

# Tips to help your child at home

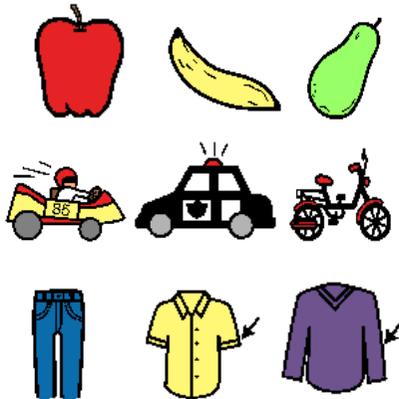


# Vocabulary

## Information Leaflet

## What Is Vocabulary?

- Vocabulary refers to the words a child understands and uses. This is continually developing from an early age. Children need to hear a word many times and in different situations before they learn its meaning.
- Children learn object words first e.g. 'ball' and then action words e.g. 'run'. Later children learn to use describing words e.g. 'small', 'slow'.
- We group words together in our memory in different categories e.g. food, transport, clothes. There can be overlap between these groups e.g. 'lamb' is an animal, but it can also be a food that we eat.



## How do I know if my child is having difficulties with vocabulary?

Sometimes as adults we forget words: it feels like the word is on the tip of our tongue, but we are unable to find it. As children are learning lots of new words, this can happen frequently. This may be described as a 'word finding difficulty'.

Children with word finding difficulties may:

- Use vague vocabulary e.g. 'thingy', 'mmm', 'you know'.
- Use the wrong word e.g. 'piano' may be called 'guitar'. This is the wrong word but it belongs to the same category of 'musical instruments.'

- Describe words using their function rather than their name e.g. 'binoculars' may be described as 'for looking at things far away' and a 'vet' may be described as 'a doggie doctor'.
- Point and use gesture to support their language.

## **How can I support my child's vocabulary development?**

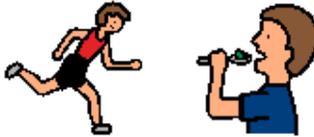
- The learning of new words is most effective when children hear them used in real life situations e.g. within school, in the home, on shopping trips, when visiting family and friends.
- Naming objects and people in the child's environment encourages them to associate the name with the object/person. It is effective to revise this vocabulary to ensure it is remembered and familiarised.
- It is useful to repeat information about a word. This will help your child remember the word and store it accurately in their memory.
- In school your child will be learning vocabulary in topics or themes e.g. 'All about me,' seasons, transport. Ask your child's teacher which topic is being worked on. You can help improve their vocabulary by looking at books and creating a scrapbook.
- It is important to listen carefully, giving your child time to say words and make sentences.



## Activities and games to develop vocabulary skills.

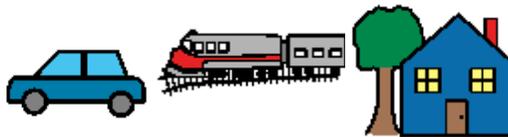
**Guessing games:** Describe a common object and get your child to guess what it is. E.g. I am red, I grow on a tree, I am a fruit that you can eat. What am I?... apple.

- Label things throughout the day e.g. clothes, grocery items. Remember to include doing and describing words 'running, eating' (doing words) 'heavy, wet' (describing words) as well.

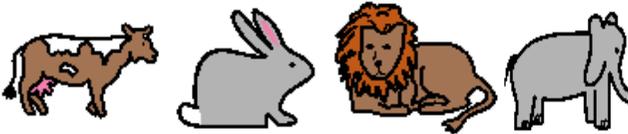


**Odd one out games:** Get your child to tell you which one does not belong and why?

E.g. Car      Train      House



**Topic naming:** Get your child to name as many items in a particular category e.g. all the fruits, clothes, or animals etc. they can think of.



- When reading with your child, talk about what is on each page to develop their knowledge of the vocabulary.

**If you have any queries about the information in this leaflet or would like further advice, please contact your local RISE NI team:**