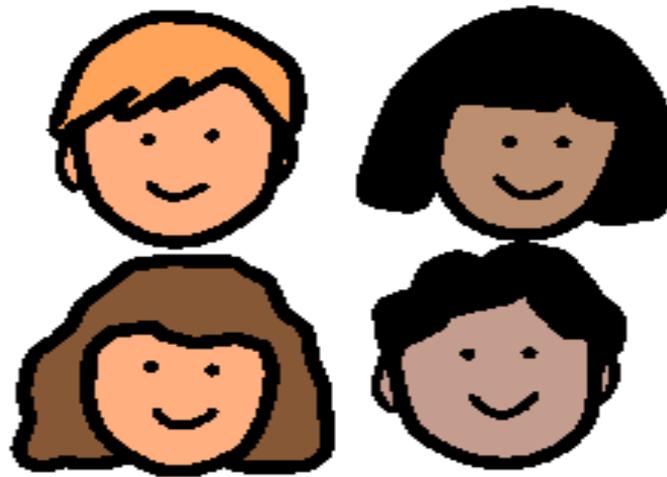


Early Years  
Speech and Language Therapy (SLT)  
(for 0-5 year olds)



Supporting your child's pronunciation at  
home

April 2020

## The Pack

This home programme pack has been designed by Speech and Language Therapists and is based on the most up-to-date research on communication development in the early years.

### How-to-use this pack

1. Take a look at the **top tip**
2. Each top tip has an **activity** idea you could try
3. Think about how you can use the top tip in other **daily routines** (e.g. snack time, playtime, bath time etc.) to increase the opportunities for your child to learn throughout their day.
4. ... and finally keep it **fun** and keep it **going!**

### Children' speech sounds develop gradually....

Approximate age	Usually children will:
18-24 months	Use a limited number of sounds in their words – often these are p, b, t, d, m and w. Children will also often miss the ends off words at this stage. They can usually be understood about half of the time.
2-3 years	Use a wider range of speech sounds. However, many children will shorten longer words, such as saying 'nana' instead of 'banana'. They may also have difficulty where lots of sounds happen together in a word, e.g. they may say 'pider' instead of 'spider.'  They often have problems saying more difficult sounds like 'sh', 'ch', 'th' and 'r.' However, people that know them can mostly understand them.
3-4 years	Have difficulties with a small number of sounds – for example 'r', 'w', 'l', 'f', 'th', 'sh', 'ch' and 'z'.
4-5 years	Use most sounds effectively. However, they may have some difficulties with more difficult words such as 'scribble' or 'elephant'.

## LISTENING FIRST

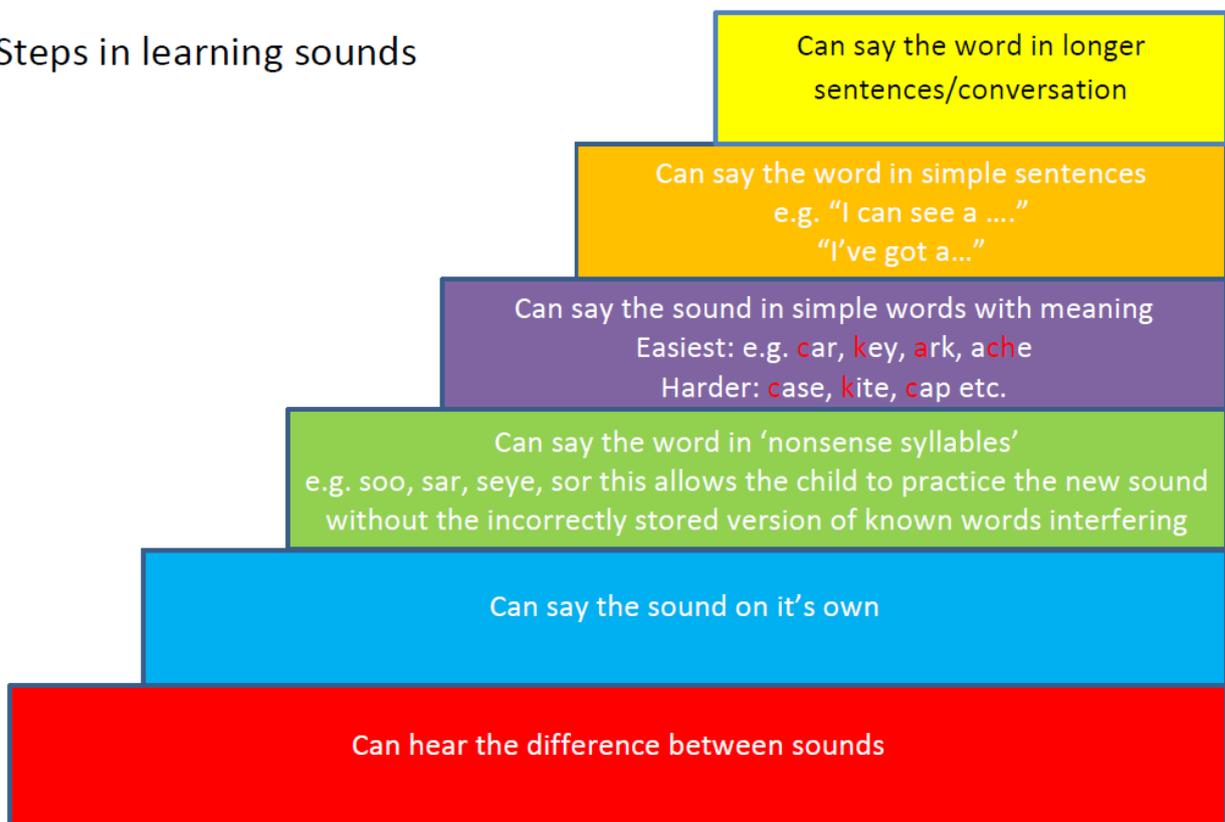
Remember that before a child is able to say a sound or letter correctly, they need to hear it lots and lots of times.

Lots of adults fall into the trap of only asking their child to say the word correctly, without having given the child the chance to hear how it should be said, lots of times.

You will find that many of these strategies do not require your child to say the sound or letter, but just to listen to you saying it.

### This is helping your child to be able to say the word

#### Steps in learning sounds



**This diagram shows the steps children need to take towards changing how they say sounds....**

**It's actually quite tricky! Try changing the way you say one of your speech sounds to see how tricky it is!**

## Tip 1: Repeat your child's mistakes back correctly

### Activity 1

When your child makes mistakes with this pronunciation, **repeat what they said back again correctly** as part of your reply. For example:



This works because:

- × **No pressure for child to repeat**
- × **Do not correct the child**
- × **Do not tell them they said it wrong**

However by using this strategy :

- ✓ **Child hears how they should have said it**
- ✓ **Child hears the right version lots of times, so they can remember it**
- ✓ **Doesn't stop the natural flow of conversation**

Once you have done this, you can then try to repeat the tricky word many times. Aim to say it at least 10 times. This sounds like A LOT! But here is an example of how to do it...



Remember:

**DON'T** put too much emphasis on the word, if it is over-emphasised or said too loudly it changes the sound of the word

**DO** use nonsense and songs at times to make it fun and increase your recasts!

"Oh look at the little **cat-cat-cat-kitty-cat-cat-cat**. It's a fluffy wuffy **cat-cat-cat-kitty-cat-cat-cat**".

**Tip 2: Model lots of words, that contain the sound your child finds difficult to say...**

### Activity 2:

#### Make a 'Feely Bag'



- Find a selection of objects/pictures that start with the sound your child finds it tricky to say
- Put them in a bag
- Let your child choose an object or picture from the bag and **YOU** name it
- REMEMBER this is a LISTENING GAME – the idea is for your child to hear the target sound lots of times, not for them to say it
- If your child chooses to say the word after you, that's fine! If they don't say it quite correctly, just repeat it back to them (but don't ask them to say it again)



#### You could also try ...

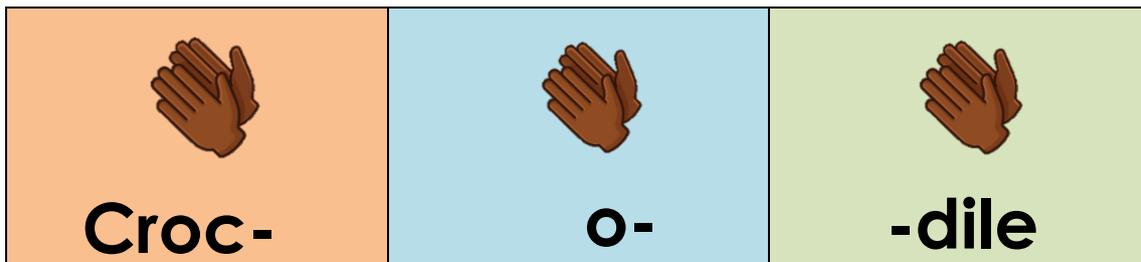
...making a post box and letting your child post the objects or pictures after you name them!

**A 'monster' postbox always goes down well!**

# Tip 3: Clap out the beat of the word

## Activity 3

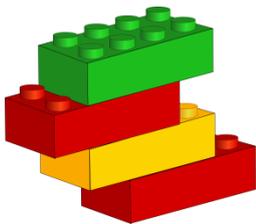
**Clapping out:** Clap your hands or stamp your feet to count out the number of syllables in a word e.g.



### You could also try ...

Grab a bag or box and go around your house together collecting items. What can you find? A flower, a pen, a ball, etc.

Take turns to take an object out the bag, and clap out the syllables of that word. You need to do this often to see progress. So to keep it interesting, as well as clapping, another day you could...



Build towers of bricks to show the number of syllables, e.g. 2 bricks for flow-er, 3 bricks for el-eph-ant etc.

Using a drum to bang out the beats in a word



...or walk one step per syllable...



## Tip 4: Use rhymes!



Rhyming words help us learn about the way words sound. The rhythm used in rhymes and songs helps makes words more memorable.

### Activity 4

**Rhyming songs**, e.g. 'Postman Pat', or nursery rhymes with your child – miss out the rhyming word and ask your child to fill in the gap, e.g. "Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall, Humpty Dumpty had a great ....."

**You could also try** this by making up silly rhymes with people's names, e.g. Vicky, Wicky, Ticky. You can also read rhyming books, e.g. Cat in the Hat.

### Humpty Dumpty

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.  
Humpty Dumpty had a great ...?????

All the King's horses  
And all the King's men  
Couldn't put Humpty  
Together ...?



A cartoon illustration of Humpty Dumpty, a yellow egg-shaped character with a red nose and a blue bow tie, sitting on a brick wall. A black speech bubble with a white question mark is positioned above him.

# Tip 5: Use the sound as much as possible

Once you've noticed which sound(s) your child finds difficult, you can try to repeat it as much as possible during daily routines, for your child to hear.

## Activity 5

**Listening game:** Think of as many words as you can that start with the sound your child is working on. Spend 5 minutes each day when focus on using these words as much as you can!

### You could also try...

Making this into a lotto game using a board with pictures of the items, and some pieces of paper with matching pictures.

Using pictures of the words to make a pairs game, and match up the words.

Making up stories using these words! You can use this one if your child can't say 'k' sounds yet!

This is Kate. 

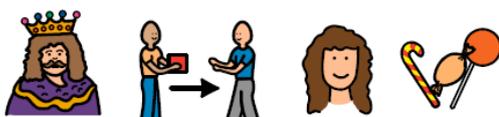
Kate's dad is the king.



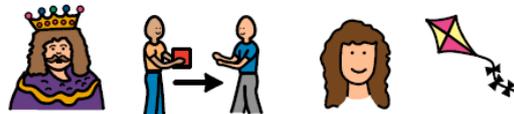
The king likes to give Kate everything.



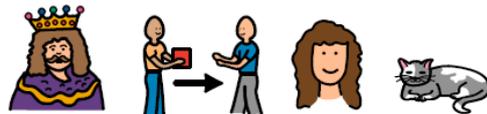
The king gives Kate some candy.



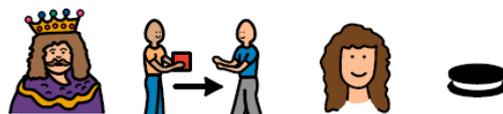
The king gives Kate a kite.



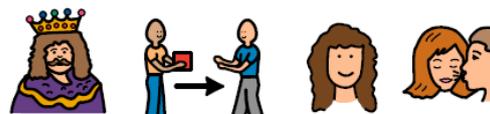
The king gives Kate a cat.



The king gives Kate a cookie.



The king gives Kate a kiss and says goodnight.



## Tip 6: Listen for the difference between sounds

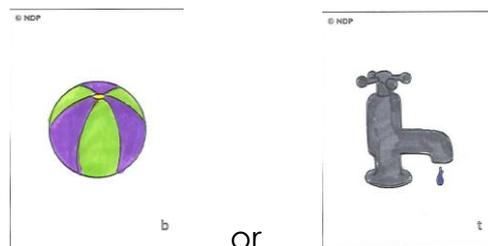
**First of all....** your child needs to get to know the attached sound pictures and the SOUND each one stands for – NOT the letter name: see the 'Speech sounds and actions' chart in the Resources section of the pack to help with this. For pre-school children, we use an action to go with the sound and picture, to help them remember which sound the picture stands for.

- Have fun naming the pictures with your child, talking about the sound each picture makes and posting it in a box
- Stick a selection of pictures around the room and ask your child to find one of them, giving different levels of clue eg "Find the ball".... "great! The ball says: b...b...b" and then later: "Find the one that says b....b"
- Put the pictures into a 'feely bag', take turns to pull out a card and talk about the picture/what sound it makes

NB When saying the sounds, try to make them as 'pure' as possible, without added vowel sounds attached eg "b", rather than "buh" – this makes it easier for your child to learn about blending sounds later.

**Next.... Listening for the difference between SINGLE sounds (ie sounds on their own):**

Put out 2 sound cards at a time, say one of the sounds and ask your child which sound they can hear eg:



"Which one says.....**b**?"

Remember, the sounds your child confuses will be the hardest for them to hear the difference between, so start with some easier sound pairs first.

**Activities to make it fun:**

- Put a block on a tower each time your child listens and chooses
- Let your child take a turn in a simple game each time they listen and choose eg Pop-up-pirate, snakes and ladders, hanging monkeys etc
- Let your child post the picture in a box each time they listen and choose
- Any other game/activity they enjoy

**When your child is confident with hearing the difference between single sounds, you can try listening to sounds at the beginning of words....**

- Put out a picture, representing a word and tell your child, you are going to listen for the sound at the beginning of the word.

For free speech therapy pictures by sound go to:

[http://mommyspeechtherapy.com/?page\\_id=55](http://mommyspeechtherapy.com/?page_id=55)



fire

- Now put out 2 speech sound picture cards, one of which must be the sound at the beginning of the word.



or



- Say the word and ask your child which sound they can hear at the beginning.. stress the first sound if needed “**f**ire”
- You should do this both with words containing the sound(s) your child is finding difficult and with other sounds (mixed pictures)

**Next is listening to sounds at the end of words....**

- Now do the same as above, but this time listening for the sound at the **end** of words



Cap



or



Again, mix up the pictures, so your child is sometimes listening for the sound they find difficult and sometimes other sounds.

## Here are some more sound activities for you to try...

**I Spy:** Look around for words beginning with the sound/letter your child finds difficult to say. Play 'I Spy' with all words which start with that sound.



### You could also try...

Drawing 2 or 3 pictures starting with different sounds.  
Say the first sound of one of the pictures (e.g. 'k' for cow) and ask your child to colour in which picture he thinks it is.

Using a lotto game/ puzzle/ book or a selection of toys – ask your child to find things that begin with a certain sound, e.g. /s/. Remember to use the sound and not the letter name. You can make the activity easier or harder by changing the number of choices available.

Making a scrapbook and sticking / colouring/ drawing pictures that begin with the sound your child is working on

Collecting lots of things that start with the sound your child is working on, and another sound e.g. /b/ (balloon, ball), k (cat, cup) and t (teddy, tie). Mix them up together in a bag or box, then ask your child to sort them according to the first sound.

# Reducing Your Child's Frustration

Children with speech difficulties can become frustrated when they are not understood. Below are some strategies you can try to reduce your child's frustration...

## 1. Look and listen

- Look at your child when they are talking and listen with interest.
- Try to be face to face with your child.
- When your child's speech is difficult to understand, let him/her know that you are listening or that you have time to listen.
- Keep a positive expression on your face.



## 2. Interpret what your child is saying and give choices to check you have understood

- You may not always understand what your child is trying to say but give it your best guess.
- Use 'clues' such as time of day and situation to help you work out what your child might be talking about.
- e.g. if it is the morning and you are in the kitchen your child may be talking about breakfast.
- Repeating back what you think your child has said lets them know you have understood and gives them a chance to correct you if you are wrong!
- Offering choices also allows your child to point or gesture if they are having difficulty being understood.



## 3. Try not to pretend that you have understood

- Children are often aware when they are not understood.
- If you haven't understood them, you could say something like: "oh sorry, my ears are not working today", "Can you show me what you mean?" Or "Did you mean 'cake' or 'gate'?"



## 4. Encourage your child to 'show you'

- Encourage your child to use different ways of communicating to support their talking.
- E.g. pointing, pointing to pictures, gestures and acting out what they are trying to say.



# Resources

## Speech sound labels and actions

**Remember to say the SOUND not the name of the letter: “sssss” not “ess”**

Speech Sound	Picture Description for Child	Hand Action
P (Push button)	Press the button – p p p p	Pointed finger as if pressing a doorbell. Press each time you say ‘p’
B (Ball)	The ball goes bounce – b b b b	Flat palm facing downwards as if you’re bouncing a ball. Move hand each time you say ‘b’
T (Tap)	A drippy tap – t t t t	Bring index finger and thumb tips together each time you say ‘t’
D (Drum)	A banging drum – d d d d	Pretend to bang a drum each time you say ‘d’
K (Camera)	The camera goes click – k k k k	Pretend to take a photograph, and say ‘k’ each time you press the button
G (Geese)	Noisy geese – g g g g	Make a beak near your mouth with your whole hand
M (Motorbike)	Let’s drive the motorbike – mmmm (continuous sound)	Hands as if holding handlebars
N (Nose)	A nosey nose – nnnnnn (continuous sound)	Place index finger on your nose
W (Worm)	Wiggly worm – w w w w	Make a wiggly worm with your index finger
Y (Yoyo)	The yoyo sound – yyyyyyy (continuous sound)	Make a circle with your index finger while making the sound
L (Lolly)	Lick the lolly – LLLLLLL (continuous sound)	Pretend to hold a lolly in front of your mouth
R (Rollerskate)	Rolling rollerskates – rrrrrrr (continuous sound)	Face your palms together but apart and move them forward
F (Firework)	Firework shoots up – fffffff (continuous sound)	Shoot hand up like a firework
V (Van)	The van goes really fast – vvvvv (continuous sound)	Pretend to drive a van
S (Snake)	Snake says sssssss (continuous sound)	Make a pretend snake with your hand/arm
Z (Zip)	When you do up your zip it goes zzzzzzz (continuous sound)	Pretend to do up your/your child’s zip as you make the sound
SH (Baby)	Baby’s sleeping – ssshhhhh (continuous sound)	Put finger on your lips as if saying be quiet
CH (Chick)	The chick goes ch ch ch ch	Make a beak near your mouth with your fingers
J (Jack in the box)	Jack goes jump – j j j j	Raise your hands as if they are jumping

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p

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b

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t

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d

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k/c

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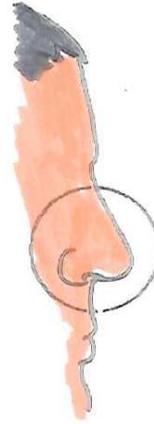
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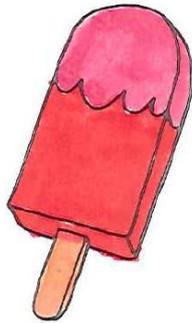
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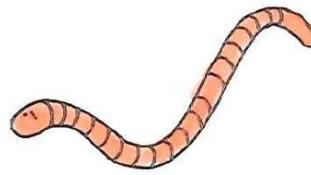
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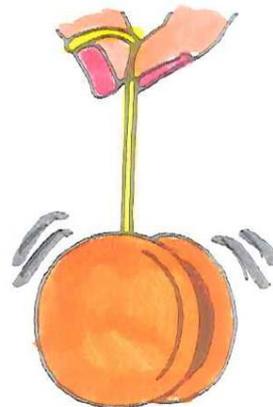
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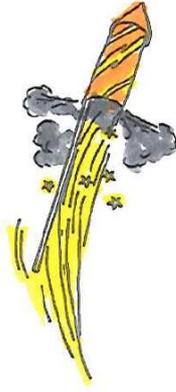
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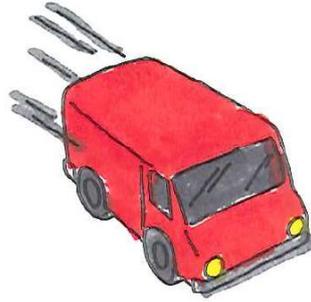
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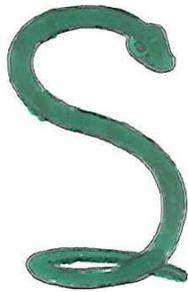
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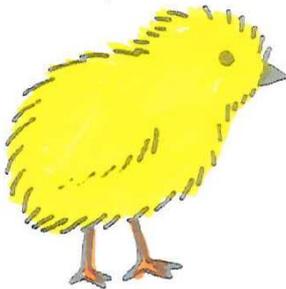
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sh

## Websites

You may also find the following websites helpful:

- Our speech and language therapy website: <https://www.clch.nhs.uk/services/speech-and-language-therapy-children>
- **NSPCC's** 'Look, Say, Sing, Play' campaign' with the following link <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/look-say-sing-play/sign-up>
- **Vroom:** Boost your child's learning with **Vroom's** fast and fun tips to your phone or via email. <https://www.vroom.org>
- The **Hungry Little Minds** campaign provides lots of ideas that can help boost your child's learning. [www.hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk](http://www.hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk)
- **Local Offer website:** (search "SEND local offer with the name of your borough). This website has lots of useful information for parents about local help for children with additional education and/or health needs
- **Parent forums:** Contact for support if your child has additional education/health need
  - Parents Active (Hammersmith & Fulham) [www.parentsactive.org.uk](http://www.parentsactive.org.uk)
  - Full of Life (RBKC) [www.fulloflifekc.com](http://www.fulloflifekc.com)
  - Make it Happen (Westminster) [www.wppg.org.uk](http://www.wppg.org.uk)
- **The Communication Trust:** for what to expect at different ages [www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk)
- **ICAN:** a children's communication charity [www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)

## CLCH NHS Trust

The speech and language therapy service is provided by Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust.

For more information visit [www.clch.nhs.uk](http://www.clch.nhs.uk) or call us on 020 7266 8777