



# Summer Talk

**Games and activities to support children's communication skills when you're out and about this summer**

# Summer talk

This August, you and your family may be spending lots of time together going out and about locally. You may even be planning exciting day trips or even going away on holiday.

Here at the Communication Trust, we know how important family time is. In this *Summer Talk* toolkit, you'll find a range of games and activities that are fun and easy to do whilst at the same time encouraging your children's communication skills.

We'd like to thank our partners from across the country who have contributed their brilliant ideas and activities to this toolkit as part of their support of *Hello (national year of communication)*.

Visit [www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk](http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk) for further information, free resources and to sign up for regular updates.

## What's inside this pack?

- **Museum fun** – question ideas to start a conversation with your children.
- **Zoo fun!** – help your children learn the signs for different animals at the zoo and go exploring together.
- **Trolley challenge** – keep your kids amused in the supermarket and develop their language skills at the same time.
- **Car challenge** – exhausted by the thought of long journeys? Check out our ideas and challenges for journeys.
- **Picnic fun!** – take the family out for a teddy bears picnic and use songs and rhymes to develop communication skills.
- **Sports challenge** – take the classic game of 'throw and catch' to the next level.
- **Kitchen fun** – make a noisy lunch at home and get help from your children in the kitchen.
- **Top tips for communication with your child** – top tips to support children's speech, language and communication.
- **And there's more...** – useful websites with more games and activities that you can do with your children at home or out and about.



## Why communication?

It's easy to think that children's speech, language and communication develops no matter what. But this isn't true.

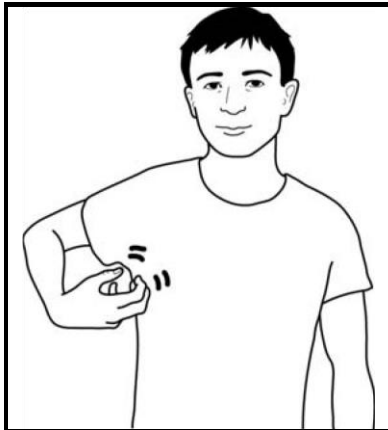
Speech, language and communication underpins everything we do, yet children don't learn to talk by accident.

Adults play a really important role in nurturing and supporting these skills. Listening to what children say, giving them ideas and creating opportunities for talk and interaction can make a big difference to children's ability to live life to the full.

# Zoo fun

A family trip to the zoo offers many things to talk, or sign about, and there's lots of fun to be had. Can you spot these as you walk around?

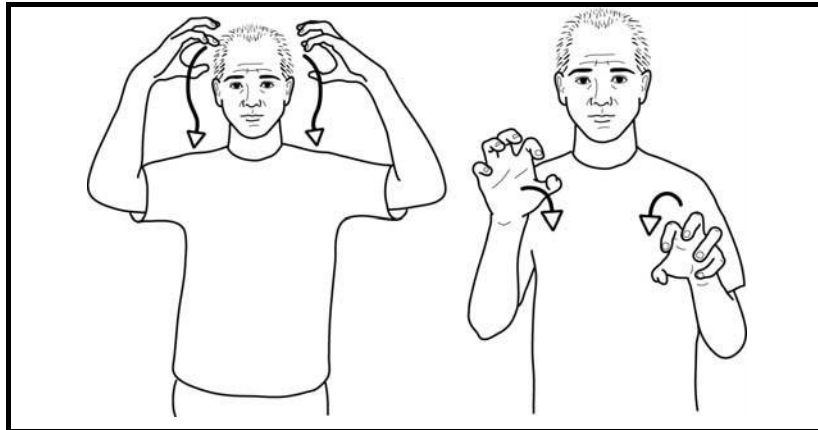
Monkey



Diagrams, text and descriptions ©SIGNALONG

Working clawed hand scratches under working then make alternate clawing movements (palms forward, arm pointing up).

Lion



Diagrams, text and descriptions ©SIGNALONG

Clawed hands (palms in, pointing up) outline mane and then make alternate clawing movements (palms forward, arm pointing up).

Snake



Diagrams, text and descriptions ©SIGNALONG

Working bunched hand (palm down, pointing forward) "snakes" forwards. Directional sign.

Spider



Diagrams, text and descriptions ©SIGNALONG

Working clawed hand (palm down, pointing forward) by side of head, moves down with fingers wriggling.

Giraffe



Diagrams, text and descriptions ©SIGNALONG

Pads of thumb, middle and third fingers of working hand touching, index and little fingers extended (palm in, pointing up); supporting cupped hand (palm back, pointing in) moves up and down working forearm.

# Trolley Challenge

Keep your children amused and develop their communication skills, as you go around the supermarket with the *Trolley Challenge*. You have a lot to think about as you shop, so here are some quick and easy things to do with your child at the same time, whatever their age. If you have children of different ages, swap the activities you do, so they all have a turn.

## 24 – 36 months

Every time you put something in your trolley – say the name of the object and add a describing word, e.g. 'big banana'

## 3 – 4 years

Every time you put something in your trolley – clap out the syllables in the word, e.g. ba/na/na = 3 claps



# Car challenge

Exhausted at the thought of keeping your kids amused on a long journey? Try these activities to ensure travel time is fun and educational rather than a stressful experience for everyone involved!

## Registration plate challenge

Make up silly phrases based on the registration plates of vehicles you pass: C989 VAE = Very Amazing Elephants

## Let's pretend

Pretend your car's a different vehicle (such as a submarine) and make up a story about it. 'The submarine is being chased by three pink hammerhead sharks.' Take turns to add the next sentence or part of the story so that everyone in the car adds something.



## Passenger maths

Give a number to people and animals in cars that you pass e.g.: 1

for a man

2 for a woman

3 for a child

4 for a pet

Take turns and keep your score. The first to get to an agreed number of points, e.g. 50 or more, wins the game.

## Car football

Everyone in the car chooses an unusual type of vehicle (like a tractor), or a less common colour of vehicle (yellow), or a specific type of lorry (like a Sainsbury's lorry). Whoever sees their chosen vehicle coming towards them scores a goal, but if the car overtakes a chosen vehicle everyone else scores a goal. Once someone has seen or overtaken their chosen vehicle, they have to pick a different one.

# Picnic fun

Why not go to the park on a sunny day for a Teddy Bear's Picnic and use songs and rhymes to help develop your children's communication skills. Here are a few for you to try

## Spoken rhymes

*Chop chop choppety chop  
Chop off the bottom and chop off the top What you  
have left – you can  
eat the lot! Chop  
chop choppety  
chop*

You can  
rhythm sticks etc  
rhyme in a

*Slice slice the  
bread looks nice  
Spread spread  
butter on the bread  
On the top we'll put some ham/cheese/jam etc  
Make it tasty for your Ted  
(as in a teddy bear's picnic)*

Accompany with a spreading action



accompany this with drums,  
(beating in time with pulse of the  
chopping action)

## To the tune of 'Frere Jacques'

*Lick your ice cream*

*Lick your ice cream*

*With your tongue*

*With your tongue*

*It's all sweet and sticky*

*It's all sweet and sticky*

*Yum, yum, yum! Yum, yum, yum!*



## To the tune of 'Here we go round the mulberry bush'

*Here we go round the picnic rug, the picnic rug,  
the picnic rug. Here we go round the picnic rug, on  
a sunny morning.*

*This is the way we...*

*peel an orange/ bite an apple/ drink our juice etc  
on a sunny morning.*

Children hold hands and walk in a circle round the picnic rug, then do appropriate actions for each verse

*We're going on a picnic, leaving right away  
If it doesn't rain we'll stay all day Have you got the  
sandwiches? Yes I've got the sandwiches Have  
you got the bananas?*

*Yes I've got the bananas etc*

*Going on a picnic on a sunny day.*

Children provide the answers to the 'Have you got the...?' questions.

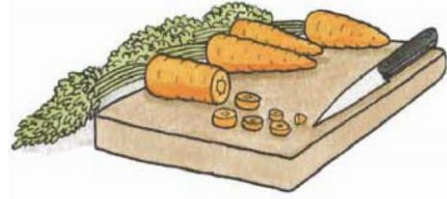


# Kitchen fun

If you find yourself at home this summer, why not get the family together in the kitchen? Making a noisy lunch together is an excellent opportunity for talking and having fun.

## Have fun in the kitchen with your children

Make a noisy lunch together, talking and copying the sounds you hear. Encourage children to learn vocabulary by introducing new equipment and unusual foods.



Here are some ideas:

### Listen to the sounds

- Listen to the sounds in the kitchen.
- Talk about and copy the sounds of different kitchen utensils and equipment:

Metal spoons

Food processor

Knives chopping

### Listen to the sounds

Take turns to talk about the different sounds you make as you eat.

Chewing slurping, munching and crunching!



### Guess the noise:

1. Pick a noisy utensil or piece of equipment in the kitchen
2. Tell your child to close their eyes and listen carefully
3. Make a noise e.g. chop on a board
4. Get your child to open their eyes and make a guess
5. If they're wrong, do it again and then show them

# Top tips for communicating with your child

Below are some top tips for communication development when you are out and about this summer.



- Talk about the things your child is interested in. For example, if they're playing on the slide in the park, go over and comment 'weeee you're sliding down'
- Use comments and prompts to keep the conversation up. They're better than questions for keeping children involved. For example, if your child is eating an ice-cream, comment, 'Mmm, that looks good. I love ice-cream.' They can then respond with more words than if you ask 'What's that you're eating?'
- Put aside time each day for talking together
- If your child doesn't get it quite right the first time, don't say "that's wrong", say it back the right way. For example, if your child says, "I goed swimming", just say back to them, "yes you did, you *went* swimming.'
- Explore words - talk about new words when your child comes across one
- Enjoy conversations with your child - children learn from conversations with adults as much as their friends
- Comment on your child's play using simple language, such as "horse jumping", "man eating orange"
- Ask your child to follow simple instructions, for example feed a teddy, and see if they can copy
- Remember to **OWL!** 1) **O**bserve your child 2) **W**ait for them to interact with you 3) **L**isten to their responses to you
- Extend what your child is saying by one more word than they can say. If they say "soup please" you say "tomato soup please". Or if they say "want soup please" you say "Hannah wants soup please"
- If you're doing any activity, it can be a good idea to do the same thing beforehand so that children know what to expect. For example making sandwiches for a picnic. You could also recap the activity after you've done it. This helps to develop children's ability to understand and say the words involved in the activity, because you'll be repeating them.
- **Most importantly - have fun!**

