Learning language in everyday life

Face-to-face

When interacting with your child, it is important to get on the same level (face-to-face) rather than sitting behind or standing above your child. This encourages eye contact and allows you to see and hear each other better, encouraging interactions.

Watch, Wait, Listen

Watch: Watch your child and find out what they are interested in. Look at the items that they are playing with or looking at.

Wait: Say nothing and wait expectantly. Look at your child and show them you are waiting using your body (facing towards them, leaning in). Give them a chance to say something (wait about 10 seconds before saying anything if you can).

Listen: To what your child is saying to you. They may say something out loud, use a gesture e.g. pointing or show an object. Respond with interest and enthusiasm.

Using these strategies

You can use this strategy with your child in any activity at any time of the day. Many parents find it an easy strategy to try at play time, bath time, dressing or meal times.

When will you try it?

Information and strategies provided are based on Hanen Programs® for Parents. For more information on how you can support your child’s communication please visit the Hanen Centre https://www.hanen.org.