

**Talking with  
your child helps  
them learn**



Talking together is one of the best gifts you can give your child.

It helps them to grow their language skills, and good language skills help them to learn and build positive relationships.



## What should I talk about?

Kōrero (conversation) gives your child opportunities to practise their language and words. Here are some ideas:

- ★ talk about your daily routines
- ★ ask your child to describe what they're doing when they're playing and exploring
- ★ sing songs and play rhyming games with your child.

We're going to the shop now to get some milk.

## Reading with your child



Reading lots of books and stories are some of the best ways for children to learn to use language. Read with your child at all ages!



## What language should I use?

Use your **strongest** language – the language you feel most confident with. This could be English, Māori, Samoan, or another language.

It's good for children to know more than one language.

If you and your family speak one language at home and a different language is spoken at an early childhood centre or school, your child will be learning to understand and speak in two languages.

Keep using your strongest language at home with your child. It will be easier for them to learn the second language when their first language is strong.

## When your child is under 2



- ★ Talk with them so they can see your face and you can see what they are interested in.
- ★ Talk about what you and your child are doing.
- ★ Talk about what you can see.

## When your child is 2-3

- ★ Build your child's words into a full sentence.

*Child says:*

**Milk!**

*You say:*

**Would you like some more milk?**

- ★ Introduce new words.

*Child says:*

**It's nice.**

*You say:*

**Yes, it's delicious.**

## When your child is 4-5

- ★ Use lots of new and interesting words when talking with your child, and encourage them to use them.

I had a *fantastic* time today.

- ★ Play rhyming and guessing games.
- ★ Ask questions that can't be answered with "yes" or "no".

Why did it make such a big noise?

## When your child is 6-7

- ★ Encourage your child to listen well to others and take turns to speak.
- ★ Give them time to think if they're having difficulty saying something.
- ★ Encourage them to share their opinion on something.
- ★ Give them opportunities to use their imagination to tell stories and play games.



## **Remember, all children are different**

Children will learn to do things at different times. Just like crawling and walking, some children talk earlier than others.

The best thing you can do is keep talking with your child and keep things fun.

## **If you are worried**

If you think your child is not talking or hearing well for their age, talk to your doctor or your child's teacher about your concerns. A speech-language therapist can also help.

### **For more information, visit**

<http://seonline.tki.org.nz/educator-tools/much-more-than-words>

Published by the New Zealand Ministry of Education.  
[www.education.govt.nz](http://www.education.govt.nz)

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ISBN 978-1-77669-147-0

Item number 69147