

Language and speech development





Your baby will make contact with you immediately after birth. Your child will express what they want through movement, facial expressions and by using their voice. As your child grows older, they will begin to understand the things you say. Eventually, your child will start to say words and sentences on their own. This leaflet provides information about your child's speech and language development and what you can do to help.

Remember: every child develops in their own way. There can be many differences between children when they learn to talk. That is not a bad thing.

What can you expect when your child is 18 months old?

- Your child understands a lot already
- Your child can do simple tasks
- Your child says 3-5 short words besides daddy/mommy
- Your child knows some animal sounds or sounds made by a train or car, for example

Often, a child understands more than they can put into words. This certainly applies to toddlers. It's important not to talk to your child in baby language. But you shouldn't use difficult sentences either.

Your child will not always be able to say what they mean. This can be very difficult for your toddler. The anger about wanting to but not yet being able to say what they mean can cause a tantrum. Visit www.cjgcapelle.nl for tips on dealing with tantrums.

GROWING UP TOGETHER

At this age, the words don't have to be exactly right. It's normal for your toddler to use a word and then not use it again for a while. Your child is learning a lot at once!

Tip: make a list of the words your child says. It's fun for later and helps you to see which words your child already knows.

Body language

Children make a lot of things clear using body language. For example, your toddler points and says 'that one, that one'. You can teach your child language by saying what your child means: 'Oh, you want that book!'

Talk to your child a lot. Your child will learn from that. You can do that all day. For example, with:

- Bathing: 'I am washing your ears, your stomach, your arms...'
- Dressing: 'I'm putting your sock on your foot, your trousers on your legs...'
- Cooking: 'Mmm, that food smells delicious...'
- Setting the table: 'Let's put the cup on the table and the plate...'





Reading aloud

Reading books together is important. Your child will also learn a lot from this. Reading stories aloud may still be a little difficult. Looking at pictures and saying what you see works too. Especially books with simple pictures and preferably one picture per page. Pictures are good for recognising shapes and species.

As well as looking at animals in a book, it's also lovely to see them in real life, like the ducks in the pond and the animals at the petting zoo.

Things to be aware of

- Make sure you have a peaceful environment. Don't leave the TV or radio on all day.
- Make eye contact: look at your child when you talk.
- Stand close to your child when you talk to them (1 metre at the age of 1, 2 metres at the age of 2).
- Speak in short, clear sentences.
- Speak in your mother tongue.
- Talk a lot with your child about everything you do, see, smell or feel.
- Use sign language to make words recognisable.
- Sing songs.
- Repeat mispronounced words in a positive way so that your child knows that you understand without feeling that they are doing something wrong.
- Show that you enjoy listening to your child talk.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Tips

- Go to the library for new books or CDs/DVDs with songs.
- Make a photo book for your child in a plastic folder.
- Plan a time in the day to look at pictures (books) with your child.
- Play together and talk about what your child is doing (a puzzle, building with blocks...).
- Set a good example: sit on the couch with a book or magazine now and again.
- Only use the dummy for falling asleep.
- Regularly practise drinking from an open cup (without a spout) or through a straw so that the muscles that your child uses when talking are properly exercised.
- Read the information in the groeiboekje (growing up booklet) on language/speech.





Questions?

If you still have questions after reading this leaflet, please contact us. You can call the advice line on 010 - 24 23 200 or drop by during the walk-in consultancy hours. You can find more information on www.cjgcapelle.nl



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De Linie 8
2905 AX Capelle aan den IJssel
010 - 24 23 200

info@cjgcapelle.nl
www.cjgcapelle.nl

