

Understanding First Words



Seaside SaLT
Speech and language therapy

Learning about first words means learning to understand the words and then being able to say them. Children usually learn to understand words before they attempt to say them.

Use simple words and short phrases when talking to your child.

Use gestures, pointing and facial expressions to support meaning.

Get your child's attention, get down to their level and use eye contact when you want them to listen.

Have fun with nursery rhymes and songs, especially those with actions.

Keep language fun and part of everyday routines.

Create verbal routines by using the same words each time, e.g. "ready, steady, go!" or "night night, sleep tight."

Label objects and actions during play (e.g. "ball", "car", "drink").

Talk about what your child is looking at or playing with.

Offer choices like "banana or apple?" and show the items.

Repeat key words often so your child hears them many times.

