Play, sing and talk with your baby!

A great deal of language development occurs before a child is able to talk. Here are seven suggestions for how you can help your child to pick up their language.

Bokstart (Bookstart) is a national initiative aimed at parents and adults who spend time close to young children (ages 0–3). The aim is to stimulate language development at an early age.
bokstart.se

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Material from the Swedish Arts Council for promoting reading

1 Talk, talk, talk

Children need to hear something in order to be able to say it themselves. It doesn't matter what you talk about – the child's language skills grow just by hearing you talk!

2 Invite speech

Create situations where the child feels a need to speak. Bring out a fun toy or some tempting food, and let the child say that it wants to have that toy or food.

3 Use your mother tongue

Talk, sing and read in your mother tongue. If you use your mother tongue, the child's language skills develop even more. Young children can learn several languages at the same time.

4 Get the child point to things

Your child understands many words before it learns to speak. Ask for things that the child can point to. You will then discover how much the child already understands.

5 Talk about what you are doing

Talk about what you do together. If you are playing with a train and you talk about the train, it is easier for the child to connect the new words to the item.

6 Read and talk

A book can provide a lot to talk about. It also gives you a cosy moment together. Look at the pictures in the book and talk about them together.

7 Exaggerate your voice and gestures

Young children enjoy contrasts. They learn more easily if you use your voice and movements to exaggerate and emphasise what you say. Say, for example, "Look! What a big ball!", and show with your voice and hands how big the ball is.



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