



ALL ABOUT SPEECH & LANGUAGE

10 EASY TIPS FOR GETTING IN MORE SPEECH PRACTICE

1. Make it fun with games! Playing games (such as Candy Land, Don't Break the Ice, Chutes and Ladders, or any other simple turn-taking game) is a motivating way to get in lots of sound practice! Use word lists sent home from your therapist or picture pages with target sounds and have your child practice saying 2-3 target words, phrases, or sentences with their target sounds before they can take another turn! For your turn, have your child be the teacher to spot if you make a mistake saying the word in a phrase or sentence!
2. Practice before or after brushing teeth. The bathroom mirror is a great way for your child to see what his/her mouth is doing while making speech sounds! Sit or stand next to your child so he/she can watch and match what your mouth is doing or have your child judge whether his own tongue and lips were doing the correct movements for his sounds of focus! Even tape some practice sheets to the mirror for easy access and a constant reminder to squeeze in some practice! Every little bit counts!
3. Take it on the Road. Keep target words/sound pictures handy in the back of your car; your child can add in an extra 5-10 minutes of practice on the commute to and from school or other activities! That's an extra 20 minutes of practice each weekday!
4. Play the BEEP Game! The BEEP game is a way for you and your child to monitor their/your speech sound production! A great time to play this game is when your child retells the most exciting part of school that day, or what they would like to do for fun that afternoon/weekend. During this time when you normally converse with your child, ask for permission to play the BEEP game too; you simply say "BEEP" when you hear a target sound produced incorrectly and your child must think what he/she said and resay the word correctly! You need to take some turns too and make some target sound errors, so your child must keep on his/her listening ears to "BEEP" you! They can then say your error correctly!
5. Double Up! Many children are required to read daily for school homework. What better way than to get in extra practice by having your child read aloud to you or another family member, with the goal of focusing on correct production of their speech sounds. If your child is working on multiple sounds in therapy, pick just one as the focus during a 5-10 minute read-aloud session! If your child does not yet read, you can still use shared story-book reading time to point out and practice words in the book that have their target sound of focus.
6. Use a calendar. Use a calendar to set the days you are going to practice speech and check off your calendar dates just like you do nightly homework routine. Better yet, if your



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child's planner has a monthly calendar in it, add your speech practice to their planner so everything is all in one place! Use the calendar to set goals; when a goal is met, a prize, opportunity, or something special happens (i.e. ice cream date with Mom, more tablet time, go to store to get a small toy, etc.). Speech-language homework is just as important as academic homework because it is the foundation for communication. Research shows that more frequent practice aids in faster completion of therapy due to the success children have in reinforcing their learning!

7. Get Visual! These days we are all visual learners as pictures and videos capture our attention more so than actual writing and text. Your therapist can guide you in printing off a stimulus picture that incorporates target sounds you are working on and will guide you as to how to use it in your home. By drawing your attention and your child's attention to this picture in whatever rooms you hang it up in, it will help be a visual reminder of what they are working on in therapy; this picture will indirectly help with generalization of the skills they have been working on to outside the therapy setting. Generalization to conversation and other environments is the last step in the hierarchy we work on in therapy and visuals will aid in this transition!

8. Get Active Outside! Whether it's your child's favorite sport like soccer, football, basketball, swimming, or dancing, incorporate your speech practice into outdoor activities! You can throw a ball back and forth, climb a ladder to the slide, or make a castle in the sand all while layering in your speech sounds and words. Other activities that are fun include drawing things out with chalk and outdoor scavenger hunts...the more opportunities to add fun in the mix, the less it feels like homework and something that has to get done!

9. Who Doesn't Love A Good Joke? Find some knock knock jokes, riddles, or play on words (your therapist can share lists as well) to add some humor to your practice! You can teach your child the jokes that incorporate target speech sounds or they can combine working on their speech sounds while they are reading the jokes out loud. A good chuckle goes a long way for everyone!

10. At the end of the day, you know your child best! Caregivers know best when it comes to their child for what is fun, motivating, what they like and dislike, and how to get in what needs to be accomplished, so use that to your advantage! If your child loves stacking and blocks, make the tallest tower; if they love balls and sports, "throw out the trash" by writing a speech word on a piece of paper, crumpling it up and literally throwing it into the garbage; if they love Legos, put masking tape on Lego pieces and as they build, they can practice the words. Don't fret: you've got this when it comes to getting in practicing



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speech sounds at home and we are here to support you and bounce ideas around during wrap-up sessions each week as well!

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