

# Communication in the home matters!

## The importance of Early Language development

**Susan Davies- SEND Specialist Coordinator and Home Learning and Early Language Lead for Family Hubs**



# Session Outline-

- Why is early language development so important- current context
- Why focus on it now!
- Risk factors
- Parents/carers are key!
- Your role and where to get support



- Only 20.3% of pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) gained grade 4/C or better in English and maths at GCSE, compared with 63.9 percent of all pupils.
- 81% of children with emotional and behavioural disorders have unidentified language needs.
- Children with vocabulary difficulties at age five are three times as likely to have mental health problems in adulthood.
- Children with poor vocabulary skills at age five are twice as likely to be unemployed when they reach adulthood.
- 60% of young offenders have low language skills.
- Children with poor vocabulary skills at age five are at greater risk of poverty and social disadvantage.
- The home learning environment (HLE) has significant influence on children's verbal ability. As early as two to three years, the HLE can differentiate children meeting age related expectations for early communication.



## Family Hubs and Start for Life programme guide August 2022- Early Language HLE

Early language acquisition impacts on all aspects of babies' and young children's non-physical development. It contributes to their ability to manage emotions and communicate feelings, to establish and maintain relationships, to think symbolically, and to learn to read and write.

*Law, J., Charlton, J., & Asmussen, K. (2017). Language as a child wellbeing indicator. Early Intervention Foundation*





# Why a focus on early language right now?

---

- Children's early language development is the foundation upon which all future success is built.
- Improving children's early language is an investment in everyone's future.
  - Children's early years are a golden opportunity
  - There has been a significant rise in speech and language difficulties post pandemic.



1 in 5 children in the UK are now struggling with talking and understanding words- the highest number ever recorded.

Children with speech and language challenges are more likely to struggle to read, write and do maths, have mental health problems, end up in the criminal justice system and be out of work as an adult. Their families can also face intolerable stress trying to get help for their children.

*Speech and Language UK Listening to the Unheard Child Sep23*



# Risk factors for long term language difficulties

- School-age (pervasiveness)
- Severity
- Lower non-verbal IQ
- Family history of communication / literacy difficulties
  - Low socioeconomic status and maternal education
  - Mother did not finish secondary school
- Late talking – Lack of word combinations at 24 months – Limited babbling – Limited gesture



# How do SLC skills develop?



With thanks to The Communication Trust for this model





# Multilingual

Multilingualism does NOT  
cause speech, language or  
communication need.



‘If a community values its children  
it must cherish their parents.’

John Bowlby

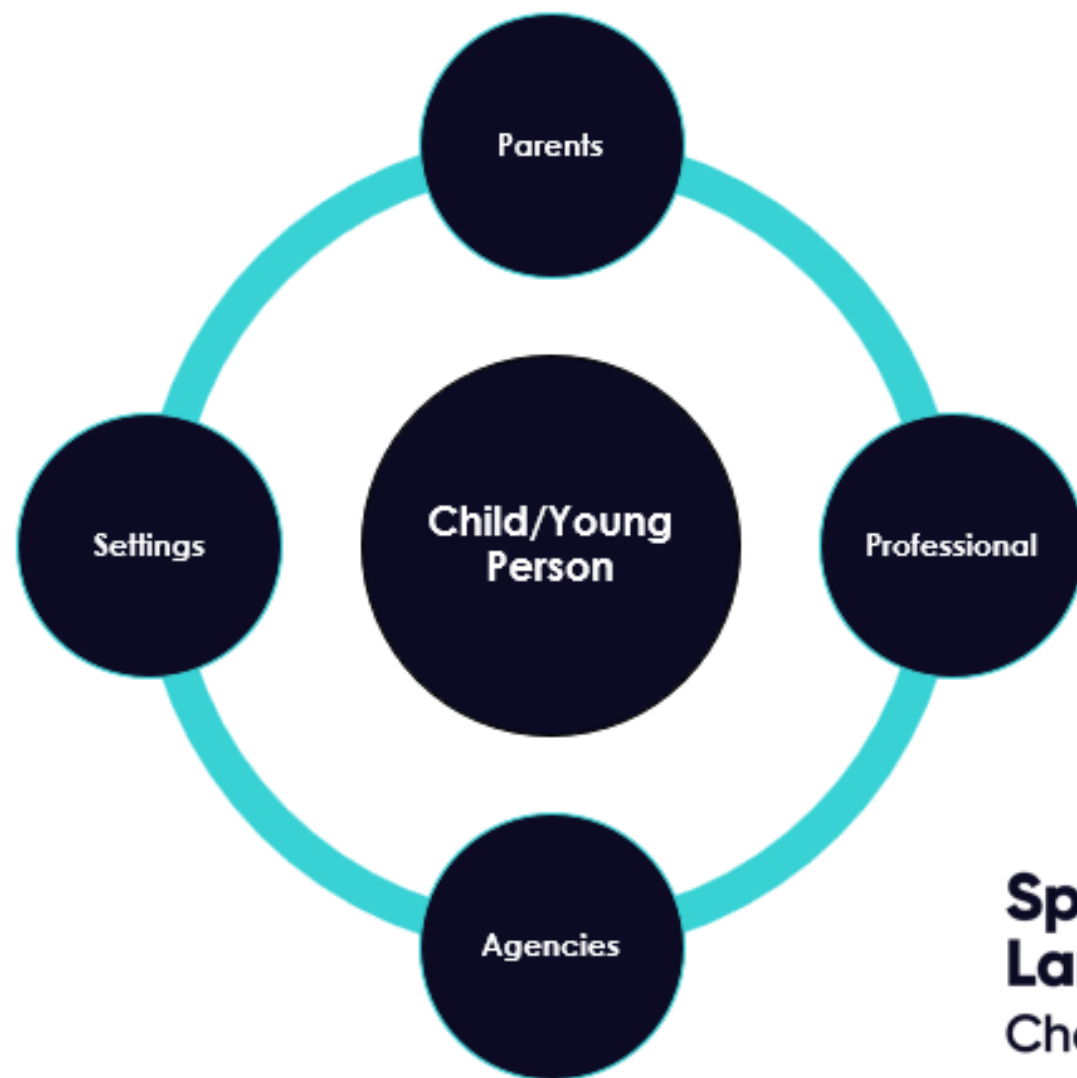


# Parents/carers are vital!

- Parents have more impact on children's outcomes than any other factor/choice of primary school
- If parents know what to look out for they can be the first to identify any difficulties and access services and appropriate support if required
- The attachment to the significant carer that occurs during the neonatal period and around birth is the basis for communication development
- The amount and type of language used at home has an effect on children's overall language development
- Good early communication sets the pattern for later childhood and adolescence.



# Partnership working for children with SLCN



**Speech and Language UK**   
Changing young lives.



With thanks to The Communication Trust for this slide



What can you do to help?





BBC TINY HAPPY PEOPLE

# TOOLS FOR TALKING

WAYS TO SUPPORT A CHILD'S LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

0-3 months



GET FACE TO FACE

3-6 months



HAVE MINI CONVERSATIONS - RESPOND TO BABY'S SOUNDS

6-9 months



RESPOND TO BABBLE

9-12 months



TUNE INTO BABY'S INTERESTS - CONTINGENT TALK

12-18 months



FOLLOW BABY'S LEAD

18-24 months



EXPAND ON LANGUAGE

2-3 years



REPEAT AND BUILD SENTENCES - RECASTING

3-4 years



TALK ABOUT PAST AND FUTURE - DECONTEXTUALISING

4-5 years



PRACTISE SOUNDS IN WORDS - PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS

SEE THEM ALL IN ACTION AT [bbc.co.uk/tinyhappypeople](http://bbc.co.uk/tinyhappypeople) @bbctinyhappypeople



**B B C**

# TINY HAPPY PEOPLE

Fun & easy speech  
and language tips  
to try at home!

get face to face

add a word

...and short phrases

use simple language

narrate what you're doing

narrate what your child does

pause and give them time to respond

talk about what catches their eye

show objects or pictures when talking

let your little one try to say words...

...don't say they are wrong

...just repeat correct words or phrases

use more statements...

...use fewer questions in play

use nursery rhymes or songs

target one word all day

use the same words in daily routines

repeat words over and over

ask open-ended questions

[bbc.co.uk/tinyhappypeople](https://bbc.co.uk/tinyhappypeople)

  @bbctinyhappypeople



- **Key behaviours from 0-5 years old**
- From 0-12 months, we encourage parents to:
  - **Get face to face with their baby**
  - **Have mini conversations with their baby** – waiting for them to respond to interactions with noises/gestures
  - **Respond to their baby's babble**
  - **Tune into their baby's interests and talk about them**
- From 1-2 years, we encourage parents to:
  - **Follow their child's lead in play**
  - **Expand on toddlers' early words**
- From 2-5 years, we encourage parents to:
  - **Recast toddlers' sentences** – repeating their phrases back correctly
  - **Decontextualise language** – talking in past and future tenses with their child
  - **Explore phonetics and rhyme with their child**



- [Get face to face with their baby](#)





# Where to get support

- **Local speech and language therapy service** – referral, assessment and intervention.
- [Children's Speech and Language Therapy - CHFT](#)
- **Local Family Hubs** – advice and sharing ideas.
- [Calderdale's Community Information Directory | Calderdale SEND Local Offer](#)
- [Speech, Language and Communication - Calderdale Family Hubs](#)
- [About Us - Calderdale Family Hubs](#)
- **Talking Point** – website providing advice and tips for parents and professionals:  
<https://speechandlanguage.org.uk/talking-point/>
- [Tiny Happy People - Activities \(bbc.co.uk\)](#)
- [Learning to talk 1 to 2 years - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)





# Electronic Devices

- World Health Organisation (WHO) recommends no devices to under 2s
- 2 to 4 years old 1hr screen time a day
- For older children no more than 2 hrs a day



- Impact on thinking and learning
- Impact on sleep
- Social Skill
- Concentration, Focus and impulse Control
- Feelings of self-worth and mental health
- Not getting enough exercise



- Expand on toddlers' early words

