

## Help your child develop speech sounds

Speech sounds develop gradually. Most children will have developed all their sounds by age 7. However some children require therapy to help them develop their speech sounds.

### How can you help your child with speech sounds?

- Do not correct your child's speech mistakes. Instead, say the word correctly after him so that he hears the correct pronunciation:

e.g. Child: "dock"  
Adult: "Sock. The sock is on the line."

Child: "Tar"  
Adult: "That's right! It is a car."



- Pronounce words clearly, slowly and correctly for your child to hear.
- Tell other family members and friends that it is important not to correct your child's speech mistakes.



- Respond with attention and praise when your child makes any attempt to speak. Let her know how pleased you are she is talking, even if she is not speaking clearly.
- If you can not understand your child, do not pretend that you can. Get your child to show you what they mean or tell you more.
- Do not use your child's mistakes yourself in conversation! Ask family members not to do this also, e.g. avoid using the word "it" for "sit", even if she uses it herself.
- Don't be afraid to send your child to school or pre-school because of his speech difficulties. Encourage your child to mix with other children as much as possible.
- Let your child watch your face, lips and tongue as you form sounds and words.
- Your Speech & Language Therapist will advise you on a specific plan to help your child's speech sound development.

**Remember to listen to *what* your child says  
and not *how* she says it.**

