

First Steps (18 months - 2 years)

Most children should be able to:

- Understand the names of familiar toys, food etc
- Understand simple phrases without clues
- Can point to parts of the body when asked E.g. "*Point to your nose*"
- Use about 20-50 single words, often alongside actions.
- Use one word to describe many similar things e.g. "*apple*" for all fruit.
- Putting two words together by 2 years e.g. "*More juice*"
- Speech sounds to expect: p, b, t, d, n, m
- Act out simple routines like putting teddy to bed

What can you do to help?

- Talk to your child using short simple phrases
- Give your child the opportunity to make choices e.g. "*Do you want an apple or banana*"
- Follow their lead – comment constantly on what they and you are doing.
- Share a book with your child, talk about the pictures and use an exaggerated voice.
- Praise and repeat what your child says and add another word e.g. if they say "*car*" say "that's right it's a "*blue / fast / big car*"
- Talk to your child about actions (i.e. verbs), what things look like, feel like, taste like and sound like.
- Answer your child's questions.

Things to play with - some ideas

- Paints, crayons and play dough.
- Sand and water play.
- Matching and sorting games e.g. stacking rings/beakers or posting boxes.
- Use everyday activities as opportunities to sort and match items e.g. sorting washing, tidying toys away, putting the shopping away.
- Simple puzzles, balls, pop up toys, and books.
- Beakers or sieves to fill and spill in the bath.
- Empty boxes, magazines, newspapers to build, tear and stick.