

Did you know?

Face-to-face conversation can increase a child's language understanding up to six times more than passive communication.

Professionals recommend less than seven hours of screen time per week. 85 percent of children exceed this amount.

Children who experience varied communication can be more than two years ahead of their peers in verbal and memory skills by the age of five.

Talk Spot is an awareness campaign from Speech and Hearing BC: a not for profit with more than 1200 volunteer member speech-language pathologists and audiologists in British Columbia. Our vision is that everyone in the province is empowered to communicate effectively. We offer resources and information to members of the public about identifying, living with and treating problems with their speech, language, hearing, voice, swallowing, fluency, or social communication.

Visit speechandhearingbc.ca to:

- Receive further information about healthy language and learning in children.
- Access a healthy milestones chart for children's language development.
- Find a Speech-Language Pathologist or Audiologist near you.
- Download fun, educational resources for children, parents or caregivers and teachers.

Talk Spot. Find Yours. Use Yours.

Speech and Hearing BC is a registered charity. Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists are registered by the College of Speech and Hearing Health Professionals of BC.



Speech and Hearing BC
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Find Your Talk Spot

Face-to-face conversations are the best way to support your kids' learning.

Put down the screen and find your Talk Spot.

That's anywhere you can communicate in person with someone you love:
in the car, at the table,
in the community centre,
at the mall, in the park.

Talk Spot. Find yours. Use yours.
#TALKSPOT

What makes a Talk Spot?

Too much time with smartphones or tablets is linked with significant language delays and even lifelong learning difficulties for children. In-person communication is one of the best ways to help your child to learn.

A **Talk Spot** is anywhere you can communicate face-to-face with someone you love. This could be in the car, at the dinner table, in the community centre, at the mall, in the park: anywhere you can talk without the distraction of a screen. Find yours, use yours, and set your child up for learning success.

Let's start a conversation

Back-and-forth communication is one of the best ways to help your child develop their language and memory skills. Asking varied questions can help your child to increase their vocabulary, but so does talking about your own experiences as they happen. This can be the actions or decisions you take while driving, washing dishes, shopping, or cleaning the house.

Try some of these questions next time you want to create a Talk Spot.

Ages 0–2

Do you see [say what you see]?

I hear a dog. Do you hear it?

What is that smell?

What colour is this? Do you see it somewhere else?

Ages 2–4

What makes you happy?

What are you really good at?

Did you smile or laugh extra today?

What games did you play at recess?

Ages 5+

What have your friends been up to?

If you opened a store, what would you sell?

What super powers do you want?

What makes you feel brave?

What are some of the best things about nature?

What three things do you want to do this summer?

Keep the conversation going

- Ask open-ended questions that require more detail than "yes" or "no." For example, instead of asking "Did you have a good day?", ask "Can you tell me something that happened today?"
- Encourage your child to ask questions in return. Conversation is not a one-way street!
- Narrate your current activity to reinforce the structure of language for your child. Talk in complete sentences to mimic real conversation.
- A conversation doesn't have to involve talking, especially for infants and toddlers! Children learn the basics of conversation well before they learn to talk. When your child looks or gestures, treat this as a conversational turn and respond to keep the conversation going!
- When you are burping your child, or doing other similar activities, talk out loud. "Do you like when I comb your hair?" "Look at that big smile!"
- Use new words when your child can learn the meaning from the experience. For example, at a restaurant, you can say things like "She is pouring you water." or "Let's slice your bread."
- Set up silly situations where your child needs to use words to express themselves. For example: giving your child a bowl of cereal with a fork, or reading a menu upside down.

Learn even more about Talk Spots at speechandhearingbc.ca

When You Need Professional Help

Children with speech or language disorders are more likely to have difficulties with reading and comprehension in later years. Early intervention is important to help your child succeed in school. Do any of the following apply to you or your child?

- Has experienced multiple ear infections (hearing directly affects speech development);
- Does not receive regular communication with adults;
- Would rather 'show' you than tell you about something;
- Has difficulty saying sounds in the correct order in words;
- Leaves sounds out of words or drops word endings.

If you see multiple 'warning signs', there is a range of options for receiving help. The first step is assessment: diagnosing a problem as early as possible is essential.

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) are registered, highly trained professionals who can diagnose and treat disorders relating to poor hearing, language delay, speech impairments, reading difficulties or writing challenges.

Audiologists are also registered, trained professionals who specialize in diagnosing and treating hearing impairments. They can determine if problems with hearing or auditory processing are contributing to a child's difficulty with learning. Some services are government funded and available free of charge and others you will need to pay for.