

Make Time to Talk

Language Building Tips for Center-Based Child Care Providers

We know that it's important to talk every day with each child, using the kind of talk that builds language and thinking skills. The phrase **MAKE TIME TO TALK** is to help you remember things you can do when talking to children to help them learn new vocabulary and how to use language to express their ideas and needs, and that helps them have fun with language.

M	Mealtimes can be good opportunities for individual and small group conversations with children.
A	Ask questions that encourage the child to think—questions involving analysis, prediction, imagining things that could happen.
K	Kneel or squat to be able to have eye contact with the child.
E	Extend your conversation with the child. Conversations should go back and forth with each person responding to other speaker at least a few times.
T	Themes help children understand and remember the meanings of new words, especially when you build activities around a theme.
I	Involve all of the children in the group in at least one individual conversation every day.
M	Make connections with books the class has read and recent classroom activities to help build meaning.
E	Expand on the child's language by repeating it with extensions (adding descriptive words, using words correctly that child used incorrectly), adding to or building on the child's ideas.
T	Two-way conversations mean that the child should be doing at least half the talking.
O	One or more individual conversations should take place with each child in the setting every day.
T	Texts, such as books, posters, newspapers, and magazines provide shared topics to talk about. Read them with the child, asking questions and discussing them as you go along.
A	Act out stories with the children, re-using words from the book you read aloud with the children.
L	Language should include rich, varied vocabulary in talking with the child that build on classroom themes and experiences.
K	Keep the conversation going through questions, expansions, comments.



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