

# LEARN THEIR WORDS

Turning Everyday Moments Into  
Communication Growth



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Vol. 2

## Part Two Introduction

### Turning Everyday Moments Into Communication Growth

- The first part of this book focused on understanding.
- Understanding your child's communication journey.
- Understanding the difference between language and speech.
- Understanding strengths before difficulties.
- Understanding how children naturally learn language.
- Understanding how the home environment and parental modeling influence communication development.
- These insights formed the foundation.
- But understanding alone does not create progress.
- Action does.
- As we begin Part Two, we shift from awareness to application.
- From identifying challenges to supporting growth.
- From understanding communication development to actively nurturing it in everyday life.

### A New Focus

- Many parents begin their journey searching for a quick solution.
- A special exercise.
- A perfect activity.
- A secret strategy that will suddenly unlock communication.
- The reality is both simpler and more powerful.
- Communication growth rarely happens through one big breakthrough.
- It happens through hundreds of small moments.
- A conversation in the car.
- A story before bedtime.
- A question asked during dinner.
- A game played on the living room floor.
- A carefully chosen response when a child struggles to find the right word.

These moments seem ordinary.

Yet together, they shape how children learn to understand language, use language, and develop confidence in their own voice.

Part Two is about learning how to recognize and maximize those moments.

### **Communication Development Is a Daily Process**

One of the most important ideas in this book is that language learning does not begin when a parent says:

*"Let's practice."*

- Language learning is happening all day long.
- When a child asks for help.
- When they explain a problem.
- When they listen to a story.
- When they negotiate with a sibling.
- When they describe a drawing.
- When they talk about something exciting that happened at school.
- These everyday interactions provide opportunities for growth far more frequently than most parents realize.

The goal of Part Two is to show you how to transform daily life into a supportive communication environment without turning your home into a therapy clinic.

### **Progress Does Not Need To Be Perfect**

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- As you work through the chapters ahead, you may encounter days that feel successful.
- You may hear your child use a new word.
- You may notice a clearer sound.
- You may enjoy a longer conversation than you've had before.
- On other days, progress may feel invisible.
- Your child may seem reluctant to talk.
- Words may be difficult to find.
- Communication may feel frustrating.
- This is normal.
- Language development rarely follows a straight line.
- Children often make rapid progress, pause, consolidate their learning, and then move forward again.
- The key is consistency.
- Small efforts repeated over time often produce extraordinary results.

### **What You Will Learn In Part Two**

The chapters ahead are designed to provide practical, realistic tools that fit naturally into family life.

You will learn how to:

#### **Support Clearer Speech**

Understand speech development and discover fun, confidence-building activities that help children practice sounds naturally.

#### **Correct Without Creating Pressure**

Learn how to guide communication while protecting confidence and preserving the joy of conversation.

#### **Use Reading as a Language Tool**

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Transform story time into one of the most powerful language-building experiences available.

### **Leverage the Power of Play**

Discover why play is one of the most effective environments for communication growth and how to use it intentionally.

### **Strengthen Listening Skills**

Build the foundation upon which language and communication develop.

### **Support Emotional Well-Being**

Recognize the emotional impact communication challenges can have on children and learn how to respond with empathy and encouragement.

### **Work Alongside Professionals**

Learn how parents, teachers, and therapists can collaborate as a team to support a child's growth.

### **Create a Long-Term Communication Plan**

Develop sustainable habits that continue supporting language development long after this book is finished.

### **Remember Your Most Important Role**

As you move into these practical chapters, remember something essential:

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

- You are not expected to become a speech therapist.
- You are not expected to become a language specialist.
- You are not expected to have all the answers.
- Your role is much more important.
- You are your child's most consistent communication partner.
- You are the person who hears their stories.
- The person who notices their efforts.
- The person who celebrates their progress.
- The person who helps them feel understood when words are difficult to find.
- No professional, program, or resource can replace the value of those daily interactions.
- That is why the strategies in this section focus on real life.
- Because real life is where communication grows.

### Before We Continue

- Take a moment to reflect on how far you have already come.
- You have learned to look beyond labels.
- You have learned to identify strengths.
- You have learned to create a language-rich environment.
- You have learned to model communication intentionally.
- Most importantly, you have begun seeing language development through a new lens.
- Not as a race.
- Not as a test.
- Not as a list of shortcomings.
- But as a journey.
- A journey built on connection, consistency, confidence, and growth.
- Now it is time to take the next step.

The chapters ahead will equip you with practical tools, real-world examples, and daily routines that can help your child develop stronger language skills and clearer speech while preserving the most important ingredient of all:

**A positive, trusting relationship with the people who love them most.**

Welcome to Part Two.

Let's begin turning everyday moments into lasting communication success.

### Chapter 6

#### The Power of Everyday Conversations

##### Chapter Goal

- Many parents imagine that helping a child develop language requires special lessons, carefully designed activities, or long periods of structured practice.
- The truth is often much simpler.
- The most effective language lessons usually happen when nobody realizes a lesson is taking place.
- They happen while choosing fruit at the grocery store.
- They happen during a car ride.
- They happen while setting the table.
- They happen while walking through a park, feeding a pet, folding laundry, or preparing dinner.
- Children do not separate life from learning.
- For them, communication is not a subject.
- It is part of everyday living.

This chapter will help you recognize the extraordinary language-learning opportunities hidden inside ordinary family routines. You will learn how to transform everyday moments into communication-rich experiences without making them feel like work, therapy, or school.

##### Turning Daily Life into Speech Therapy

##### Without Making It Feel Like Therapy

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- One of the biggest mistakes well-meaning parents make is turning every conversation into an exercise.
- They begin asking constant questions.
- They repeat words excessively.
- They correct every mistake.
- Eventually, communication becomes stressful.
- The child begins feeling tested rather than heard.
- The goal is not to create a mini therapy clinic at home.
- The goal is to create a communication-rich lifestyle.
- Think about how children naturally learn to walk.
- Most parents do not spend hours teaching every step.
- Instead, they provide opportunities for movement.
- Language develops in a similar way.
- Children need opportunities to communicate repeatedly throughout the day.

### The Hidden Power of Ordinary Moments

Imagine a child participates in:

- 5 minutes of conversation during breakfast
- 10 minutes during a car ride
- 5 minutes while shopping
- 10 minutes during play
- 10 minutes before bed

That equals 40 minutes of meaningful communication exposure every day.

Over a year, that becomes hundreds of hours of language practice.

No worksheets.

No pressure.

Just conversation.

### Communication Is Everywhere

Communication opportunities exist during:

- Mealtimes
- Shopping trips
- Car rides
- Bath time
- Outdoor walks
- House chores
- Bedtime routines
- Family gatherings

When parents learn to recognize these opportunities, language development becomes part of everyday life instead of something extra.

### Conversation Examples

- One of the easiest ways to support language growth is learning how to expand everyday interactions.
- The goal is to keep conversations flowing while providing richer language models.

### Grocery Store Conversations

- Grocery stores are communication goldmines.
- They contain colors, shapes, numbers, categories, labels, actions, choices, comparisons, and opportunities for decision-making.
- Every aisle contains vocabulary.
- Every shopping list contains language.

### Basic Example

Parent:

"We need three apples."

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Child:

"Apple."

Parent:

"Yes, three red apples."

This simple interaction provides:

- Counting
- Color vocabulary
- Object identification
- Sentence expansion

### Expanded Grocery Store Conversation

Parent:

"We need three red apples."

Child:

"Apple."

Parent:

"Yes, three shiny red apples."

Child:

"Red apple."

Parent:

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"Can you help me find the biggest one?"

Child:

"Big."

Parent:

"That's a very big apple. Let's compare it to this smaller apple."

Now the conversation includes:

- Comparison
- Size concepts
- Descriptive vocabulary
- Turn-taking

### Vocabulary Opportunities in Grocery Stores

#### Fruits and Vegetables

Apple Banana Orange Cucumber Tomato Lettuce

#### Describing Words

Big Small Round Heavy Soft Hard

#### Action Words

Choose Carry Push Find Pick Compare

#### Car Ride Conversations

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- Many parents underestimate the power of car rides.
- Car rides remove many distractions.
- Children are often relaxed.
- Parents and children share a view of the same surroundings.
- This creates endless conversation opportunities.

### Talking About Weather

Parent:

"The sky is very cloudy today."

Child:

"Cloudy."

Parent:

"Yes, it looks like it might rain."

Child:

"Rain."

Parent:

"I wonder if we'll need an umbrella."

Language develops through observation and prediction.

### Talking About Traffic

Parent:

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"That bus stopped at the traffic light."

Child:

"Bus."

Parent:

"Yes, a large yellow bus."

Child:

"Yellow bus."

Parent:

"I think the passengers are going home."

Even ordinary traffic becomes a storytelling opportunity.

### Talking About Buildings

Parent:

"That building is very tall."

Child:

"Tall."

Parent:

"Yes, much taller than the houses next to it."

Comparisons build vocabulary and reasoning.

### Talking About Animals

Parent:

"Look at that bird sitting on the fence."

Child:

"Bird."

Parent:

"Yes, a small bird with black feathers."

These moments naturally expose children to new vocabulary.

### The "Talk About What You See" Technique

One simple strategy works almost anywhere:

Describe what is happening around you.

Instead of asking:

"What is that?"

Try:

"I see a truck carrying building materials."

Instead of:

"What color is the car?"

Say:

"That bright blue car stands out from the others."

Children learn more from rich descriptions than from repeated testing.

### **50 Everyday Conversation Starters**

These questions are designed to encourage thinking, storytelling, imagination, and conversation.

#### **About Daily Life**

1. What was your favorite part of today?
2. What made you laugh today?
3. What surprised you today?
4. What was easy today?
5. What was challenging today?
6. Who did you spend time with today?
7. What would you like to do tomorrow?
8. What did you learn today?
9. What made today special?
10. What are you looking forward to?

#### **About Feelings**

1. What made you happy today?
2. What made you feel proud?
3. Did anything make you nervous?
4. What helps you feel calm?
5. What makes you excited?
6. What makes you feel safe?
7. What was the nicest thing someone did for you today?
8. How would you describe your day in one word?
9. What makes a good friend?
10. When do you feel brave?

### About Imagination

1. If you could fly anywhere, where would you go?
2. If animals could talk, what would they say?
3. What would happen if it snowed in summer?
4. If you could build anything, what would you build?
5. What superpower would you choose?
6. If you found a treasure chest, what would be inside?
7. What would you invent?
8. What would your dream house look like?
9. If you were king or queen for a day, what would you do?
10. If your toy could talk, what would it say?

### About Problem Solving

1. How can we fix this problem?
2. What could we try next?
3. What do you think will happen?
4. Why do you think that happened?
5. What is another way to do it?
6. What would you do differently?
7. How could we help?
8. What should we do first?
9. What should we do next?
10. Can you think of another solution?

### About Nature

1. What's your favorite animal?
2. Why do leaves fall?
3. What do birds eat?
4. Where do insects live?
5. What do plants need to grow?
6. What would happen without rain?
7. Why do trees matter?
8. Which season do you like most?
9. What sounds can you hear outside?
10. What do you notice about the sky today?

### Why Conversation Matters More Than Correction

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- Children develop language most effectively when communication feels enjoyable.
- Many parents focus heavily on fixing mistakes.
- Unfortunately, constant correction can reduce confidence.
- Imagine talking to someone who corrected every sentence you said.
- Eventually, you might stop talking altogether.
- Children are no different.
- The goal is not perfect language.
- The goal is comfortable communication.
- Comfort leads to practice.
- Practice leads to growth.
- Growth leads to clarity.

### Daily Conversation Challenge

For one week, choose one daily routine:

- Breakfast
- Grocery shopping
- Car rides
- Bedtime

Commit to ten minutes of intentional conversation during that activity.

- Listen more.
- Describe more.
- Expand more.
- Correct less.
- Notice what changes.

### Chapter Reflection Questions

1. When during the day does your child talk most?
2. Which daily routine offers the best communication opportunities?
3. How often do your conversations feel relaxed rather than instructional?
4. Which conversation starter could you try today?
5. How can you create more opportunities for meaningful communication?

### Chapter Summary

- Communication does not grow only during lessons.
- It grows during life.
- Everyday routines are filled with opportunities to develop vocabulary, sentence structure, storytelling skills, problem-solving abilities, and confidence.
- The more meaningful conversations children experience, the stronger their communication skills become.
- Children rarely remember language exercises.
- But they remember conversations.
- And it is through those conversations that language truly grows.

### Chapter 7

#### Helping Your Child Speak More Clearly

#### Chapter Goal

Few things concern parents more than hearing their child struggle to pronounce words clearly.

Parents often ask:

*"Why does my child say 'wabbit' instead of 'rabbit'?"*

*"Why do strangers struggle to understand my child?"*

*"Should I correct every mistake?"*

*"Will these speech errors disappear on their own?"*

These questions are common and understandable.

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Hearing a child mispronounce words can be worrying, especially when comparisons to other children begin.

The encouraging news is that many speech errors are a natural part of development.

Learning to speak clearly is a complex process.

Children must coordinate breathing, jaw movements, tongue placement, lip movements, timing, and sound production simultaneously.

That takes practice.

This chapter will help you distinguish between normal developmental mistakes and difficulties that may require additional attention.

You will also learn how to help your child practice clearer speech in ways that are playful, positive, and confidence-building.

### Understanding Developmental Sound Errors

- When children learn to speak, they rarely produce every sound correctly from the beginning.
- Instead, they simplify words as they learn more complex speech patterns.
- These simplifications are known as developmental sound errors.
- For many children, these errors are completely normal.

### Common Examples

#### Rabbit → Wabbit

- The /r/ sound is difficult because it requires precise tongue positioning.
- Many young children replace it with /w/.

#### Truck → Tuck

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- Complex sound combinations are often simplified.
- Removing one sound makes the word easier to produce.

### School → Cool

- Some children omit difficult sound clusters.
- The word becomes easier to pronounce.

### Spider → Pider

The initial sound may disappear temporarily during development.

### Yellow → Lellow

Children sometimes substitute easier sounds for more difficult ones.

### Why These Errors Happen

- Children are not being lazy.
- They are not refusing to speak correctly.
- Their speech system is still developing.
- The muscles, coordination, and movement patterns required for accurate speech mature gradually over time.

### Which Sounds Develop First?

Some sounds are easier because they involve large, visible mouth movements.

Children often learn these sounds early.

These include:

**M**

Seen in:

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mom more milk

Children can easily observe the lips closing together.

### B

Seen in:

ball book baby

### P

Seen in:

pop pig pizza

### D

Seen in:

dog door daddy

Because these sounds are easier to see and feel, they often appear early in speech development.

### Which Sounds Develop Later?

- Some sounds require more complex coordination.
- These sounds often emerge later.

Examples include:

### R

rabbit red rain

### S

sun snake sandwich

### L

lion light laugh

### TH

think three thumb

Children may need years of practice before consistently producing these sounds accurately.

Remember:

Every child develops at a different pace.

### Home Practice Sessions

One of the biggest mistakes parents make is practicing too long.

Children learn best through short, positive experiences.

### The Five-Minute Rule

Practice should be:

✓ Fun

✓ Positive

✓ Playful

✓ Short

Aim for:

**5 minutes per day**

Never more.

- Stopping while the child is still engaged creates positive feelings about future practice.
- Stopping after frustration appears creates resistance.
- Always leave your child wanting more.

### **Why Short Practice Works Better**

- Children's attention, motivation, and energy are limited.
- Five highly engaged minutes often produce more learning than thirty minutes of struggle.
- Consistency is more important than duration.
- Five minutes every day is powerful.

### **The Speech Practice Routine**

To make practice easy and effective, follow four simple steps:

#### **1. Listen**

First, listen carefully.

Choose one target sound.

Allow your child to hear it clearly in words.

Example:

rabbit rain red rocket

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The goal is awareness.

### 2. Watch

Children learn best when they can see how sounds are formed.

Use:

- Face-to-face communication
- Mirrors
- Exaggerated mouth movements

Example:

Watch how your lips or tongue move when producing the target sound.

### 3. Repeat

Encourage children to imitate naturally.

Keep repetitions light and playful.

Example:

Parent:

"Red."

Child:

"Wed."

Parent:

"Good try. Red."

Child:

"Red."

Celebrate effort rather than perfection.

#### **4. Play**

Practice should quickly become a game.

Use:

- Toy hunts
- Memory games
- Storytelling
- Picture cards
- Puppet play

Children learn best while enjoying themselves.

#### **Sample Five-Minute Practice Session**

##### **Minute 1**

Listen to target words.

##### **Minute 2**

Watch mouth movements in a mirror.

##### **Minute 3**

Repeat words together.

### Minute 4

Use words during a game.

### Minute 5

Celebrate effort and finish.

Simple.

Effective.

Positive.

### What Not to Do

Avoid:

✗ Correcting every mistake.

✗ Forcing repetition.

✗ Practicing when your child is tired.

✗ Comparing your child to others.

✗ Turning speech practice into a struggle.

The goal is confidence first, clarity second.

### Chapter Reflection Questions

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

1. Which sounds seem easiest for your child?
2. Which sounds seem most difficult?
3. Do speech errors occur consistently or occasionally?
4. How does your child respond to correction?
5. Could shorter practice sessions improve participation?

### Weekly Action Plan

#### Day 1

Choose one target sound.

#### Day 2

Practice listening and watching.

#### Day 3

Introduce mirror practice.

#### Day 4

Use target words during play.

#### Day 5

Practice during a favorite activity.

#### Day 6

Celebrate progress.

#### Day 7

Review improvements and choose next steps.

### Chapter Summary

Speech development is a gradual process.

Many pronunciation errors are a normal part of learning.

Parents can support clearer speech most effectively through short, joyful, consistent practice rather than constant correction.

Remember:

Listen.

Watch.

Repeat.

Play.

The goal is not perfect speech today.

The goal is stronger communication tomorrow.

### Chapter 8

#### Fun Speech Games

#### Chapter Goal

Children learn best when they are having fun.

Unfortunately, speech practice sometimes becomes the exact opposite. Parents sit at a table, repeat words over and over, and ask children to imitate sounds until both become frustrated.

- The child begins to associate speech practice with correction.
- The parent begins to associate speech practice with resistance.
- Everyone loses.
- The most effective speech practice rarely feels like practice at all.
- It feels like play.
- It feels like exploration.
- It feels like laughing together.
- It feels like a game.

This chapter will provide enjoyable, low-pressure activities that help children practice speech sounds naturally while maintaining confidence, motivation, and connection.

Remember:

Children practice longer when they are smiling.

And practice is what creates progress.

### **Why Games Work Better Than Drills**

When adults hear the word "practice," they often imagine repetition.

Children imagine play.

The good news is that speech development benefits from repetition too.

The difference is how the repetition is delivered.

Consider these two situations:

#### **Situation 1**

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Parent:

"Say rabbit."

Child:

"Rabbit."

Parent:

"Again."

Child:

"Rabbit."

Parent:

"Again."

Child:

"Rabbit."

After a few repetitions, motivation disappears.

### **Situation 2**

Parent:

"We need to help the rabbit find treasure!"

Child:

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"Rabbit!"

Parent:

"Let's find another rabbit clue!"

Child:

"Rabbit!"

The same target word is repeated.

The difference is engagement.

The brain learns better when emotion and enjoyment are involved.

### **Mirror Talk**

#### **Why Mirror Talk Works**

Many children have no idea what their mouth looks like when producing speech sounds.

Adults often say:

"Put your tongue here."

"Move your lips like this."

But children cannot see what is happening.

A mirror solves this problem.

Mirror Talk helps children:

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- See mouth movements
- Observe lip positioning
- Notice tongue placement
- Compare their movements with yours
- Increase self-awareness

It transforms speech practice into a visual experience.

### Step-by-Step Instructions

#### Step 1

Sit together in front of a mirror.

Use a bathroom mirror, handheld mirror, or tabletop mirror.

Make sure both faces are visible.

#### Step 2

Choose one target sound.

Examples:

- R
- S
- L
- P
- B

Start with sounds your child can comfortably attempt.

#### Step 3

Demonstrate the sound slowly.

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Example:

"Rrrrr."

Allow your child to watch carefully.

Exaggerate the movement.

### Step 4

Invite your child to imitate.

Keep expectations low.

The goal is participation rather than perfection.

### Step 5

Turn it into a game.

Make:

- Silly faces
- Funny sounds
- Animal noises
- Character voices

Children stay engaged longer when laughter is involved.

### Mirror Challenge

Who can make:

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- The longest sound?
- The funniest face?
- The loudest lion roar?
- The quietest snake sound?

Fun always beats pressure.

### Sound Hunters

#### The Mission

Children become detectives searching for words that contain a specific target sound.

This activity develops:

- Sound awareness
- Vocabulary
- Listening skills
- Speech practice

#### How to Play

Choose a target sound.

For example:

#### S Sound

Search the room for:

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- Sock
- Spoon
- Soap
- Shirt
- Sandwich

Every discovery earns a point.

### Advanced Version

Instead of finding the object, children must use it in a sentence.

Example:

Parent:

"What did you find?"

Child:

"Sock."

Parent:

"Can you tell me something about the sock?"

Child:

"Blue sock."

Parent:

"Yes, a blue sock."

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Now speech and language are being practiced together.

### Sound Hunters Outdoors

Take the game outside.

Search for:

#### B Sound

- Bird
- Bush
- Bench
- Ball

#### T Sound

- Tree
- Truck
- Tire

Nature becomes part of speech practice.

### Treasure Hunts

#### Why Children Love Treasure Hunts

Treasure hunts create excitement.

Excitement increases participation.

Participation increases repetition.

Repetition improves speech.

### How to Set Up a Treasure Hunt

Choose a target sound.

Hide several objects around the house.

Examples for /R/:

- Rabbit toy
- Ring
- Red block
- Robot

Give clues.

Parent:

"Find the rabbit!"

Child locates the object.

Parent:

"What did you find?"

Child:

"Rabbit."

Each discovery creates another opportunity for practice.

### Color Clue Version

Use clues such as:

"The red rabbit is hiding under something soft."

Now children practice:

- Target sounds
- Vocabulary
- Listening skills
- Following directions

simultaneously.

### Silly Story Generator

### Why Storytelling Is Powerful

Stories naturally encourage repetition.

Children become motivated to use words because they contribute to the story.

### The Basic Formula

Pick:

- A character
- A place
- A problem

Then build the story using target sounds.

### Example for R Sound

- Character: Rabbit
- Place: Rainforest
- Problem: Lost robot

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Story:

"A rabbit found a robot in the rainforest. The rabbit rode on the robot while looking for a rainbow."

Notice how target sounds occur repeatedly.

Practice becomes embedded within imagination.

### Example for S Sound

Character: Snake

Place: Space Station

Problem: Lost Sandwich

Story:

"A silly snake searched a space station for a shiny sandwich."

Children love ridiculous stories.

The sillier the better.

### Family Story Challenge

- Take turns adding one sentence.
- Every sentence must include a target word.
- The story quickly becomes hilarious and memorable.

### Parent-Child Game Scripts

#### 25 Ready-Made Examples

#### Script 1

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Parent:

"I spy something that starts with B."

Child:

"Ball!"

### Script 2

Parent:

"Can you find something red?"

Child:

"Red car!"

### Script 3

Parent:

"Let's roar like lions."

Child:

"Rooooaar!"

### Script 4

Parent:

"Can you find a rabbit?"

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Child:

"Rabbit!"

### Script 5

Parent:

"What sound does a snake make?"

Child:

"Sssssss."

### Script 6

Parent:

"Who can say sunshine three times?"

Child:

"Sunshine, sunshine, sunshine."

### Script 7

Parent:

"Tell me a silly story about a sandwich."

### Script 8

Parent:

"What is hiding behind the chair?"

### Script 9

Parent:

"Can you drive the robot to the red road?"

### Script 10

Parent:

"Let's find three things that begin with S."

### Script 11

"Who can make a longer snake sound?"

### Script 12

"Let's feed the hungry rabbit."

### Script 13

"Tell me something funny about a robot."

### Script 14

"Can this dinosaur say R words?"

### Script 15

"Help the pirate find the treasure."

### Script 16

"Which animal begins with B?"

### Script 17

"Let's build a tower and describe it."

### Script 18

"Can you find something round?"

### Script 19

"What would a talking bird say?"

### Script 20

"Can the snake sing?"

### Script 21

"Let's make a rhyming sentence."

### Script 22

"Describe the biggest toy."

### Script 23

"What happens next in our silly story?"

### Script 24

"Can your teddy bear say the word rabbit?"

### Script 25

"Let's create the funniest sentence we can."

### Common Mistakes During Speech Games

Avoid:

- Correcting every attempt
- Focusing only on mistakes
- Playing too long
- Making the child repeat excessively
- Showing frustration

Games should end while the child is still enjoying them.

The goal is leaving the child excited to play again tomorrow.

### Chapter Reflection Questions

1. Which speech game excited your child most?
2. Which target sounds seem easiest during play?
3. Does your child respond better to stories, treasure hunts, or challenges?
4. How can speech practice become more enjoyable?
5. Are you focusing more on fun or perfection?

### Chapter Summary

Speech development thrives in playful environments.

Games create opportunities for repetition without boredom.

Children practice more when they are engaged, curious, and emotionally connected.

Remember:

A child who enjoys speech practice will willingly return to it.

And willingness is one of the strongest predictors of progress.

### Chapter 9

#### Correcting Without Hurting Confidence

##### Chapter Goal

- Every parent wants to help.
- When a child says a word incorrectly, the natural instinct is to correct it.

After all, if we hear a mistake, shouldn't we fix it?

- The answer is more complex than many parents expect.
- Correction is important.
- But the way correction happens can either strengthen communication or unintentionally damage confidence.

This chapter explores how to support improvement while protecting the most valuable communication resource your child possesses:

The willingness to keep trying.

#### Why Constant Correction Backfires

#### The Psychological Side of Communication

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

- Imagine learning a new language.
- Every time you speak, someone interrupts.
- Every sentence is corrected.
- Every pronunciation error is pointed out.
- Every mistake becomes the focus.

How would you feel?

Most adults would quickly become:

- Self-conscious
- Frustrated
- Reluctant to participate
- Afraid of making mistakes

Children experience these same feelings.

### **Communication Requires Risk**

Every time a child speaks, they are taking a risk.

They are attempting to organize thoughts, remember words, and coordinate speech sounds.

When mistakes become the center of attention, communication begins to feel unsafe.

Children may start:

- Speaking less
- Using shorter sentences
- Avoiding difficult words
- Remaining silent

The very thing parents are trying to improve becomes less frequent.

### **What Children Hear**

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Parent:

"No, say it properly."

Child often hears:

"I'm wrong."

Parent:

"That's not how you say it."

Child often hears:

"I failed."

Repeated correction can unintentionally create communication anxiety.

### **The Goal of Correction**

The goal is not:

Perfect speech today.

The goal is:

Confident communication that gradually becomes clearer over time.

Confidence and clarity must grow together.

### **The Model-and-Move-On Method**

One of the most effective correction strategies is surprisingly simple.

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Professionals often call it modeling.

You provide the correct version and continue the conversation.

No lecture.

No demand.

No pressure.

### Example 1

Child:

"Tat."

Parent:

"Yes, a cat."

Continue playing.

No additional correction.

No forced repetition.

The child hears the correct model naturally.

### Example 2

Child:

"Look, wabbit!"

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Parent:

"Yes, the rabbit is hopping."

Conversation continues.

Communication remains successful.

### Example 3

Child:

"Car go."

Parent:

"Yes, the car is going very fast."

Again, the parent provides a richer language model without criticism.

### Why the Method Works

The child:

- ✓ Feels understood
- ✓ Hears the correct version
- ✓ Remains engaged
- ✓ Avoids embarrassment
- ✓ Continues communicating

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

The conversation keeps moving forward.

Growth occurs naturally over time.

### **Confidence First Framework**

Communication develops best when emotional safety exists.

Children are far more likely to practice difficult skills when they know mistakes are allowed.

#### **Rule 1**

##### **Connection Before Correction**

First communicate:

"I understand you."

Then provide support.

Understanding comes first.

#### **Rule 2**

##### **Praise Effort Before Accuracy**

Instead of:

"That's not right."

Try:

"Great effort. Let's keep practicing."

Effort predicts future success.

### Rule 3

#### Focus on Progress

Celebrate:

- New words
- Longer sentences
- Improved clarity
- Increased participation

Perfection is not required.

Progress is enough.

### Rule 4

#### Create a Safe Communication Zone

Your child should feel free to:

- Experiment
- Guess
- Try
- Make mistakes

Learning lives inside mistakes.

#### Repairing Communication Breakdowns

Even with the best strategies, communication sometimes becomes frustrating.

Children may:

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

- Cry
- Refuse to speak
- Become angry
- Give up

Knowing how to respond matters.

### Step 1

#### Stay Calm

Your calmness becomes your child's emotional anchor.

If you panic, frustration grows.

If you remain calm, safety remains.

### Step 2

#### Acknowledge Feelings

Say:

"I can see this feels difficult."

"I know you're trying."

"I want to understand you."

These statements reduce emotional pressure.

### Step 3

#### Slow Things Down

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Avoid rushing.

Give extra processing time.

Silence is often productive.

### **Step 4**

#### **Offer Support**

Try:

"Can you show me?"

"Can you point to it?"

"Let's figure it out together."

Communication includes more than speech.

### **Step 5**

#### **Celebrate Success**

When the message is finally understood:

"I got it!"

"Thank you for explaining."

"That helped me understand."

The child's effort receives recognition.

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

### Real-Life Example

Child:

"I want... I want..."

Child becomes upset.

Parent:

"Take your time."

Child points toward the kitchen.

Parent:

"Kitchen?"

Child nods.

Parent:

"You want something from the kitchen."

Child:

"Juice!"

Parent:

"Juice! Thank you for showing me."

The communication succeeded.

That success matters more than perfect speech.

### When to Correct and When to Let It Go

A simple rule:

#### During Conversation

- Prioritize communication.
- Use Model-and-Move-On.

#### During Practice Time

- Focus on target sounds and specific goals.
- Children benefit from knowing there is a difference.
- Conversation time is for connection.
- Practice time is for learning.

#### Confidence Builders Parents Can Use Daily

- "I love hearing your ideas."
- "Thank you for telling me."
- "You worked hard to explain that."
- "I understood you."
- "Keep going. I'm listening."
- "You're getting clearer every day."

#### Chapter Reflection Questions

1. How often do you correct speech during everyday conversations?
2. How does your child react to correction?
3. Do you focus more on mistakes or communication success?
4. What confidence-building phrases could you use more often?
5. How can you make communication feel safer this week?

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

### Weekly Action Plan

#### Day 1

Practice Model-and-Move-On.

#### Day 2

Use three confidence-building statements.

#### Day 3

Reduce unnecessary corrections.

#### Day 4

Focus on listening.

#### Day 5

Celebrate effort rather than accuracy.

#### Day 6

Practice repairing a communication breakdown calmly.

#### Day 7

Reflect on changes in your child's confidence.

### Chapter Summary

- Children learn best when they feel safe communicating.
- Constant correction often increases anxiety and decreases participation.
- Supportive modeling, emotional safety, and confidence-building strategies help children continue practicing without fear of failure.

Remember:

- The ultimate goal is not perfect speech.
- The ultimate goal is a child who feels confident using their voice.
- Because a confident communicator will keep trying.
- And children who keep trying continue growing.

### Chapter 10

#### Reading Together the Right Way

#### Chapter Goal

If there were one activity that could improve vocabulary, strengthen listening skills, develop sentence structure, increase attention, build imagination, improve memory, and deepen the parent-child relationship, most parents would want to do it every day.

That activity already exists.

It is reading together.

Yet many parents unknowingly miss much of reading's potential because they focus only on finishing the story rather than using the story as a conversation tool.

Reading is not simply about words printed on a page.

Reading is about interaction.

It is about helping children connect words to ideas, ideas to experiences, and experiences to the world around them.

For children with speech and language challenges, shared reading can become one of the most powerful communication-building activities available.

This chapter will help you transform story time from a passive activity into an active language-learning experience.

### **Why Reading Builds Language**

Long before children become independent readers, books provide access to language they may never hear in everyday conversation.

Books introduce new vocabulary, richer grammar, more complex ideas, and opportunities for meaningful discussion.

Every story becomes a language lesson disguised as entertainment.

### **Vocabulary Growth**

Children learn vocabulary through exposure.

The more words they hear, the more words they eventually understand and use.

In everyday conversation, parents often repeat familiar words.

Books introduce unfamiliar language naturally.

For example:

A child may already know:

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

- Big
- Small
- Happy
- Sad

But reading introduces:

- Enormous
- Tiny
- Excited
- Disappointed
- Curious
- Brave
- Mysterious

Stories expose children to words that rarely appear in ordinary conversation.

### How Vocabulary Becomes Learning

The first time a child hears the word:

"Adventure"

They may not understand it.

After hearing it several times in different stories, contexts, and conversations, meaning begins to emerge.

Eventually, the child says:

"That was an adventure!"

Vocabulary growth happens gradually through repeated exposure.

Books provide thousands of opportunities for this process.

### Grammar Development

Children learn sentence structure by hearing sentence structure.

Many books contain language patterns that are richer and more complex than everyday speech.

For example:

Instead of hearing:

"The dog ran."

A child may hear:

"The energetic puppy raced across the field as quickly as the wind."

The brain stores these patterns.

Over time, children begin using similar structures themselves.

This is one reason regular reading often leads to longer, more sophisticated language.

### Listening Skills

Reading requires children to:

- Listen
- Focus
- Follow sequences
- Make predictions
- Remember details

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

These are essential communication skills.

When children listen to stories, they practice processing language without relying entirely on visual cues.

Listening becomes stronger.

Understanding becomes stronger.

Communication becomes stronger.

### **Reading Mistakes Parents Make**

Most parents have good intentions during story time.

Unfortunately, certain habits can accidentally reduce the language-learning benefits of reading.

#### **Mistake #1**

##### **Too Many Questions**

Some reading sessions sound like an exam.

Parent:

"What color is that?"

"What animal is that?"

"What shape is that?"

"What is this?"

"What is that?"

After a few minutes, children stop enjoying the story.

They begin anticipating more questions.

Reading becomes work.

### **Mistake #2**

#### **Too Much Testing**

Parents often use books to check knowledge.

While occasional questions are useful, constant testing creates pressure.

Children should feel as though they are exploring a story, not taking a quiz.

### **Mistake #3**

#### **Not Enough Conversation**

Many parents focus on reading every word perfectly while missing opportunities for meaningful discussion.

Remember:

The goal is not simply finishing the book.

The goal is building language.

Sometimes the most valuable moments happen between pages.

### **Interactive Reading Framework**

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

One of the most effective ways to use books for language development is through interactive reading.

Interactive reading happens in three stages:

### **Before Reading**

### **During Reading**

### **After Reading**

Each stage supports different communication skills.

### **Before Reading**

The purpose of this stage is to activate curiosity.

Do not open the book immediately.

Instead, explore it together.

Ask:

"What do you notice on the cover?"

"What do you think this story might be about?"

"Who do you think the main character is?"

The goal is not correct answers.

The goal is conversation.

### **Example**

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Parent:

"I see a bear holding a map."

Child:

"Bear."

Parent:

"Yes, a brown bear. Where do you think the bear is going?"

Now imagination and prediction become part of the experience.

### **During Reading**

While reading, pause occasionally.

Not to test.

To connect.

Use comments more than questions.

**Instead of:**

"What color is the bird?"

Try:

"That bird has very colorful feathers."

**Instead of:**

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

"What is he doing?"

Try:

"He looks like he's searching for something important."

The conversation stays natural.

### After Reading

This is where language truly expands.

Encourage reflection.

Examples:

"What was your favorite part?"

"What surprised you?"

"What do you think happens next?"

"What would you have done if you were the character?"

These questions encourage:

- Storytelling
- Reasoning
- Prediction
- Emotional language

### Sample Shared Reading Script

Imagine reading a story called *The Lost Puppy*.

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

### Before Reading

Parent:

"Look at the cover."

Child:

"Puppy."

Parent:

"Yes, a small puppy. What do you think happened to the puppy?"

Child:

"Lost."

Parent:

"You think the puppy got lost?"

### During Reading

Parent:

"The puppy walked into the forest."

Pause.

Parent:

"The forest looks very large."

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Child:

"Big."

Parent:

"Yes, a huge forest."

Continue reading.

Parent:

"The puppy heard a strange sound."

Pause.

Parent:

"I wonder what the sound could be."

Child:

"Animal."

Parent:

"Maybe an animal."

### After Reading

Parent:

"How do you think the puppy felt when it was lost?"

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Child:

"Sad."

Parent:

"Yes, I think the puppy felt sad and scared."

Parent:

"How do you think the puppy felt at the end?"

Child:

"Happy."

Parent:

"Happy because it found its family."

The story becomes a language experience rather than simply a book.

### Creating a Reading Routine

Children thrive on predictability.

Try creating a daily reading ritual.

Examples:

- 15 minutes before bed
- 10 minutes after school
- After dinner family reading
- Weekend reading mornings

The routine matters as much as the book.

### Chapter Reflection Questions

1. How often do you read together?
2. Does reading feel like storytelling or testing?
3. Which books does your child request repeatedly?
4. What conversations emerge naturally during reading?
5. How could interactive reading improve your current routine?

### Chapter Summary

Books provide a rich source of vocabulary, grammar, listening practice, imagination, and conversation.

The goal of reading is not merely to finish a story.

The goal is to use stories to build language.

When parents move beyond testing and focus on conversation, books become one of the most powerful communication tools available.

### Chapter 11

#### Play as a Language Classroom

#### Chapter Goal

To most children, play is fun.

To researchers, educators, and speech-language professionals, play is much more.

Play is one of the most important learning environments in childhood.

When children play, they are not merely entertaining themselves.

They are:

- Learning language
- Practicing social skills
- Solving problems
- Building imagination
- Developing communication

Play creates the perfect conditions for language development because it is meaningful, motivating, and enjoyable.

This chapter will show you how to use play intentionally while keeping it fun.

### Why Play Works

#### The Neuroscience Behind Play

The brain learns best when it is engaged.

Play activates multiple areas of the brain simultaneously.

During play, children:

- Pay attention longer
- Process language more effectively
- Remember information better
- Participate more willingly

Stress decreases.

Motivation increases.

Learning accelerates.

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

This is why children often acquire more language during an enjoyable game than during a structured lesson.

### Toy Kitchen

#### Language Targets

Vocabulary:

- Cook
- Stir
- Mix
- Pour
- Hot
- Cold
- Sweet

Sentence Building:

"I'm making soup."

"The pizza is hot."

"I need more water."

#### Example

Child:

"Soup."

Parent:

"Yes, you're making vegetable soup in a large pot."

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

The language expands naturally.

### Doll House

#### Language Targets

- Family vocabulary
- Emotions
- Daily routines
- Social interactions

Children naturally practice conversations during pretend play.

#### Example

Doll:

"I'm tired."

Parent:

"Why is the doll tired?"

Child:

"Sleep."

Parent:

"The doll is tired because it needs sleep."

### Building Blocks

#### Language Targets

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

- Colors
- Sizes
- Position words
- Problem-solving language

### Example

Parent:

"Should we put the large block on top or on the bottom?"

Child:

"Top."

Parent:

"The large block goes on top of the tower."

### Animal Figures

#### Language Targets

- Animal names
- Action words
- Descriptive vocabulary
- Storytelling

### Example

Parent:

"What is the lion doing?"

Child:

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

"Run."

Parent:

"The lion is running across the grass because it sees a zebra."

The story expands.

### Outdoor Play

#### Language Targets

- Nature vocabulary
- Observation skills
- Descriptive language
- Action verbs

#### Example

Parent:

"What do you see?"

Child:

"Bird."

Parent:

"I see a small black bird sitting on the tree branch."

Rich language becomes part of exploration.

#### Language Targets by Activity

### Activity

### Language Focus

Toy Kitchen

Action words, requests, sequencing

Doll House

Conversation, emotions, social language

Building Blocks

Position words, problem solving

Animal Figures

Vocabulary, storytelling

Outdoor Play

Observation and descriptive language

### Chapter Summary

Play is not a break from learning.

Play is learning.

Through pretend play, building activities, storytelling, and exploration, children practice language in meaningful contexts.

When adults join play thoughtfully, language development becomes natural, enjoyable, and effective.

### **Chapter 12**

#### **Developing Listening Skills**

#### **Chapter Goal**

Before children learn to speak clearly, they must learn to listen effectively.

Listening forms the foundation of communication.

A child cannot consistently use language they do not understand.

For this reason, listening deserves far more attention than it often receives.

#### **Listening Comes Before Speaking**

Think about how babies develop.

For months, they listen before speaking.

They hear thousands of words long before saying their first word.

Listening builds understanding.

Understanding supports expression.

Expression leads to communication.

#### **Why Listening Matters**

Strong listening skills help children:

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

- Follow directions
- Learn vocabulary
- Understand conversations
- Participate socially
- Develop reading skills

Listening is not passive.

It is an active thinking process.

### Follow-the-Directions Games

#### One-Step Directions

Begin simply.

Examples:

- Touch your nose.
- Clap your hands.
- Pick up the ball.

Success creates confidence.

#### Two-Step Directions

Examples:

- Pick up the toy and place it on the table.
- Touch your nose and then sit down.

Children learn to retain more information.

#### Three-Step Directions

Examples:

- Get the book, sit on the chair, and open the first page.
- Find the teddy bear, place it on the bed, and return to me.

These activities strengthen memory and listening simultaneously.

### Listening Challenge Activities

#### 15 Printable Activity Ideas

1. Sound Bingo
2. Follow-the-Leader
3. Simon Says
4. Story Sequencing
5. Listening Walk
6. Mystery Sound Game
7. Treasure Map Directions
8. Animal Sound Match
9. Picture Following
10. Story Recall Challenge
11. What's Missing?
12. Listening Dice Game
13. Action Cards
14. Hidden Object Directions
15. Direction Obstacle Course

Each activity develops attention, memory, and listening comprehension.

### Chapter Summary

Listening is the gateway to language.

The stronger a child's listening skills become, the stronger communication skills can become.

Developing listening does not require complicated programs.

It requires opportunities to listen, respond, and engage.

### **Chapter 13**

#### **Helping Your Child Feel Understood**

##### **Chapter Goal**

Language challenges are not only communication challenges.

They are emotional challenges too.

Children who struggle to express themselves often experience feelings that adults cannot immediately see.

Understanding those feelings is essential.

##### **The Emotional Side of Communication**

Communication difficulties frequently create emotional pressure.

Children may experience:

##### **Frustration**

- When words feel stuck.
- When people misunderstand.
- When communicating feels difficult.

##### **Embarrassment**

- When others laugh.
- When someone repeatedly asks:
- "What did you say?"
- When comparisons occur.

### Avoidance

- Some children respond by speaking less.
- Not because they have nothing to say.
- But because speaking feels hard.

### Parent Responses That Build Confidence

The words parents choose matter.

When communication feels difficult, children need reassurance.

**"I understand."**

This communicates acceptance.

**"Take your time."**

This removes pressure.

**"I'm listening."**

This communicates patience.

**"You can show me if the words are hard."**

This provides alternatives.

**"Thank you for trying."**

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

This values effort.

### **Building Resilience**

Resilience is the ability to keep trying despite difficulty.

Children build resilience when parents focus on effort rather than perfection.

### **Teach Progress Thinking**

Instead of:

"I can't say that."

Teach:

"I'm still learning that sound."

### **Celebrate Effort**

Notice:

- Attempts
- Persistence
- Participation

Not just accuracy.

### **Normalize Mistakes**

Remind children:

Everyone makes mistakes while learning.

Mistakes are proof that practice is happening.

### Share Your Own Learning

Say:

"I'm learning too."

Children gain courage when they see adults continue learning despite challenges.

### When Children Become Frustrated

Respond calmly.

Try:

"I can see this feels difficult."

"We'll figure it out together."

"I'm proud that you kept trying."

These statements reduce stress and increase communication safety.

### Chapter Reflection Questions

1. How does your child react when misunderstood?
2. What confidence-building phrases do you use?
3. How can you reduce communication pressure?
4. How do you respond to frustration?
5. What resilience skills would you like to strengthen?

### Chapter Summary

- Communication challenges affect both language and emotions.
- Children need understanding just as much as they need practice.
- When parents provide patience, emotional safety, encouragement, and support, children are more willing to communicate, take risks, and continue learning.
- A child who feels understood is far more likely to keep using their voice.
- And every communication journey begins with that feeling.

### CHAPTER 14

#### Working with Teachers and Therapists

##### Chapter Goal

No child develops communication skills in isolation.

A child's language journey often involves a team of adults working together toward a common goal:

- To help the child communicate with greater confidence, clarity, and independence.
- Parents play a central role, but they are not alone.
- Teachers, speech-language therapists, learning support specialists, and other caregivers all contribute valuable insights and support.
- When these adults work together, progress becomes more consistent.
- When they work separately, opportunities are often missed.

This chapter will help you become an active and effective member of your child's support team.

#### Building a Team Around the Child

Think of your child as the center of a circle.

Around that child are the people who influence communication development every day.

#### The Parent's Role

Parents provide:

- Daily practice opportunities
- Emotional encouragement
- Home observations
- Consistency

Parents see the child in the most natural environments and often notice changes before anyone else.

### **The Teacher's Role**

Teachers provide information about:

- Classroom communication
- Peer interactions
- Group participation
- Academic language
- Listening skills

Teachers can identify challenges that may only emerge in larger social settings.

### **The Speech Therapist's Role**

Therapists help:

- Evaluate communication skills
- Design intervention goals
- Teach strategies
- Monitor progress
- Provide professional guidance

Therapists do not replace parents.

They coach parents.

### The Child's Role

The child is not a passive participant.

Children should be encouraged to:

- Share ideas
- Set simple goals
- Celebrate progress
- Practice communication skills

The more ownership children feel, the more motivated they become.

### Questions Parents Should Ask

Every meeting with a teacher or therapist is an opportunity to gain valuable information.

The following checklist can help guide productive discussions.

### Communication Skills

- ☐ What communication strengths are currently most noticeable?
- ☐ What communication challenges are affecting learning?
- ☐ Which situations seem easiest for communication?
- ☐ Which situations seem most difficult?

### Speech Development

- ☐ Which sounds are improving?
- ☐ Which sounds remain challenging?

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

- ☐ What should we practice at home?
- ☐ How much practice do you recommend?

### Social Communication

- ☐ Does my child initiate conversations?
- ☐ Does my child participate during group activities?
- ☐ How does my child communicate with friends?

### Home Support

- ☐ What can we reinforce at home?
- ☐ Which activities seem most effective?
- ☐ What mistakes should we avoid?

### Progress Review

- ☐ What progress has been observed?
- ☐ Are current goals still appropriate?
- ☐ What should the next goals be?

### Progress Communication Form

A simple shared document can significantly improve collaboration.

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal Being Targeted:

New Words Observed:

Improved Sounds:

Communication Successes:

Challenges This Week:

Questions for Teacher/Therapist:

Next Steps:

### Parent Reflection Questions

1. Do you feel comfortable communicating with teachers and therapists?
2. What information about your child could help professionals support them better?
3. Are you tracking communication progress consistently?
4. How often do you discuss goals with your child's support team?
5. What can you do to strengthen collaboration?

### Chapter Summary

Communication progress accelerates when everyone works together.

Parents, teachers, and therapists each see different parts of the child's world.

When information is shared regularly, support becomes more effective, goals become clearer, and children receive consistent encouragement wherever they go.

### CHAPTER 15

### Building a Long-Term Communication Plan

#### Chapter Goal

Language growth is not measured in days.

Speech development is not measured in weeks.

Communication improvement is a long-term process.

The goal is not rapid progress.

The goal is sustainable progress.

This chapter will help you create realistic plans that support continued growth over months and years.

#### Setting Realistic Goals

One of the most common mistakes parents make is expecting huge changes too quickly.

Progress becomes easier to see when it is broken into smaller milestones.

#### 30-Day Goals

Focus on habits and participation.

Examples:

- Read together 15 minutes daily.
- Use language-expansion techniques consistently.
- Practice target sounds five minutes per day.
- Introduce ten new vocabulary words.

## 90-Day Goals

Focus on measurable communication growth.

Examples:

- Increase average sentence length.
- Improve confidence in conversations.
- Expand vocabulary.
- Improve accuracy of targeted sounds.

## 6-Month Goals

Focus on broader communication success.

Examples:

- Participate more during group activities.
- Tell simple stories independently.
- Use richer vocabulary.
- Communicate needs confidently.

## Creating Daily Habits

Children thrive on repetition.

Small habits create large results.

## Reading Habit

Read every day.

Not occasionally.

Not only when convenient.

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Every day.

Even ten minutes matters.

### Conversation Habit

Create one uninterrupted conversation every day.

Examples:

- Breakfast
- Car ride
- Bedtime

Consistency builds communication.

### Storytelling Habit

Encourage storytelling.

Ask:

"What happened today?"

"What was funny?"

"What surprised you?"

Storytelling strengthens vocabulary, memory, sequencing, and confidence.

### Progress Tracking System

Parents often underestimate how much progress has occurred because growth is gradual.

Tracking solves this problem.

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Monthly Communication Review

New Words Learned

New Sounds Mastered

Longer Sentences Observed

Communication Successes

Areas Still Being Developed

Goals for Next Month

Success Indicators

Look for:

✓ More communication attempts

✓ Better listening skills

✓ Longer responses

✓ Greater confidence

✓ Reduced frustration

✓ Stronger social interactions

Not every improvement will involve speech sounds.

Many of the most important improvements involve confidence.

## Chapter Summary

The best communication plans are simple, realistic, and sustainable.

Small daily habits practiced consistently over time create extraordinary results.

Communication development is a journey measured in progress, not perfection.

## BONUS SECTION 1

### 30 Daily Language-Building Activities

#### Ages 3–5

1. Name objects during meals.
2. Describe toy colors and sizes.
3. Read one favorite book.
4. Sing action songs.
5. Go on a vocabulary walk.
6. Play animal sound games.
7. Picture naming challenge.
8. Pretend cooking.
9. Match household objects.
10. Family photo storytelling.

#### Ages 6–8

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

1. Retell a story.
2. Play guessing games.
3. Create comic strips.
4. Describe favorite movies.
5. Follow treasure maps.
6. Share three daily highlights.
7. Compare objects.
8. Build and describe structures.
9. Role-play conversations.
10. Interview family members.

### Ages 9–12

1. Debate simple topics.
2. Keep a daily journal.
3. Create podcasts.
4. Design stories.
5. Explain hobbies.
6. Research favorite animals.
7. Describe current events.
8. Solve family challenges.
9. Build presentation skills.
10. Create a family newsletter.

### BONUS SECTION 2

#### 100 Powerful Conversation Starters

Organize them into six categories:

#### Feelings (1–20)

"What made you smile today?"

"What was difficult today?"

"What made you feel proud?"

(Continue until 20)

### **School (21–40)**

"What was the most interesting thing you learned?"

"Who did you help today?"

(Continue until 40)

### **Family (41–55)**

"What is your favorite family tradition?"

"What is your funniest family memory?"

### **Nature (56–70)**

"What would happen if trees could talk?"

"Why do birds build nests?"

### **Imagination (71–85)**

"If you could invent anything, what would it be?"

"If your pet could talk, what would it say?"

### **Problem Solving (86–100)**

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

"How would you help a friend who felt sad?"

"What could we do if the power went out?"

### BONUS SECTION 3

Parent Workbook

Weekly Reflection Page

This Week My Child...

- ☐ Used a new word
- ☐ Spoke more confidently
- ☐ Tried a difficult sound
- ☐ Initiated a conversation
- ☐ Told a story

Progress Journal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What improved?

What remains challenging?

What will we focus on next?

Vocabulary Tracker

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Word

Date Introduced

Date Used Independently

Speech Sound Tracker

Sound

Current Accuracy

Goal

Success Celebration Pages

Every achievement deserves recognition.

I Am Proud Because...

My Child Improved By...

Our Next Goal Is...

CONCLUSION

Every Word Matters

When you first opened this book, you may have been searching for answers.

You may have been worried.

You may have wondered whether your child would ever feel confident expressing thoughts, sharing stories, or communicating clearly.

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

Those concerns are natural.

Every parent wants their child to be understood.

But throughout this journey, I hope you have discovered something important:

Communication development is not a race.

It is not about keeping up with another child.

It is not about achieving perfection.

It is about progress.

Every new word matters.

Every attempt matters.

Every conversation matters.

Every moment of courage matters.

There will be good days.

There will be difficult days.

Some days progress will feel obvious.

Other days it may seem invisible.

Keep going.

Children grow through thousands of small moments.

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

A bedtime story.

A conversation in the car.

A shared laugh.

A patient response.

A second chance.

A word spoken a little more clearly than yesterday.

These moments accumulate.

And eventually something wonderful happens.

The child who once struggled for words begins expressing ideas.

The child who once avoided speaking begins participating.

The child who once felt frustrated begins feeling confident.

Not overnight.

But steadily.

Remember:

You do not need to be a therapist.

You do not need to be perfect.

You simply need to be present.

## LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

You are your child's first teacher.

You are your child's safest listener.

You are your child's strongest advocate.

And most importantly:

**You are your child's most important communication partner.**

Keep reading.

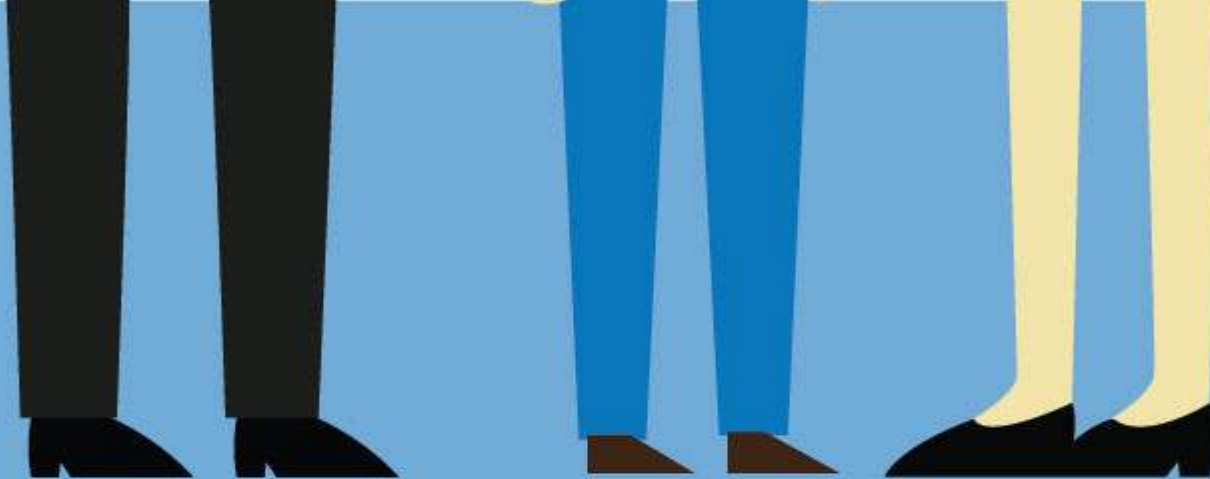
Keep talking.

Keep listening.

Keep believing.

Because every word matters.

And so does every child who is learning to find their voice.



# LEARN THEIR WORDS \_ Part Two Introduction

In "LEARN THEIR WORDS: Part Two Introduction," parents are guided from understanding their child's communication journey to actively fostering growth through everyday interactions. This section emphasizes that meaningful communication occurs in the small moments of daily life, empowering parents to transform routine activities into rich language-learning experiences. With practical tools and strategies, readers will discover how to nurture their child's speech development while cultivating a positive, trusting relationship.