

Before first words

Before first words are spoken, it is important for your child to demonstrate the following abilities:

- **Imitation**

Children must have the foundational skill of imitation before they can learn to repeat words. Practice having your child imitate actions from songs such as “Wheels on the Bus”, “Heads, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes”, and “If You’re Happy and You Know it”.

- **Follow simple directions**

Following directions is the ability to act on requests by others. Practice following simple directions, such as “give me” and “come here” while playing with your child’s favorite toys.

- **Establish joint attention**

Joint attention is the shared focus of two individuals on an object. To practice joint attention, follow your child’s lead and have many face-to-face interactions with your child.

- **Gesture/ Point**

By encouraging gestures, we are promoting overall language development. Practice this skill by holding up objects and pointing to objects in your daily interactions with your child. You can also teach your child simple signs, such as “eat” and “open”.



Speech