



# Supporting Your Child's Speech Sound Development

- Children acquire speech sounds at different rates.
  - It can be difficult to understand a child who is substituting speech sounds, and this can lead to frustration both for the child and the listener.
  - Your child is not being lazy, they are just finding it difficult to learn new sounds, or are not yet old enough to be using certain sounds or sound combinations.
  - There are a range of speech sound processes, which we would expect to see whilst children are developing their speech sound system; however some substitutions are less common.
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- If your child uses a dummy/bottle, it may affect communication development by restricting tongue movements, making speech sound unclear or causing a gap in the front teeth that may lead to a lisp.
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## General Speech Sound Support Strategies

Provide your child with clear models of the words they are trying to say.

Ask your child to 'show' you what they are trying to say if it is not clear.

Look at the speech sound milestones chart to decide whether or not your child should be using a particular sound by their age, or not.

## Auditory Input/Bombardment


Give your child frequent opportunities to hear the sounds they find tricky to produce in words, in day situations

Play games, and make up 'silly stories', using objects/words which contain your child's 'tricky' sounds

Focus on one sound in one word position each week. For example, one week you may focus on 'S' at the beginning of words (sun, sock, soap etc) and the next week you may focus on 'S' at the ends of words (house, mouse, horse etc).

Think about the sounds within the words, and not just the letters (e.g. 'shoelace' has a /s/ sound at the end, even though it is spelt 'ce'). Similarly, the initial sound is /sh/, even though the word starts with a /s/.

## Sound Awareness

- Break down longer words into syllables, to support your child to produce them more clearly (e.g. ba-na-na/el-e-phant).
  - Support your child to clap the syllables in words as they say them. You may initially need to put your hands over theirs to help them to do this. If your child is reluctant or struggling to say the words, then you can say them for them as they clap.
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## DON'T (or try not to!)

Tell your child they are saying a word wrong  
Ask your child to correct him/herself

## Which sounds to expect at which age?

