



Language, communication and social interaction

Language Development



Children who are using short phrases

Children at this stage of their communication development usually benefit from;

- Language being kept simple, consistent and non-ambiguous. It would help if visual supports such as objects/ gesture/ pictures/symbols are used in conjunction to spoken language.
- Whenever possible, reduce distractions within the environment and secure their attention before giving an instruction
- Give instructions in the same order as the actions required and in small chunks
- Opportunities to learn through play- based activities.
- Opportunities for structured activities 1:1 and in a small group setting which will stimulate and encourage expressive language.
- Adults facilitating a communication environment where the child can be calm and alert, with minimal sensory triggers and social stressors.
- Multi-sensory teaching approaches, activities and experiences to engage your child in learning and to aid their processing and understanding of information.
- Encourage your child to explore and express their boundaries and develop assertiveness skills.
- Emphasise different functions of language when developing language skills rather than just vocabulary alone, for example to express interest, needs, boundaries, feelings, opinions, and choices.
- Follow the Child's lead, notice what they are paying attention to and comment and model language based on this.

[Resources for Everyone - Solihull Children's Community Therapies](#)

[Targeted Resources - Solihull Children's Community Therapies](#)

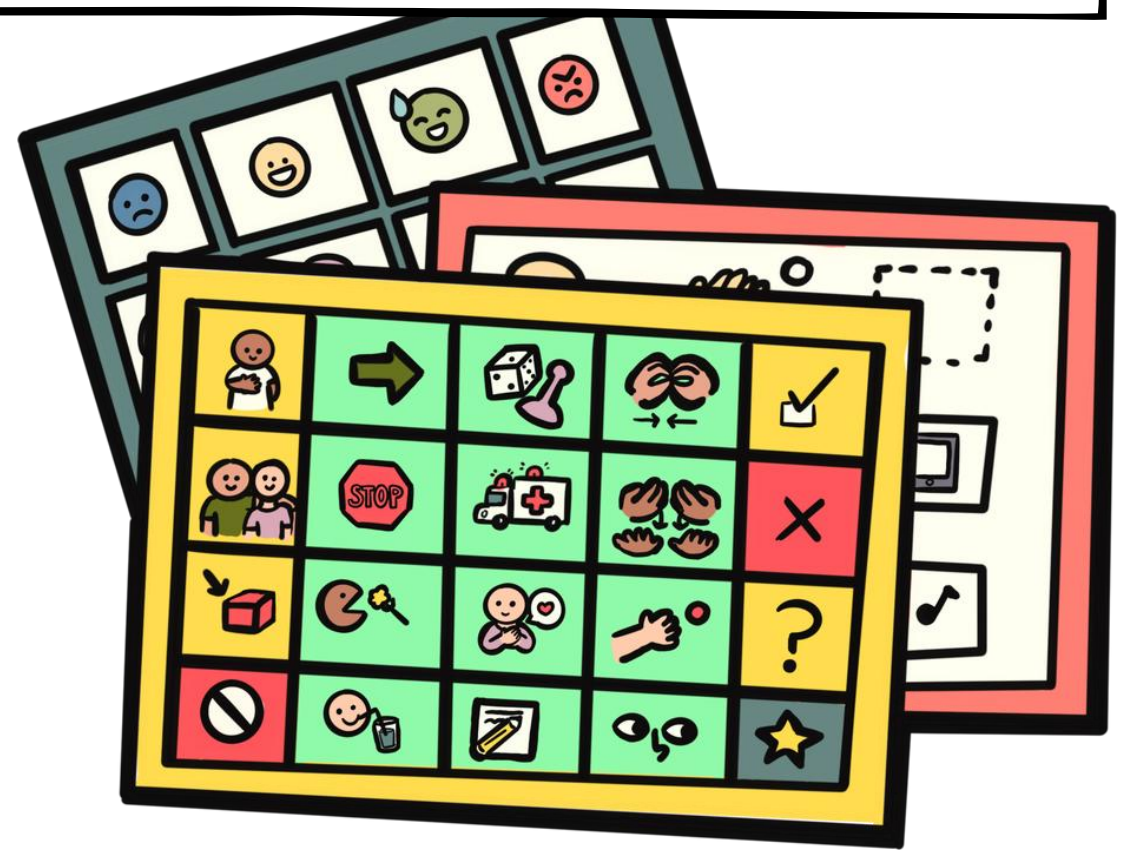
If you would like to contact Private SLT services who may be able to provide a range of support, a list of practitioners in the area can be found at the [Association of Speech and Language Therapists in Independent Practice \(ASLTIP\)](#)

Use visuals

- Visual cues may be helpful to support your child's ability to give explanations and clear information to others. Symbols and key word prompts can also be used to support and extend re-telling events and stories.
- Visual supports to support your child to understand what is happening, provide predictability and develop independence. These may include objects, visual timetables, schedules, reward charts, now-next boards.
- Visual supports can also be used to help children prepare for a change in plan, to visit a new place or to help them learn a new routine (e.g. getting dressed).
- Further information about visual supports:
<https://www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk/online-resources/visual-resources/>

Accept Echolalia

Recognise that echoing words or scripts is a valid form of communication and self-regulation, take time to work out what this means for the child. Link to SLT pages on children using echolalia/ gestalt



Model correct grammar supportively

If an error is made, repeat the sentence back with the correct structure without explicitly pointing out the mistake (e.g., Child: "He goed." Adult: "Yes, he went to the shop.").

Value Non-Verbal Communication

Acknowledge and encourage communication via gestures, AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) devices, or writing.

Expand Utterances

If a child says "Car," expand it to "Yes, the red car". Modelling language can be used to support extending language structures, for example using words like 'because', 'if' to join sentences. If your child uses a simple sentence, then an additional thought e.g. "it's hot. It's Sunny." you could model linking these in a positive way e.g. 'Yes it is hot because it's sunny'.

