



# READY TO LEARN EVERY DAY!



**Speaking and Listening:**  
A short guide for parents



# READY TO LEARN

**NAHT and Family Action have based the advice in this leaflet on the latest research about what helps children to speak and listen well.**

## Your child: speaking and listening



### It is important to help your child with speaking and listening because:

- Your child's ability to speak and listen well will be a good foundation for their future learning
- If they are good speakers and listeners they will do better at reading and writing
- If they can communicate well with others, it will help them to make friends more easily
- They will become more independent and be able to learn about the world
- Your child will learn to express their feelings and not become frustrated so easily



### At school younger children will learn to:

- Think about what they say and choose the right words
- Speak fluently and confidently
- Listen to instructions from the teacher
- Listen to their classmates before speaking and take turns



### As they get older they will:

- Join in group discussions and make useful points
- Present to an audience, expressing their opinions clearly
- Take part in decision-making and debate
- Learn how language varies in different situations

# RN EVERY DAY!

## Your child: what you can do to help



### Put listening to your child first:

- Show your child how to be a good listener by listening to them and others
- Be patient: don't interrupt or finish their sentences for them
- Give your child your attention: don't check your mobile phone at the same time as they are talking to you
- Show you're listening: ask questions about what they say, ask their opinions
- Listen to your child reading aloud regularly



### Be a clear speaker:

- Speak confidently, using the right words and set an example by talking in full sentences
- If English is not your first language, the most important thing is that you speak your own language confidently and well
- Use clear, simple directions for tasks and behaviours
- When your child follows directions, show you notice: praise them for listening to you



### Get involved every day:

- Discuss their day with them when you see them after school
- Try to have a family meal together as often as possible
- Encourage your child to talk about their views and interests with others
- Ask them about their homework and get involved with it
- Switch off television and laptops well before bedtime: chat or read a bedtime story together instead

# Have fun speaking and listening together

- Play family games together, like I Spy, Charades, Chinese Whispers and Articulate
- Nursery rhymes, songs, jokes and puppets are an important way of helping younger children learn language
- Re-tell familiar stories and have fun making up your own
- With older children, read books and poetry aloud together
- Discuss and debate issues in the news

## And look at these websites for a few more ideas:

[www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/songs](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/songs)

[www.ican.org.uk](http://www.ican.org.uk)

[www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk)

[www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)

[www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk)



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[www.family-action.org.uk](http://www.family-action.org.uk)



NAHT is a professional association and trades union with members in all phases of education. We represent 28,500 school leaders in their quest to develop great schools and improve the lives of children.  
[www.naht.org.uk](http://www.naht.org.uk)