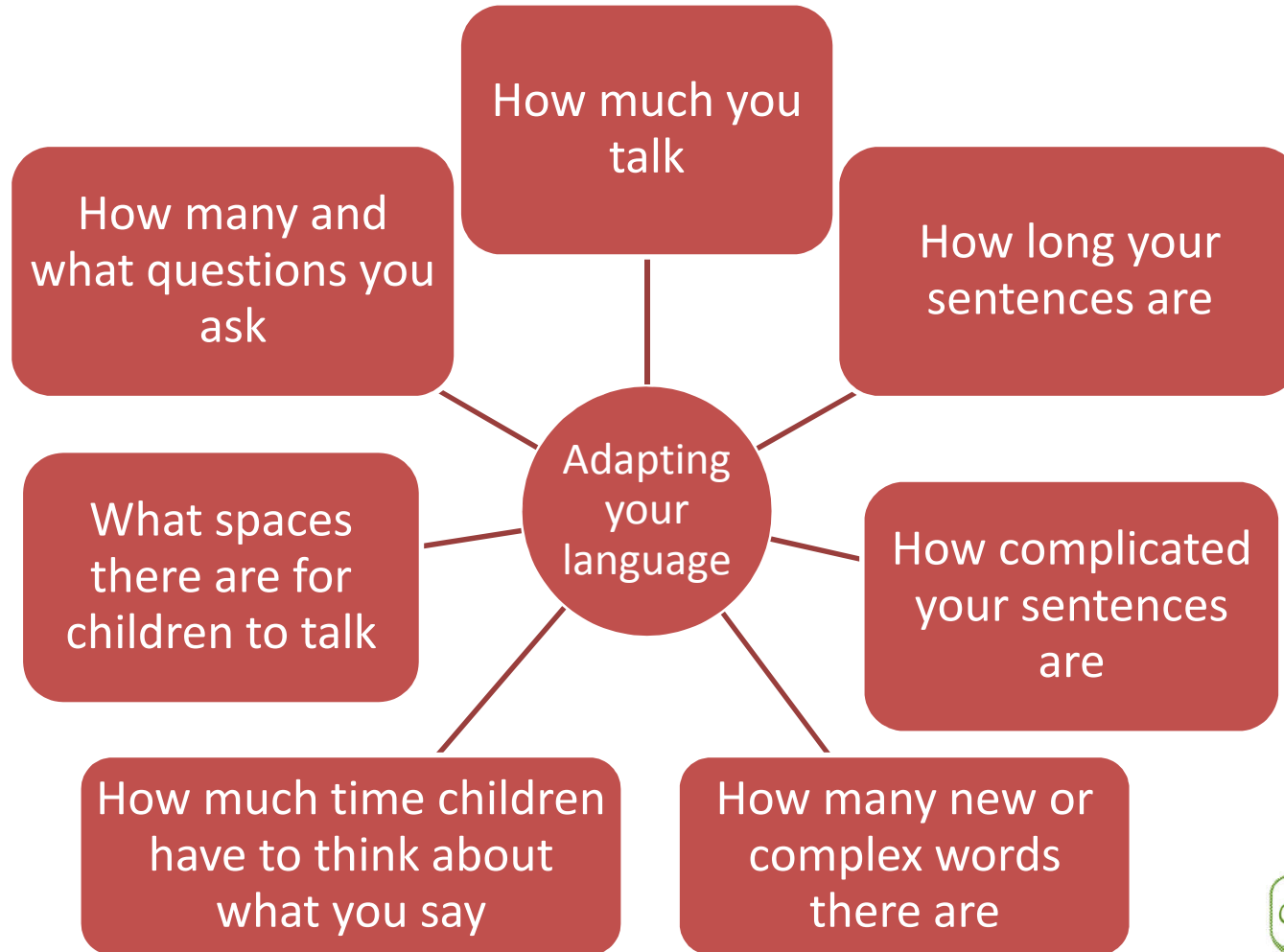
Learning to Talk, Talking to Learn has 10 top tips:

1. Get the child's attention first
2. Make learning language fun
3. Use simple repetitive language
4. Build on what the child says to you
5. Demonstrate rather than criticise
6. Imitate the child's language
7. Use all the senses to teach new words
8. Give the child time to respond
9. Be careful with questions
10. Use the full range of expression

Supporting the speech, language and communication of young children

- Choose a technique from the list on the previous slide. Discuss with a partner your thoughts about this technique
- Which of the techniques do you currently use?
- Choose one technique you haven't used before and make a plan to use it in your setting.

Adapting your language – key things to think about



Adapting your language – examples

- Pacing: Adults use a slow pace during conversation; give children plenty of time to respond and take turns in interacting with them.
- Pausing: Adults pause expectantly and frequently during interactions with children to encourage their turn-taking and active participation.

Adult: “How do we call this? It’s a... pancake!” Adult: “What day is it today, do you know?... It was Monday yesterday so it’s... Today is - Tuesday!”

- Confirming: Adults respond to the majority of child utterances by confirming understanding of the child’s intentions.

Child: “My grandmother has rabbits in her garden”. Adult: “That sounds interesting, tell me about the rabbits later”

Child: “Look Miss!” Adult: “Oh look what you’ve done! He’s made a car!”

Child: “Miss, look at my star!” Adult: “Oh wow... this is a big bright star!”

- Imitating: Adults imitate and repeat what child says more or less exactly

Child: “It is my sister’s birthday on Saturday”. Adult: “Is it really her birthday? How exciting”

Child: “Miss look at my tower”. Adult: “Oh wow... look at your tower!”

Adapting your language – examples

- Commenting: Adults comment on what is happening or what the child is doing at that time

Adult: *“Charlie, that’s a great design”.*

Adult: *“A spider! Your favourite animal!”*

Adult: *“I like the way Alfie and Tiana put all the blocks together to build a really tall tower.”*

- Extending: Adults repeat what child says and add a small amount of syntactic or semantic information.

Child: *“Because Cinderella was scared of her sisters”.* Adult: *“That’s right. Cinderella was scared of her two horrible sisters”.*

Child: *“My mummy brought me here”.* Adult: *“Your mummy’s brought you here has she? She’s seen you to the gate. Here she is!”*

Child: *“Chimney house”.* Adult: *“Chimney that’s like the one we saw when we went on our walk”.*

Child: *“Look at my dress”.* Adult: *“It’s a very beautiful summer dress”.*

- Labelling: Adults provide the labels for familiar and unfamiliar actions, objects, or abstractions (e.g. feelings).

Adult: *“When someone doesn’t feel excited in a nice way, we say they feel...(pause) upset”*

Adapting your language – examples



Strategies to support children and young people's SLCN

Many different strategies e.g.

- Adapting adult language and communication
- Enhancing the environment
- Using resources and tasks
- Supporting confidence and self-esteem
- Facilitating communication between peers
- A focus on areas of speech, language and communication

Will vary according to child or young person's:

- Age
- Needs
- Interests
- Targets
- Priorities
- Setting
- Level of support in place

Adapting and modifying adult language and communication to support SLCN



- Label actions and objects with one or two words at a time
- Use new or target words frequently
- Model to support their language
- Minimise words that they won't understand
- Chunk information
- Pause after important points
- Use gestures or signs to support what you say
- Give instructions in the order that they need to happen
- Use reminders
- Avoid idioms which may be confusing



Adapting our own communication



Adult talk

Once we're all sorted and we've tidied up the bricks especially, we're going to go outside and have a run around before we settle back in for painting.

What were you thinking this morning, walking around like that?

The purpose of the people's reaction is clear under the circumstances

Get your coat after you've finished your drink

I expect more of you

Reflections and actions

- How can you make some small adaptations to your language to support children's speech, language and communication development?
- What are you already doing that you can do more of?