

MAKING SOUNDS AND BABBLING

Making sounds and babbling is an important stage in the development of a child's language and social interaction. Not only does it bring a baby pleasure, but it also helps them to experiment with their lips, tongue, soft palate and larynx before they begin to say their first words. It is often used as a way of gaining and maintaining an adult's attention.

Activities to encourage early sounds

- Play games that will use the tongue and lips. Lick textures off the lips such as jam and ice cream. Play blowing and sucking games. This will help your child to become familiar with different parts of their mouth.
- Use exciting toys and games to elicit sounds that are likely to make your child vocalise. Whenever this happens, reward your child immediately with verbal praise, cuddles/physical contact.
- Make a pretend snake out of household objects and encourage your child to join in 'hissing' with you.
- Model the appropriate noises when playing with toy cars, animals etc and encourage your child to join in.
- Do the same when looking at pictures together. Picture and storybooks about animals are great when focusing on particular animal sounds.
- Sit with your child in front of a mirror that is large enough for you to see yourselves in. Have fun making silly faces and noises together (e.g. blow raspberries). Copy any sounds that your child makes.
- Make sounds at the same times that your child carries out actions (e.g. 'splash' at bathtime or when playing in water, 'crash' when two cars bang together).
- Sing to your child using babble sounds. Make up your own songs (e.g. sing a familiar nursery rhyme in babble "la, la, la ...") Encourage your child to join in.