



## Help Develop Oral Expression And Vocabulary

You can help your child develop **oral language** (the spoken word) with the following ideas. Do these anytime you are with your child:

### 1. Encourage your child to answer “wonder” statements.

Say such things as “I wonder why a dog barks.” Or say, “I wonder if Grandpa likes spinach.”

### 2. Help your child expand his/her vocabulary by rephrasing.

When your child says something such as, “He’s scared,” you could say, “Yes, the dog barks because he is frightened, you are correct!”

### 3. Ask open-ended questions.

Do not ask, “Are you raking leaves?” (The child would simply answer, “yes.”) Instead, ask, “What are you doing with your rake?” The child will answer you and then you can rephrase the answer to further develop vocabulary (see # 2).

### 4. Limit the amount of TV

However, if your child watches a children’s program, talk about it (see #'s 1, 2, 3).

### 5. Provide household props that encourage pretend play.

Use spoons/pans in the bathtub; cups/teapots/dolls; small rakes/shovels. While playing, be sure to talk through your actions (see #'s 1, 2, 3).

Verbally interacting with your child simply means taking every opportunity to talk with your child. With our busy lives, interactions between adults and children are often directive (“do this,” “do that,”) or negative (“stop hitting,” “don’t run.”) Try to break this pattern whenever possible. Both you and the child will have pleasant experiences and you will be helping to develop oral expression and vocabulary.