

Dear Parents,

We realize that these unfortunate circumstances are less than ideal for our students right now. Therefore, the speech/language department would like to share a few of our favorite resources with you. As speech/language therapists, we treat a variety of speech and language delays. Some of our students are working on articulation skills (the way they pronounce their sounds), some are working on improving their stuttering, some are working on early language development (learning basic vocabulary, beginning to use sentences, etc.), while others are working on higher level language skills, such as inferencing and understanding more in depth word meanings. Within this document you will find a list of resources such as websites and apps that will help you to target some of your child's speech and language needs. Most of these are free or relatively inexpensive. Please know that you are not required to use these. These are just for extra practice if you would like to work on some speech skills at home. We have also included tips on how to help those who stutter in the home environment, as well as tips to enhance early language development in the preschool ages. Please scroll on down and take a look at the included information to see if you might find some beneficial things for your child at home. We miss our students terribly, and we hope to see all of them again very soon! Please stay well and safe during this uncertain time in our country and in our world. Thank you so much for your participation and your support of the speech/language department. We appreciate you!

Sincerely,

The Speech/Language Therapy Team  
Sunflower County Consolidated School District

## **ONLINE SPEECH/LANGUAGE RESOURCES**

### **Speech/Language Websites Offering Free Printables**

[www.mommyspeechtherapy.com](http://www.mommyspeechtherapy.com) (Great for kids working on how to produce sounds correctly. Click on Free Downloads and then choose the sound that your child needs to practice saying correctly.)

[www.speechandlanguagekids.com](http://www.speechandlanguagekids.com) (Has a variety of resources ... activities for articulation, answering basic questions, understanding verbs, adjectives, etc. This also has good information for middle school and high school students. Just type "middle school" or "high school" into the search box and numerous options will pop up.)

[www.speechandlanguageathome.com](http://www.speechandlanguageathome.com) (Requires parents to sign up for emails that provide a code for free printable resources – good for preschool and early language development)

[www.speakingofspeech.com](http://www.speakingofspeech.com) (Has a variety of free resources .... You can choose a category from the drop down box, such as language, literacy, articulation, etc.)

### **Preschool and Early Language Apps**

My First Words - Flashcards and Games - FREE

100 Words for Babies and Toddlers - FREE

Baby Sign and Learn – FREE

Speech Blubs – Language Therapy - FREE

TallyTots - \$2.99

Splingo - \$2.99

WH Questions at Home - \$2.99

### **Articulation Apps** (for students working on pronouncing sounds correctly)

Speech Tutor - \$9.99 for the full version but they do offer a free trial version

Articulation Cards - \$1.99

Quick Artic – FREE

### **Apps to Improve Language Skills**

Let's Name Things – FREE (works on naming items in different categories)

Understanding Inferences - \$2.99

Synonyms Fun Deck - \$2.99

I Can Do Apps – This offers a variety of apps related to different language topics, including categories (\$4.99), same/different (\$3.99), rhyming (\$4.99), yes/no questions (\$4.99), verbs (\$4.99), following directions (\$4.99), and guess what (\$3.99). They are also available in bundles.

## **TIPS FOR HELPING STUDENTS WHO STUTTER**

There is no cue for stuttering. However, our goal in stuttering therapy is to give students some tips and techniques they can use to make their speech sound as natural as possible. Here are some ways you as parents can help at home.

**1. Reduce the pace.** Speak with your child in an unhurried way, pausing frequently. Wait a few seconds after your child finishes before you begin to speak. Your own easy relaxed speech will be far more effective than any advice such as “slow down” or “try it again slowly”. For some children, it is also helpful to introduce a more relaxed pace of life for awhile. Try to avoid rushing them with their speech or any other activity. This increases anxiety, which impacts the child’s ability to speak fluently.

**2. Full listening.** Try to increase those times that you give your child your undivided attention and are really listening. This helps the child feel comfortable and reduces stress.

**3. Asking questions.** Asking questions is a normal part of life – but try to resist asking one after the other. Sometimes it is more helpful to comment on what your child has said and wait.

**4. Turn taking.** Help all members of the family take turns talking and listening. Children find it much easier to talk when there are fewer interruptions. If your child experiences stuttering during conversation, DO NOT stop or interrupt them. Let them work through the stuttering moment. Maintain eye contact with them throughout the struggle to let them know you realize they are having trouble and that you are still listening.

**5. Building confidence.** Use descriptive praise to build confidence. An example would be “I like the way you picked up your toys. You’re so helpful,” instead of “that’s great.” Praise strengths unrelated to talking as well such as athletic skills, being organized, independent, or careful. All of these praises help to build confidence and reduce stress and anxiety.

**6. Special times.** Set aside a few minutes at a regular time each day when you can give your undivided attention to your child. This quiet calm time – no TV, iPad or phones - can be a confidence builder for young children. As little as five minutes a day can make a difference.

\*You can also practice some breathing exercises with your child to help them relax before practicing their speech.

### **Breathing Exercises**

Sit up straight with both feet on the floor.

Relax your body.

Slowly inhale through your nose (fill your belly up with air).

Slowly exhale through your mouth (empty your belly slowly).

Wait a few seconds and repeat.

After you are able to focus on breathing, try to speak slowly while exhaling.

## **TIPS FOR ENCOURAGING SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**

### **Birth to 2 Years**

- Say sound like "ma," "da," and "ba." Try to get your baby to say them back to you.
- Look at your baby when he makes sounds. Talk back to him, and say what he says. Pretend to have a conversation.
- Respond when your baby laughs or makes faces. Make the same faces back to her.
- Teach your baby to do what you do, like clapping your hands and playing peek-a-boo.
- Talk to your baby as you give him a bath, feed him, and get him dressed. Talk about what you are doing and where you are going. Tell him who or what you will see.
- Point out colors and shapes.
- Count what you see.
- Use gestures, like waving and pointing.
- Talk about animal sounds. This helps your baby connect the sound and the animal. Use words like "The dog says woof-woof."
- Add on to what your baby says. When your baby says, "Mama," say, "Here is Mama. Mama loves you. Where is baby? Here is baby."
- Read to your child. You don't have to read every word, but talk about the pictures. Choose books that are sturdy and have large colorful pictures. Ask your child, "What's this?" and try to get him to point to or name objects.

### **2 to 4 Years**

- Speak clearly to your child. Model good speech.
- Repeat what your child says to show that you understand. Add on to what she says. Use words like, "Want juice? I have juice. I have apple juice. Do you want apple juice?"

- It's okay to use baby talk sometimes. Be sure to use the adult word too. For example, "It is time for din-din. We will have dinner now."
- Cut out pictures of favorite or familiar things. Put them into categories, like things to ride on, things to eat, and things to play with. Make silly pictures by mixing and matching pictures. Glue a picture of a dog behind the wheel of a car. Talk about what is wrong with the picture and ways to "fix" it.
- Help your child understand and ask questions. Play the yes–no game. Ask questions such as, "Are you Marty?" and "Can a pig fly?" Have your child make up questions and try to fool you.
- Ask questions that include a choice. "Do you want an apple or an orange?" "Do you want to wear your red shirt or your blue shirt?"
- Help your child learn new words. Name body parts, and talk about what you do with them. "This is my nose. I can smell flowers, brownies, and soap."
- Sing simple songs, and say nursery rhymes. This helps your child learn the rhythm of speech.
- Place familiar objects in a box. Have your child take one out and tell you its name and how to use it. "This is my ball. I bounce it. I play with it."
- Show pictures of familiar people and places. Talk about who they are and what happened. Try making up new stories.

#### **4 to 6 Years**

- Pay attention when your child talks to you.
- Get your child's attention before you talk.
- Praise your child when she tells you something. Show that you understand her words.
- Pause after speaking. This gives your child a chance to respond.
- Keep helping your child learn new words. Say a new word, and tell him what it means, or use it in a way that helps him understand. For example, you can use the word "vehicle" instead of "car." You can say, "I think I will drive the vehicle to the store. I am too tired to walk."

- Talk about where things are, using words like "first," "middle," and "last" or "right" and "left." Talk about opposites like "up" and "down" or "on" and "off."
- Have your child guess what you describe. Say, "We use it to sweep the floor," and have her find the broom. Say, "It is cold, sweet, and good for dessert. I like strawberry" so she can guess "ice cream."
- Work on groups of items, or categories. Find the thing that does not belong in a group. For example, "A shoe does not go with an apple and an orange because you can't eat it. It is not round. It is not a fruit."
- Help your child follow two- and three-step directions. Use words like, "Go to your room, and bring me your book."
- Ask your child to give directions. Follow his directions as he tells you how to build a tower of blocks.
- Play games with your child such as "house." Let her be the parent, and you pretend to be the child. Talk about the different rooms and furniture in the house.
- Watch movies together on TV or a tablet. Talk about what your child is watching. Have her guess what might happen next. Talk about the characters. Are they happy or sad? Ask her to tell you what happened in the story. Act out a scene together, or make up a different ending.
- Use everyday tasks to learn language. For example, talk about the foods on the menu and their color, texture, and taste when in the kitchen. Talk about where to put things. Ask her to put the napkin on the table, in your lap, or under the spoon. Talk about who the napkin belongs to. Say, "It is my napkin." "It is Daddy's." "It is Tamara's."