

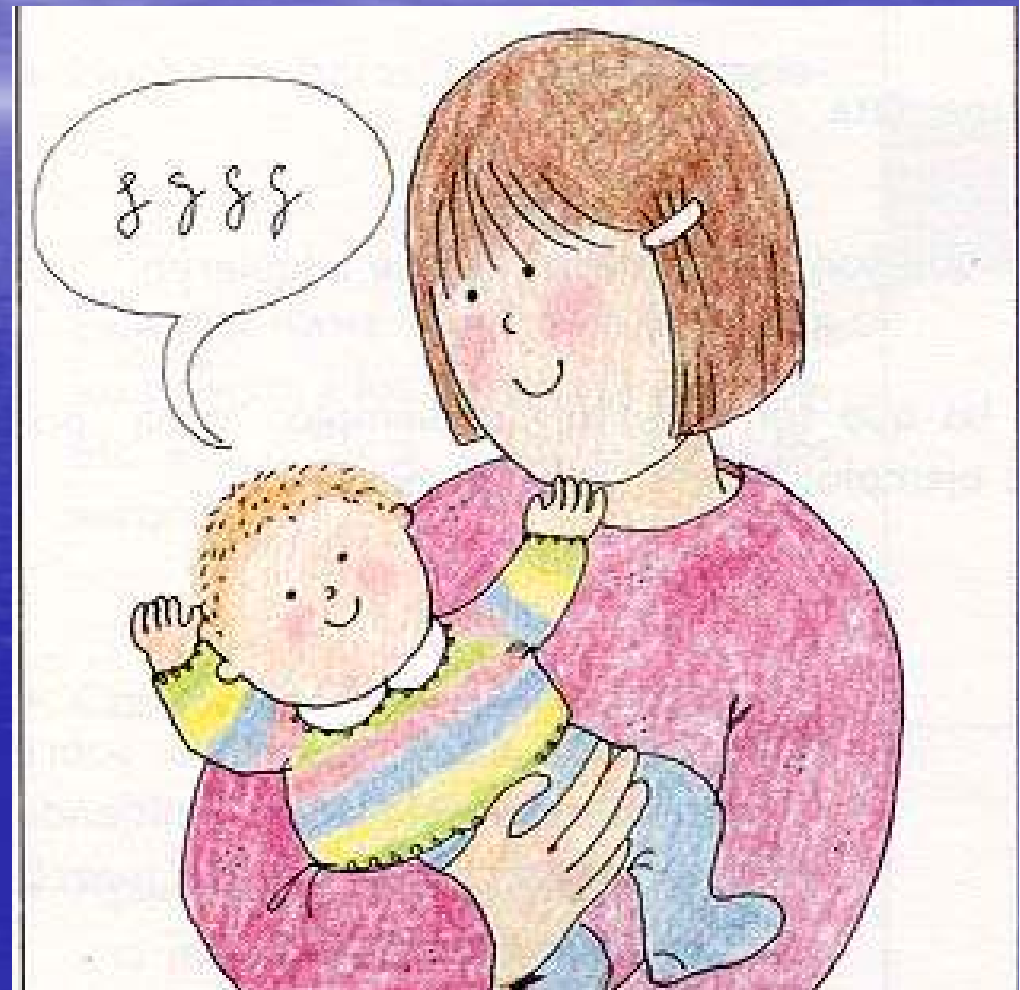
Building Conversation Skills

The most important thing parents can do is talk to their baby.

Just talk.

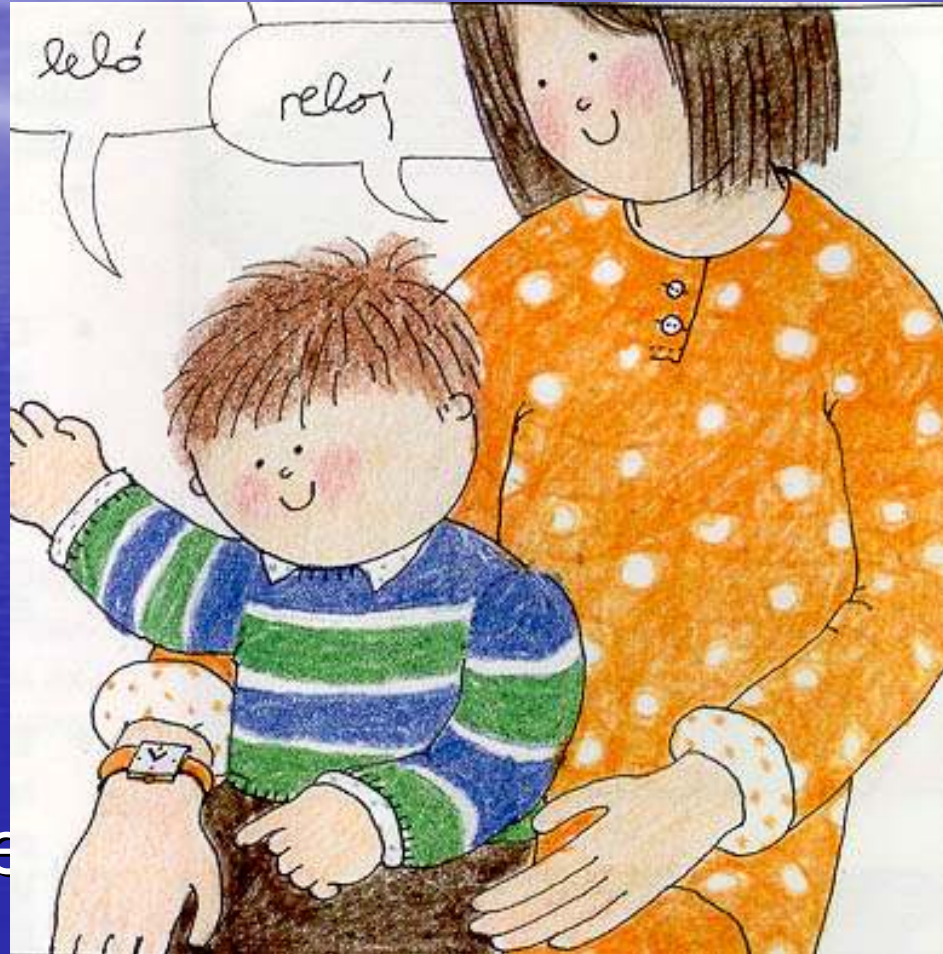
Share what you are doing.

What you are seeing, and how you feel.



Building Conversation Skills

- It is important for your baby to hear language. Talk and assume that your baby does understand.
- Talking with your child opens up the inborn capacity for language learning, and helps to grow the parent-child bond.



There are several ways to encourage language

Focus on what is familiar for children. You can talk about:

- **Daily Routines:** Everyday life is full of "new" words and things for young children.
- Talk about your child's daily activities: what she is doing; the food she is eating, how the food is prepared and the utensils to use, the clothes she is wearing, the kind of transportation being used.



There are several ways to encourage language



- **Stories (and Movies):** Talk about the characters in a story you are reading: who are they, what they are doing, why they are doing anything.
- Pick out any words that may be new to your child. Language and reading go hand in hand, so take this opportunity to encourage reading skills as well.

There are several ways to encourage language

- **Trips/Outings:** Outings are always great for talking.
- If you go to a nature park, talk about the trees and flowers.
- Talk while at the grocery store about the foods you are choosing.



Words to Talk By

- Talking involves using words - a lot of them. Parents and other adults naturally use simple, basic words when talking to children.
- They use words that are familiar to children – Words that refer to things in their environment and that are important in their lives.

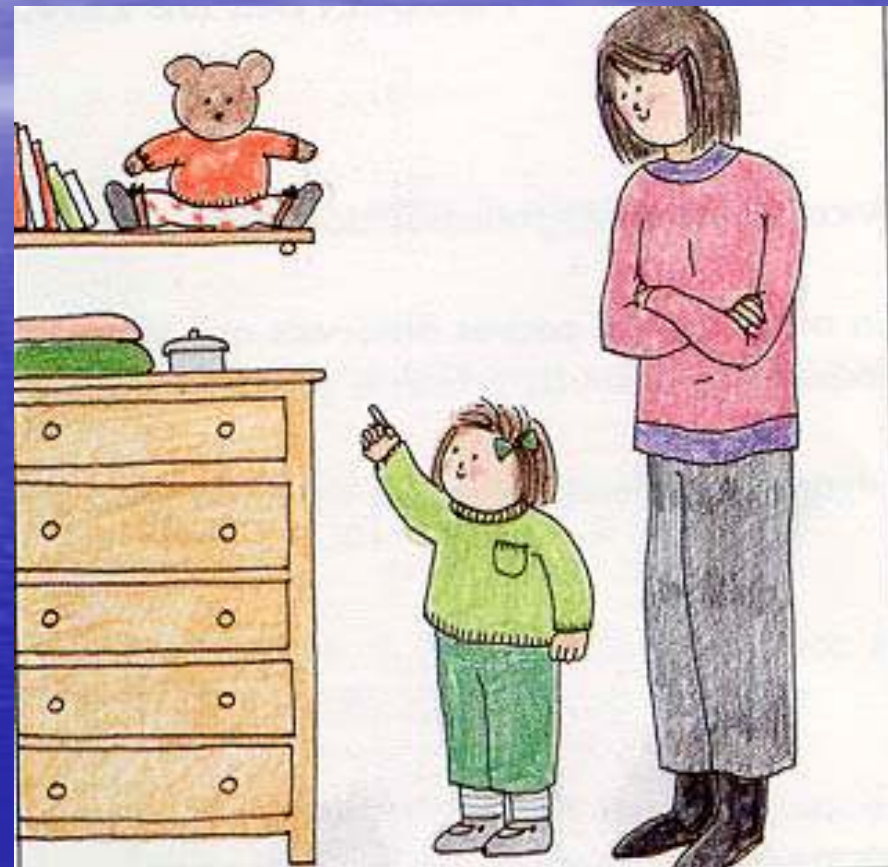


language skills grow quickly

- Children's language skills grow quickly in the early years.
- They learn the words they hear, the words that are spoken to them.
- By the time children are 3, they have a vocabulary of nearly 1,000 words.



When talking to your infant, toddler or preschooler, use words that describe things, how they look, feel, taste, and smell.



language and conversation skills.

- Use "feeling" words to help children to talk about their everyday experiences.
- Keep it simple. This list is only a small sampling to get you thinking about how you can help increase your child's growing language and conversation skills



Ways to Promote Language Skills

- Child care providers and teachers learn a lot of the following strategies as part of their training to work with young children.
- These simple strategies take place in conversations and will help with building language skills. You don't really have to always focus on how you are talking with your child, but keep these tips in mind and use them when you can. It will soon become second nature.

Infants

- Talk to your baby when holding him, feeding him, changing him. ("Are you hungry? Okay, time for milk.")
- Narrate what you are doing in your daily routines. ("We are taking a walk in the park."
"Into your car seat, you go.")

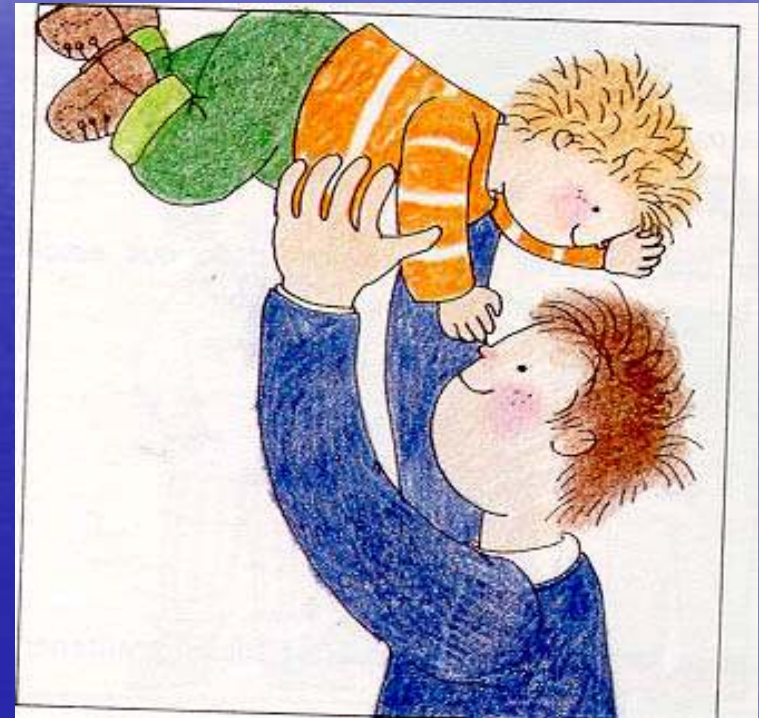


Infants

- Talk in short sentences and use short phrases. ("Roll the ball." "A pretty blue bird.")
- Use pauses and stretch or emphasize words. ("See the moonkeey.")



- Respond to your baby's sounds and attempts to talk. ("Are you cooing? Well, hello to you too!")
- Read to your baby. (Read books especially for babies/infants that focus on basic words, including shapes, colors, sounds.)



TODDLERS

Play games that involve turn-taking. (Play games such as rolling a ball back and forth to each other.

"I roll it to you. You roll it to me." "I had a turn. Now it's your turn.")



TODDLERS

Build your child's vocabulary during normal conversations ("That's a big house. "It's a big house with a chimney on top.")



TODDLERS

- Give simple one or two word instructions. ("Give me your bowl." "Wash yur hands.")
- Match your child's speech in length and complexity. ("Drink?" "Drink juice?")
- Respond to your toddler's communication and stay on topic. (Whatever your toddler talks about, follow her lead. See where the "conversation" can go.)
- Read to your toddler and have your toddler join in. (As you read books for toddlers, have your toddler turn the page and ask questions such as "What does the cow say?")

TODDLERS

Help your child know words to talk about and describe feelings and emotions.

"You seem sad." "Are you sad because it is time to stop playing?"



Preschoolers

Respond to and have conversations with your preschooler.
(Preschoolers love to ask questions - answer them.

Ask your own? "What do you see?" "Do you think that rock is heavy?")



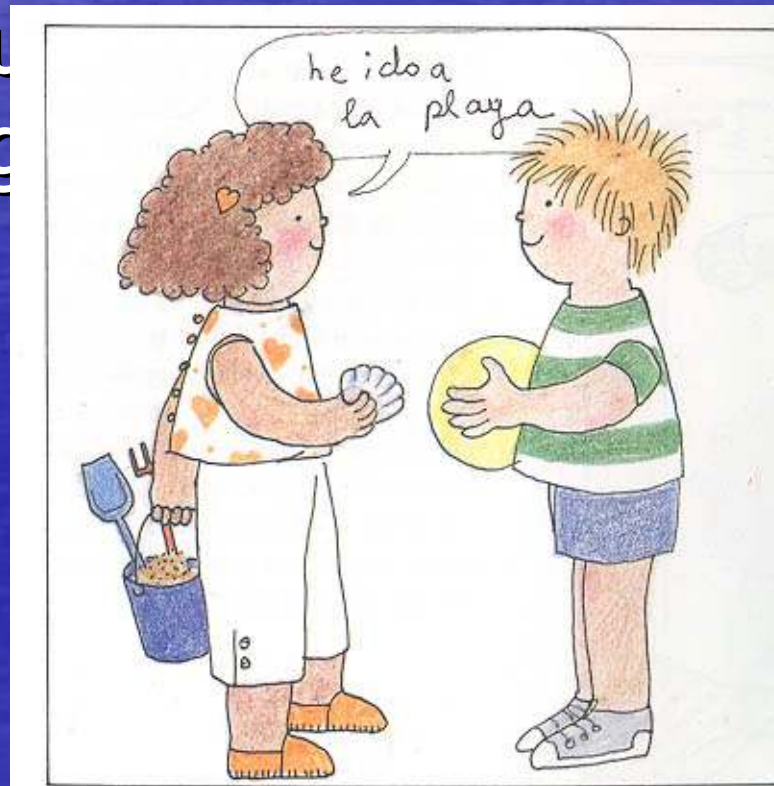
Practice taking turns
in conversations.
("What did you do
at the park today?"
"Wow... do you like
to go high on the
swings?

I like going really
high.")



Preschoolers

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Preschoolers

Talk about what your child is doing and what you're doing.

Ask questions that extend their thinking.
("What kind of picture are you drawing?" "

You're doing a good job of cleaning up."

"What do you think will happen next in the story?")



Preschoolers

Read with your preschooler.

Involve your preschooler as you are reading. (As you read with your preschooler,

Ask your preschooler to guess what will happen next?



- Ask your preschooler why a character did something in the story.
- Not only will you encourage conversation, but you are also stimulating analytical thinking.)



So talk to your baby.
Have great
conversations with
your toddler and
preschooler.

By doing so you are
supporting their
language skills, their
social skills and their
thinking skills.



Everything in your
baby's growth is
connected.



But the best thing
about talking
with your child is
developing the
bond that you
will always have
with one
another.

