

How to Help Your Child Practice New Speech Skills

- You are a key member of your child's treatment team, and we want speech practice to be positive and successful for you and your child.
- In speech therapy sessions your child will learn new ways to move their jaw, lips and tongue and say new speech sounds and words. It takes time and practice for new speech skills to develop and become automatic.
- Regular home practice is important because it gives your child more opportunities to practice and learn new speech skills.

There are 4 core skills that will help you practice new speech skills at home with your child:



1. MODEL FOR SPEECH

- Modeling shows your child what to say and how to say it.
- Make eye contact with your child so they can see how you move your mouth and hear what you say.
- Say the word slowly. This gives your child extra time to process what you said and how you said it.
- It is easier for your child to imitate a word when you say it slowly than when you say it quickly.

2. CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO PRACTICE WORDS

- Look at your child, model the word, pause and wait for your child to copy you.
- Start a sentence, pause and wait for your child to fill in the blank (e.g., Let's pour some juice in your).
- Offer your child a choice. Make one of the choices the word you want your child to say (e.g., Do you want to drink or?).
- Ask a question where your child has to use the target word in the answer. (e.g., What fell on the floor?).





3. GIVE FEEDBACK

- Watch and listen carefully when your child says a word.
- Tell them what they did well or tell them what to do differently.
- Praise their efforts.
- Give feedback when you see your child needs it. You do not need to do this on every response.

4. HELP YOUR CHILD SAY A WORD MORE ACCURATELY

- Model the word slowly and ask them to copy you.
- Say the word together (at the same time) and say it slowly.

Your child's SLP will show you other ways to help, such as:

- Telling or showing your child how to make a specific movement (e.g., make a round mouth).
- Using a gesture, letter or symbol to represent a movement/sound (e.g., pointing to your lips or printing the letter "p" to cue the sound).



Your child's speech-language pathologist will suggest activities for you to do with your child and tell you what words to practice. They will also show you how to use the 4 skills we have described above when you work with your child.

Please speak with your child's Speech-Language Pathologist if you have any questions or need additional information.