

Strategies for Indirectly Stimulating Language

Indirect stimulation of language is a way of talking to a child, giving them word labels to use – no questions or commands. Indirect stimulation should not pressure a child to answer – rather the adult should label and describe to help the child learn. Indirect stimulation is associated with everyday activities, such as playing with toys or cooking activities.

1. **Parallel Talk: describes actions** – use key words, e.g., “You turned the wheel”, four or five words per response (more may be overwhelming)
 - Parallel talk is a way of putting in action without requiring the child to say anything. Parallel talk describes actions.
 - Talk about every other thing – or maybe comment every 10 times or so – not every time.
 - Emphasize comment by repeating it – vary the voice.
 - Common prepositions could be emphasized in repetition.
 - Drop off words that don't carry meaning if the sentence is getting too long.
 - Don't worry about grammar for now, e.g., completing every sentence.
 - Associate words with actions - with what the child is doing.

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2. **Descriptive Talk:** describes what a child is seeing, e.g., “It’s a big plane.”
 - Simply label and add quality words (e.g., brown tree).
 - Talk about what a thing is instead of what the child is doing.
 - Description focuses on the object or thing – what the child sees.

3. **Self-Talk:** Talk about your own actions as they occur while the child is listening/watching, e.g., “I’m tying my shoe; first I’m tying a knot; and now I’m tying a bow”, and so on.
 - Best used with children 12 – 24 months.
 - Use short sentences to describe what the adult is doing.

4. **Expansion: Focus on what the child has said and expand it into a sentence.**
 - Expand a baby’s sentence to make it more correct, e.g., child says, “Mommy, truck”; adult responds, “Yes, there’s a truck”.

5. **Expansion Plus: Expand and add a little more information.**
 - Best used with children 1 – 3 years of age.
 - Add one more bit of information to the sentence, e.g., child says, “Mommy, truck”; adult replies, “Yes, there’s a blue truck”.

2

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6. Indirect Correction: When a child says something incorrectly, you repeat the sentence correctly; take the words used incorrectly, and repeat them back stating them correctly, e.g., child says, “I **goed** to the store today”; adult replies, “Yes, you **went** to the store today”.

Suggestion:

Use indirect stimulation in 5 – 10 minute periods, and take it at the child’s pace – don’t bombard them. Speak calmly when using indirect language stimulation.

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Expressive Language Development from Infant to Toddler

The ideas, feeling, questions and commands that we express through speech or speech and signs are **Expressive Language**. In teaching your child to talk, you help him/her develop each stage of Expressive Language. You help him/her by modelling for him/her the vocalizations and words that you want him/her to learn.

Expressive Language

1. Lalling (cooing): These are the reflexive sounds that a baby makes just lying in his/her crib breathing. They are gurgling sounds made up mainly of vowels such as 'ah,' 'uh,' 'eh' and other throaty sounds.
2. Babbling: Babbling begins when a baby begins to combine consonant sounds with the vowels: 'ma-ma-ma,' 'da-da-da,' 'guh,' 'bubu'. Then he/she begins to combine different syllables, as in 'go-ah-du'. Babbling is a very important step toward speech because while he/she is babbling, the baby is practising the sounds of the English language so that he/she can later say them in words.
3. Imitation: In this step, the baby first imitates himself, so that hearing what he has just babbled reinforces him/her and he/she says it again. Then he/she begins to unconsciously imitate the sounds he/she hears others around him/her making, sometimes producing a word though it has no meaning for him/her. As he/she gets a little older, games in

4

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which he imitates consciously sounds his/her mother or father make become fun and exciting for both parents and the child.

4. **Single Words:** Finally, the child produces a sound or uses a sign that means something and he/she uses the same sound or sound and sign to mean the same thing every time. When the sound has meaning for the child and when the listener understands what is said and meant, expressive language has truly begun. In this stage, one word or sign may mean a whole sentence; "cookie" may mean "I want a cookie," or "I dropped my cookie."
5. **Jargon:** In this stage, the child practices the rhythm, accent, intonation and inflection of speech without actually saying anything meaningful. Occasionally, a word may be thrown in, but generally this is the stage where parents say: "He sounds just like he is telling me something, but I can't understand anything he says!" Many children who use signs use "sign jargon" during which they move their hands around, inserting an occasional formal sign.
6. **Telegraphic Language:** The child picks out what to him/her are the most important elements of the information he/she is trying to convey and he/she leaves out all the other words. "Doggie no-no" may mean that Mommy told the dog that he could not come in the house or it may mean that the dog should stop barking.

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7. Phrases, Sentences and Paragraphs: When a child begins to use all of the words or words and signs necessary to make his thought both complete and understandable, he is generally speaking in phrases and sentences. He is able to produce longer and longer utterances that make sense to the listener, ultimately speaking in whole paragraphs as he tells a story or relates something he did that day.

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Articulation Developmental Norms Chart

The following charts outline expected ages for the development of speech sounds. Included in the charts is the age at which intervention is indicated.

Also included are some tips on what to do if you can't understand your child. See below.

Age of Development	Sounds	Phonological Process & Examples	Therapy Indicated If Not Acquired By:
Up to 3 years	p, b, m, t, d, n,w, h, and vowels	Final consonant deletion (e.g., The dog has a bone > The da ha a bo) Initial consonant deletion (e.g., The dog has a bone > uh og as a one) Medial consonant deletion (e.g., The puppy enjoys biscuits > The pu-ee enoys bi-its)	3 years
3 - 3 ½ years	k, g, ing, f, y, s,	Voicing (e.g., The dog has a bone > The tok has a pone. OR	3 ½ years

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	s-blends	<p>puppy > bubby)</p> <p>Voicing (e.g., The dog has a bone > The tok has a pone. OR puppy > bubby)</p> <p>Fronting (e.g., I can give the dog a goodie > I tan tive the dod a doodie)</p> <p>Stopping (e.g., It's fun to see the puppies eat > It tun to tee da puppiet eat)</p> <p>Cluster Reduction (e.g. The spider spins a web – the pider pins a web)</p>	
3 ½ - 4 years	Sh, l	<p>Stridency Deletion (e.g., Sheep – teep or sheep - eep)</p> <p>Gliding (e.g., I like to lick lemons > I wike to wick wemons OR I yike to yick yemons)</p>	4 years
4 - 5 years	l-blends, ch, j	Cluster Reduction (e.g., I played with the glue > I payed with the goo)	5 years

8

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		Deaffrication (e.g., I cheered for juice and cheese > I teered for duice and teese)	
Over 5 years	Sh, r and r-blends, v, th	Frontal lisp (e.g. I said so – I thed tho) Lateralization = slushy sounds (e.g., I said so > I shaid sho) Deaffrication (sheep – seep)	not during preschool years

9

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What to Do If You Can't Understand Your Child:

1. Ask the question in a different way such as giving a choice (e.g., if your question was "What do you want to eat?" change it to "Do you want a carrot or a cookie?").
2. Try to get more information (e.g., "Is it a toy?", "Do you want juice?").
3. Ask your child to "show" you what he is talking about.
4. Ask questions that can be answered yes/no (e.g., "Do you want juice?").
5. Add more words to what your child has said (e.g., if your child says "ba", you might say "Bathroom. Do you want the bathroom?").
6. Watch what your child is trying to tell you. Look at his actions and facial expressions (e.g., a child holding his stomach may be trying to tell you that he feels sick).
7. Talk about the here and now (i.e., what you are doing, objects around you, the room you are in, etc.).
8. It is okay if sometimes you can't understand your child.

10

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