

Let's speak clearly.

How to help your child when you can't follow what they are saying.

Things to try:

- ✓ **Use choice questions to break down what your child is trying to tell you.**
e.g. "Did you play in the sand or the water"?
- ✓ **Ask your child "Can you show me"?**
Your child may be able show you something that will help them explain what they are trying to say.
- ✓ **Use praise to help your child feel comfortable**
Encourage your child to keep trying even if you find it difficult to understand them
- ✓ **Use what you have understood to help and repeat back**
e.g. "oh you played in the sand today, that sounds fun!"
- ✓ **Use gestures and drawing to communicate with your child**
Get into the habit of using gestures to support what you are talking about, e.g. miming putting a coat on when you say "time to go out". Encourage your child to use gesture like this to act out their message.
- ✓ **Have breaks from talking time**
Being understood takes concentration and work for your child so make time for activities where there is no pressure to speak. e.g. Simon says, colouring and painting, building blocks, etc

Things to avoid:

- x **Open questions e.g. 'what do you like to do?'**
Open questions are tricky, as your child might respond with anything!
- x **Pretending to understand your child when you haven't**
Admit you didn't understand. Show them you are interested and prepared to wait for them to get their message across.
- x **Asking your child to copy what you are saying**
- x **Asking your child to keep repeating themselves**
Encourage them to use different words to talk about the same thing,