

Phonics tips for Nursery Children

Ways to support your children at home: **speaking and listening**.

- Make time to listen to you child talking – as you walk or travel, at meal times, bath times, bedtimes ... any time!
- Show that you are interested in what they are talking about – look at your child, smile, nod your head, ask a question or make a response to show that you really have been listening.
- Listen at home – switch off the TV and listen to the sounds both inside and outside the home. Can your child tell you what sounds they heard, in the order in which they heard them?
- Play-a-tune – and follow me! Make simple shakers, drums and beaters from things around the house (pans, milk bottles, rice etc), then play a simple tune and ask your child to copy. Have fun!

Ways to support your children at home: **environmental sounds (sounds you can hear inside and outside the home)**.

- Go on a listening walk. When walking down the road, make a point of listening to different sounds: cars revving, people talking, birds singing, dogs barking. When you get home, try to remember all the sounds you heard. You could try taping the sounds, to listen to them again, or try reproducing them yourselves, using your voices or instruments.
- Make sounds, using a range of props, such as running a stick along a fence or tapping the bin lid.
- Invent a family 'knock' for entering rooms.

Ways to support your children at home: **instrumental sounds**.

- Make your own musical instruments, using cardboard rolls, tins, dried peas, beans, stones. Shake these loudly, softly, as you are marching, skipping or stomping. Play 'Guess what's inside the instrument'.
- Sing known songs loudly and then quietly, quickly and then slowly.
- Listen to a range of music with your child, from appropriate rap to classical. Encourage your child to move in response to the music.

Ways to support your children at home: **body percussion**.

- Learn some action rhymes, such as 'Wind the bobbin up'.
- Play some songs on the radio, phone, tv etc. Clap along with familiar rhymes and learn new ones.
- Listen to the sounds your feet make when walking, running or skipping: slowly, softly, fast, stomping hard, in flipflops, boots, high heels.
- Try different types of clapping: clap your hands softly, quickly and make a pattern for your child to follow. Do the same clapping your hands on your legs or stamping your feet. Tap your fingers. Click your tongue.

Ways to support your children at home: **rhythm and rhyme**.

- Get into the rhythm of a song or rhyme: bounce your child on your knee to the rhythm of a song or nursery rhyme; march or clap to a chant or poem.
- Help your child move in time to the song or rhyme.
- Read or say poems, songs, nursery songs and rhyming stories as often as you can. Try to use gestures and tap in time to the beat.
- Add percussion using your hands, feet or instruments. Try out some rhythmic chanting such as 'two, four, six, eight, hurry up or we'll be late' or 'bip bop boo, who are you?'
- Ways to support your children at home: **alliteration (words that begin with the same sound)**.

- Alliteration is a lot of fun to play around with. Your child's name can be a good place to start, for example, say: 'Abdullah asks for apples', 'Carl caught a cat', 'Jolly Jessie jumped'. Encourage other family members to have a go, for example: 'Mummy munches muffins', 'Daddy is doing the dishes.'
- Point out alliteration in songs and stories, for example: 'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.'
- Find the odd one out, for example, cat, cup, boy, car (boy is the odd one out because it doesn't start with c).
- Collect items that start with the same sound from the park, the garden and around the house (cup, car, cat) (bowl, ball, boy)
- Ways to support your children at home: **voice sounds.**
- Repeat what your child says.
- Make fun noises and nonsense words.
- Say words in different ways (fast, slowly, high, low, using a funny voice)
- 'Sing' known songs using only sounds (for example, 'la, la, la' to the tune of Baa Baa Black Sheep) and ask your child to guess the song.