

National
Literacy
Trust

Change your story

Walk and Talk

Use these cards to help you talk to your baby or child while you are out and about. This will help develop their speech and communication skills.



In partnership with

Better
Health

Start
for Life

Look, listen and chat!

Look, listen, and chat.

The conversations you have with your child can make a difference to their future.



Did you know?

Talking to your baby before they can say any words helps them learn to talk.

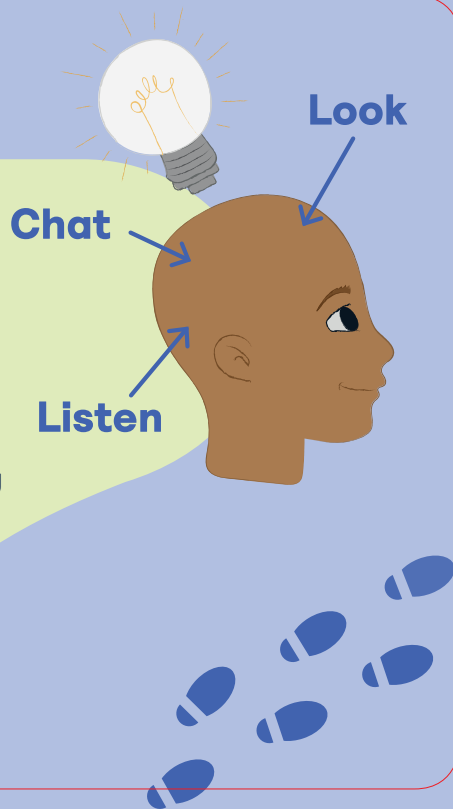
Try having a 'babble' chat with them by copying the sounds they make!



Why?

The first five years of a child's life have a big impact. The development that happens helps improve their future learning, happiness and wellbeing.

You can help this development by finding opportunities to talk and listen to them as often as you can, and introduce them to new things.



How?

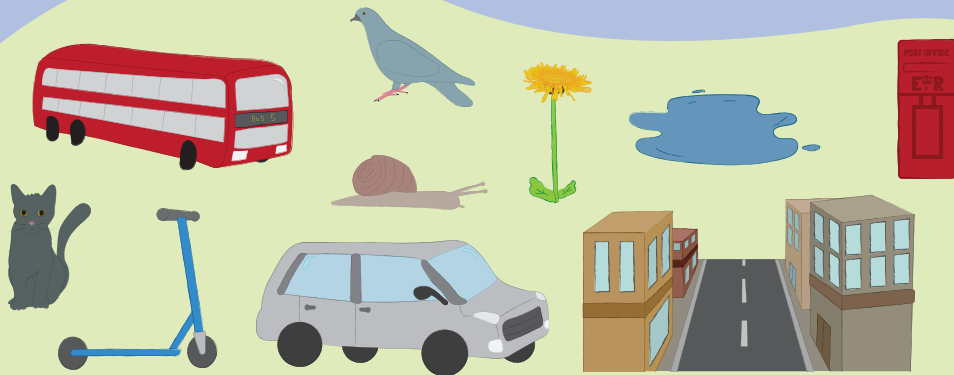
- Read the cards for ideas, and take them out with you.
- Follow your child's lead (notice what they're interested in).
- Every conversation you have with your child will make a difference.





You might notice and talk about...

Things that are living, that move, that you can hear or smell, the weather, letters and numbers, different ways you can move, patterns, textures and more.

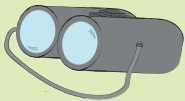


You could:

Count

1234

Play I Spy



Use your senses

Notice the small things



Splash in a puddle

Move in different ways




Sing a song or nursery rhyme



Make up a story or song





**Follow your child's lead.
Talk about the things
they are doing and
have noticed.**



Did you know?


Showing your child you're interested in what they do and say boosts their confidence.





**That's a good idea!
Taking small steps
is helping you to
balance**

**When you talk
about what I'm
doing it teaches
me new words**

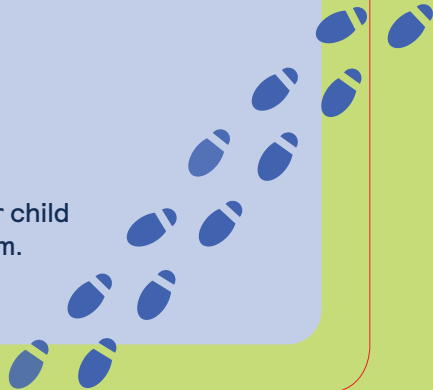



**Give your baby or
child time to think and
respond when you talk
to them.**



Top tip:


Wait at least 5–15 seconds for your child to respond when you speak to them.





**It helps me if you
give me some
thinking time**

**When I wait for her
to respond, she
gives me a better
response**

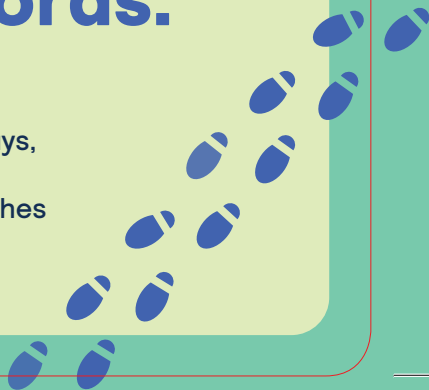


Repeat back the sounds and words your child says, and add one or two more sounds or words.



Did you know?

When you copy what your child says, it shows them you are listening. Adding an extra word or two teaches them new words, and how to say longer sentences.





cat

Yes, that cat has a
fluffy tail

da da da, yes, cat

dadadada


When you have time,
take a moment. Slow
down and show your
child you are listening.



Top tip:

Help your child to look more closely, to notice things they can see or hear.





**Seeing your face
when we talk,
helps me learn to
communicate**

**When I slow
down and give
him my full
attention, he
looks so happy**

Think about the type of questions you ask.


The best questions are the ones that encourage thinking rather than a single word answer.



Did you know?

It's okay if you can't answer all your child's questions. Visit the library or use the internet to search for answers together.






I wonder where
that snail is
going?

I think the snail
is going...

?



Whenever you can, include
looking, listening, and chatting
during your day.

It will help your
child's speech and
communication skills.

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**For lots more free activities and
resources to help your child's
development, visit [wordsforlife.org.uk](https://www.wordsforlife.org.uk)**

**If you are concerned about your child's language
development please speak to your health visitor,
Family Hub or childcare provider.**

This product is not a toy.

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**Better
Health** **Start
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We consulted speech and language therapists, teachers, early years professionals and parents to develop these cards, to help you to help your child.

