

## **AT-HOME ACTIVITIES TO TARGET SPEECH AND LANGUAGE**

Parents often see the activities that Speech Pathologists use and ask “where can we buy that?” Unfortunately, buying resources to work with children can be very expensive, however the good news is that there are activities that can be done at home to work on language and communication for children.

### **THINGS YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR CHILD**

- When you are unpacking shopping label each item, talk about where the food goes and whether it is a fruit, a vegetable or a meat, is it a cold fruit that belongs in the fridge or a dry food that belongs in the pantry, is it healthy or a snack etc.
- When you are walking outside talk about what you see eg bird, dog, tree, sky, plane, truck, car. Talk about where each object is found, is the bird in a tree or in the water or on the ground, is it a big or small tree, you can talk about the fact that the plane is in the sky whereas a car goes on the road, but they both take you places.
- When your child is getting dressed in the morning talk about what he or she is wearing eg t-shirt, shorts, shoes, socks, hat, underpants. Talk about whether these are summer or winter clothes. What do shoes go with? Do we wear these clothes in the day time or the nighttime? Are the items soft or hard? What are they made from eg leather, cotton, wool, rubber, metal etc?
- Books are another excellent source of language. Using picture books we can ask children questions about what is happening in the picture, if they can find objects that match or go together. Parents can talk to children about the pictures and help provide answers for things that they are not sure of.

All of these things work on language by looking at questions such as:-

- what an object is called?
  - what groups or subgroups items belong to?
  - where they are found?
  - what they do?
  - what things go together?
  - what they feel like?
  - what colour, shape or size are they?
  - what parts they have?
- Grouping activities can be done by putting together objects such as cars, trucks, dolls, fork, plate, yoyo, pencils, crayons etc and get your children to put things into groups and explaining why the objects go together. For example the cars and trucks are transport or take you places, the doll and yoyo are toys or you play with them, the fork and plate are for eating and you can draw or write with pencils and crayons.

These questions can also be used to teach describing and how things are the same or different.

- For describing activities, choose some random objects from around the house and put them into a box or bag. Get your child/ren to choose an object, then hide it from you. Play a guessing game using the above questions to help you guess what object your child has chosen, with your child answering the questions until you guess the object. Then take a turn yourself.
- For younger children, you may give them clues to help them guess what the object is. For older children you may get them to take a turn at asking you the questions.
- You can play games like “I spy” that get children to find an object in or outside the house, by what it does, what it looks like or where it is found. For example “I spy with my little eye..”, or just “I spy..” something you use for eating, or something you play with, something that is a green fruit and is found in the fridge/a fruit bowl (that is an apple).
- To teach same and different, you and your child choose an object each and lay them down where they can both be seen together. Ask the questions and see if the answers are the same for the objects or different. For example a teddy and a doll. They may be different because they are different colours, different sizes, they feel different (one may be hard and the other soft). They may be the same because they both have arms, legs, mouth, nose and eyes. They are both toys, you play with them and they are both found in a bedroom.