

Top Tips For How To Improve Communication Skills at Home

Give Wait Time

A good rule of thumb is to wait 5-10 seconds for your child to answer. It gives your child time to process what they want to say.

Be a Good Model

If you want to build strong speech and language skills in your child, you need to show that you have skills yourself. A good rule of thumb for how to improve communication skills is to talk slightly above your child's level. That way they will be encouraged to keep building their skills.

Treat Your Child as a Full Communication Partner

You need to talk to them as if they are adults but still remember they are children. Talking with them like an adult doesn't mean use adult vocabulary, jokes, or information they won't understand. It means take turns, use eye contact, and value what they say.

Turn Off the TV

Just remember the less time you have the TV on, the less time your child will expect it to be on. This will help your child expand their imagination, learn to entertain themselves, and consequently strengthen their language skills.

Read, Read, Read...

Read the back of the cereal box, people's shirts, and signs on the street. The more exposure your child has to speech sounds and language structure, the sooner they will understand it. This builds their receptive and expressive language skills. Try to read at least once a day.

Ask Open Ended Questions

Open-ended questions are when the answer can be a variety of things (not answered by "yes" or "no"). These questions will teach children how to think "hard" and reason for themselves. E.g. "Tell me about..."

Repeat Words Often

Especially when your children are young. *Repetition* is the key to learning... and it is how to improve communication skills.

Praise Your Child for Talking

For younger children: When they call something by the right name, say "Nice talking" or "You're right that is a..." or "You are such a good talker".

For older children: You might compliment them when they use a new vocabulary word. You might say, "Hey, look at you using such a big word." Or "That was an impressive sentence".

