



**Central and
North West London**
NHS Foundation Trust

SUPPORTING SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND --- COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

Overview

- What is language and communication?
- What can you do to help your child's speech, language and communication development?

Language & Communication

Language

The words and sentences a child is able to understand and use



Speech

The sounds that a child uses when they are talking



Receptive Language

The language that a child is able to understand when they are listening to someone talk

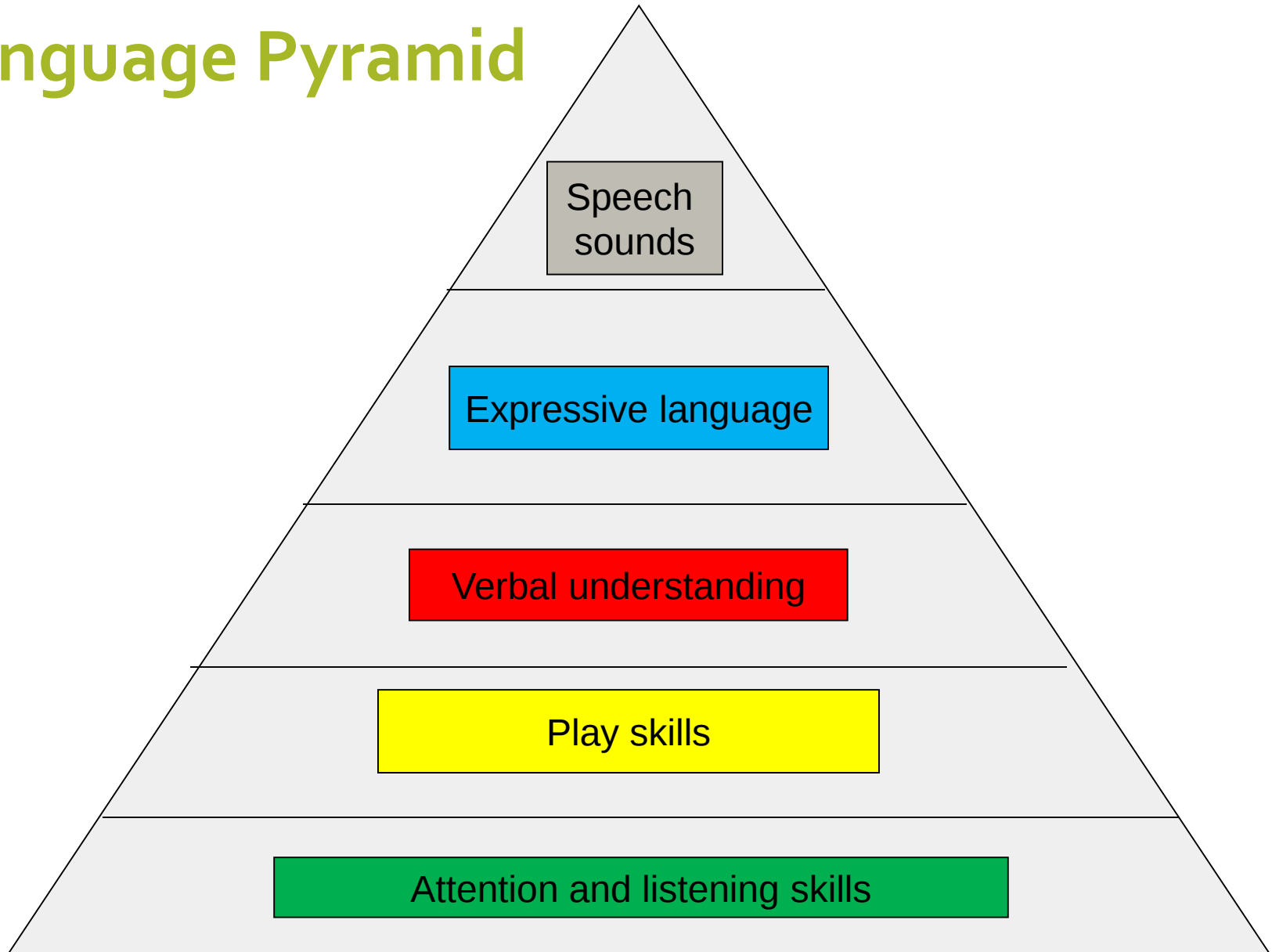


Expressive Language

The words, sentences and grammar that a child is able to use when they talk/sign



Language Pyramid



English as an Additional Language

Listen carefully to your child: Are they understanding what you say in your home language?

- Are they understanding and/or speaking your home language correctly?
- If not: Speak to the class teacher / SENCo at school / Speech and Language Therapist.

Things to consider at home...

- Keep language simple
- Minimise distractions (TV, Playstation, Radio)
- Ask fewer questions
- Use more conversation
- Use pictures, objects and natural gestures
- Let the child help you with tasks around the house – e.g. cooking, cleaning – talk to them while you are doing it

Activities



Attention and Listening Skills:

- **Ready, steady go games** – Use activities such as bubbles and Windup toys. Make the child wait to increase their ability to attend to tasks e.g. ready...steady...GO!
- **Shopping Game** – “I went to the shops and I bought....” Add a new item to list each time.
- **Pass the sound** – Use your body and mouth to make different sounds and pass between each other e.g. clap, stamp feet, say ‘woo’
- **Musical Statues** – Play music of your choice and when the music stops the child has to stop dancing and make a pose. If the child moves they are ‘out’.



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Understanding of language

- **Small World Toys** – Use toys you have to model language e.g. playing with a doll, you can pretend to wash the doll and describe what you are doing e.g. “Mummy is washing dolly”. Ask the child to copy you or give them instructions e.g. “Can you wash dolly?”
- **Barrier Games** – Put something in between you and the child so they cannot see what you are doing. Put the same thing in front of both of you and give the child instructions e.g. “put the hat on dolly”. Take down the barrier and see if the child has correctly followed the instruction.
- **Can You Find?** Ask the child to get items around the house e.g. can you get your shoes?



- **Following silly instructions** – Give the child instructions such as “Say your name, touch your toes and turn around” and get them to carry out the actions.
- **Hiding Games** – Ask your child to put objects/toys in different locations e.g. Can you put the teddy under the sofa/Can you put the apple in the jar
- **Books** – Read books with lots of pictures. Comment on the pictures and ask different questions e.g. “who ate the cake?”, “Can you find the duck?”.

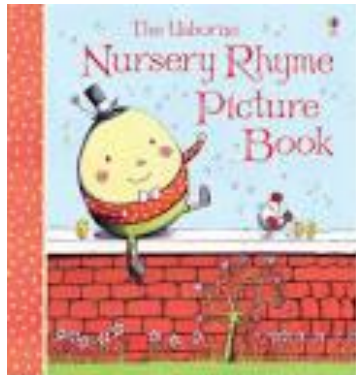


Expressive Language

- **Plan Do Review** – Explain what you are going to do, take pictures whilst you are doing it, and then get the child to tell you what they have just done. E.g. making a drink.
- **Feely Bag** - Place lots of different items into a small box or feely bag. Take turns to choose an item from the bag and describe the item without saying what it is. E.g. “it is soft and yellow, it is a fruit starting with the letter b”
- **Books** – Read stories and encourage the children to describe what they see using full sentences.
- **Make up Stories** – Use the child’s favourite character to make up a story.



- **Requesting motivating items** – Get the child to state “I want...” to request an item rather than pointing or grabbing.
- **Drawing/Colouring** – Get the child to give you/siblings instructions when colouring or drawing e.g. “draw a red tree”.

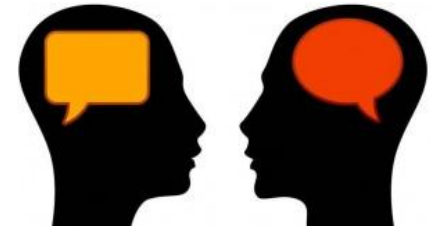




Social Interaction

- **Turn taking games** – Use games such as Pop Up Pirate, Kerplunk and even bubbles to encourage the child to turn take with you or siblings. Make sure they stay seated or do not touch until it is their turn.
- **20 questions** – Think of an item and get the child to use yes/no questions to find out what it is.
- **News telling** – Get the child to retell what they did at their friends or at school. Ask them to tell you who they were with, what they did, where they went, when they did it to encourage them to give as much detail as they can. Ask prompting questions e.g. “you went to McDonald’s, what did you eat?”
- **Pass the gesture/emotion** – Copy facial expressions and emotions and pass them around to each other.

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General Strategies

- Use verbal prompts to refocus your child's attention if they become distracted.
- Read newspaper articles with your children and talk with them about what is happening in the article.
- Support your child's understanding by breaking down instructions, using gestures, and repeating information.
- Encourage expressive language skills by playing '20 questions' – Think of an item and get the child to ask yes/no questions to find out what it is.
- If your child makes mistakes with their grammar or speech sounds, repeat what they said giving them the correct way of saying it.
- Explicitly teach rules for interacting with others (e.g. how to join a conversation, turn-taking, staying on topic).

Activities to support Narrative Skills (Story-telling)



- Narrative: recounting a sequence of events (real or imaginary) told in a logical order with a beginning, middle and ending.
- Act out/retell a story for another family member
- Ask open ended questions
- Talk about familiar sequences of activities, e.g. how to make a sandwich.
- Talk about characters within a story
- Look back at family photos and recall what happened.

Activities to support Vocabulary and Word Finding Difficulties

- There are lots of new words for every topic covered in school. Some children find it hard to learn and remember new words and need extra support.
- Create 'mind maps' for the topic.
- Use objects or pictures to explain new vocabulary – reinforces the meaning.
- Encourage your child to describe the word, if they cannot think of the word.
- Pre-teach topic vocabulary – ask teachers.



Supporting Auditory Memory Skills

- Some children have difficulties remembering information that they have heard. They may need help to remember long instructions and specific details.
 - Give children silly instructions
 - Play games e.g. list of instructions.
 - Encourage use of strategies e.g. count out what they have to do, visualise, repeating, drawing, write down, picture.



Supporting Higher Level Language Skills

- Some children have difficulty developing higher level language skills including:
 - Making inferences – understanding things that are not explicit.
 - Problem solving
 - Making predictions e.g. in stories.
 - Jokes, idioms and sarcasm – explain them
 - Understanding “why” questions
 - Multiple meanings – explicitly teach

Useful Websites

- www.ican.org.uk
- www.talkingpoint.org.uk
- www.mumsnet.com
- www.hello.org.uk

Any Questions?

