

Tips for Working with Your Child's Speech At Home

Does your child get shy when you try to help him say his words and sentences more clearly?

Does your child get frustrated when you try to help him with his speech?

Does your child try to repeat what you say but doesn't know that he is still making the same mistake?

If your child is working with a speech-language pathologist, the SLP can help you figure out what works best for you and your child. In the meantime, consider the following tips:

Incidental Teaching

- When a child makes a mistake in his speech, repeat back what he has said using correct pronunciation and grammar. This is called modelling or re-casting. Don't demand that he say it back correctly.
- Praise any *attempts* the child makes to repeat back what you say, even if she still makes some mistakes.
- Try to work on only one "target" at a time. For example, a child might say "Her wike it." You can say, "Yes, she likes it." If your child tries to copy the sentence and says, "She wikes it.", praise her for using "she" and work on "I" another time

Regular Practice Sessions

- *Short* practice sessions done more often work better than a long practice session done only once a week. Try to practice the speech homework that the speech-language pathologist gives you for a few minutes each day.
- Use your child's interests to help make regular practice sessions fun. Point out the words that have a sound she is having difficulty saying in her favorite books or movies. Practice concepts or grammar rules when you play with your child. For

instance, you can use action figures to work on the use of “is”, “he-she” and “basic concepts” (e.g., He is jumping high. He is crawling under. She is running quickly. She is hopping slowly.)

- *Show your child how well he is doing.* Many families use sticker charts or small rewards when the child has completed a worksheet or other homework. This could be as simple as “After we do 10 sentences using the word “like” with a good “I”, then we will play a game together. “ Put checkmarks on a piece of paper after each correct response, and have your son or daughter help you count out the checks.

Be calm and encouraging when you work with your child. This helps them know that you believe that they can learn what you are teaching.

Remember, the speech-language pathologist at your school can give you information about goals and strategies that are appropriate for your child’s age and grade. You can make contact with them through the school. Or you can ask a question on our blog and an SLP will respond.

