**Everyday things you can do to support language at home**

**Reading**

Reading to your child is an effective way to support vocabulary development. Depending on the language level of your child, you can ask questions whilst reading to them, for example:

* Where is the character or where is the story taking place?
* Who is in the story?
* What do you think is going to happen next?
* How do you think the character is feeling?

Once your child is an able reader, spend a little time talking about what they have been reading. This will help them to use the words they have read.

**Watching TV**

It is recommended that children’s screen time is kept to a minimum. Turning the TV and electronic devices off allows for greater opportunities for communication and interaction. However in those moments where your child is watching TV, you can make it more interactive by setting your child some tasks, for example:

* Can they come and tell you a word that they have heard?
* Can they tell you a word that they think you might not know?
* Can they describe a character from the show or compare two characters they have been watching?
* Can they tell you what happened in the TV show?

All of this involves listening and using language.

**Playing games**

The following games promote speech and language development:

* Guess Who
* Headbandz (Guess the person/object on your head with clues from other players)
* Simon Says
* I Spy
* Hide and Seek (encourage child to say where the object was e.g. the bear was under the table)

**Family conversations**

Mealtimes are a natural opportunity to practise conversational skills, although you can find many other opportunities during the day to have family conversations as well, e.g. during the quiet time before bedtime. Adults can model asking questions to children and can then encourage children to take turns asking each other questions, for example,

* What did you enjoy about your day today?
* What was your favourite thing to eat today?
* What activity did you enjoy the most? Why?
* Which character did you like the most in that movie?
* Which toys did you enjoy playing with today?
* What are you looking forward to doing tomorrow?

Encourage children listen to each other, look towards each other, comment on the answer (e.g. ‘that’s my favourite too!’), and ask follow-up questions (Why? What else?)

**Commenting on everyday activities**

Everyday tasks at home can become language opportunities when you comment and use language to describe what you are doing. For example, when getting breakfast, talk through the steps:

* First, I am getting out the bowls. They’re *empty*
* Next, I’m looking for the cereal. Oh! There it is, it’s hiding *behind* the pasta!
* Now I’m going to pour the cereal and then the milk. Look! Now your bowl is *full*!
* Finally, it’s time for you to eat it! Yummy!

Encourage children to retell you the steps of activities they participated in, using language such as ‘first, ‘next’ and ‘last’ to structure their retelling.