

TALKING SKILLS ("Expressive Language"): Activity Week 2

Playing with Playdough

Playdough can be used for helping your child's expressive language (talking). It is a great way to support functional communication, vocabulary, and sequencing steps. It's fun and helps keep their attention through a sensory activity. If you don't have any playdough at home, you can make it from scratch as well!

Here's an at home recipe:

Playdough ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour.
- 3/4 cup salt.
- 4 teaspoons cream of tartar.
- 2 cups lukewarm water.
- 2 Tablespoons of vegetable oil (coconut oil works too)
- Food coloring, optional.
- Quart sized bags.

Or follow check out this website to help make playdough.

<https://www.babyboybakery.com/blog/2018/8/13/quick-afternoon-activity-homemade-play-dough>

GOALS ADDRESSED DURING PLAYDOUGH:

- Vocabulary: names of common actions, describing words, and directional words (ie: in/on/under)
- Imitating words and phrases (if able)
- Describing functions of objects and naming action words (verbs)
- Describing actions using sentences

Play WITH your child if you can for at least 15-30 minutes. Encourage imitating words during your play time together, but do not require them to repeat your words. If your child has limited vocabulary, try to expand on what words they are able to say. For example, if your child can say "ball" and says it during play, you can respond "yes, you made a big ball." If they cannot open the container or bag that holds the playdough, model asking for help. For example, "it looks like you need help to open." Model the words "HELP" or "OPEN" and then open the container for them. You can follow your child's lead and describe what they are doing. It is also great to say the action words you are doing during play. For example, "Look, I am squeezing/rolling/pushing/pulling/cutting/slicing" the playdough." After lots of modeling, you can ask your child what they are doing with the playdough. Model words and then encourage them to include words such as "more, want, go, stop, my turn, your turn, see, look (ie: "look at mine!"). You can also work on sequencing and describing a sequence (ie: making a pizza with lots of toppings...First you roll the playdough, then pull/push it to make a big circle, then you tear off little pieces, last you put the pieces on the pizza to make the toppings). You can also ask your child questions (who, what, where, when, why, what do you do with, what do you do when). For example, if your child makes a pretend pizza out of playdough, you could ask WHERE are you going to put the toppings? WHO will eat it? WHAT do you like on your pizza? WHAT DO YOU DO WITH pizza? WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN you are hungry? WHY do you like pizza?

ADAPTING THE GAME DEPENDING ON YOUR CHILD'S LANGUAGE LEVEL:

1. FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE NOT YET TALKING:

Play with your child if you can! Encourage them to imitate words you say, but do not require them to do this. Model appropriate play with the playdough and talk about what you are doing with your playdough or what your child is doing with their playdough. Do not feel silly repeating your own words. Children learn words through repetition! You can repeat your own words over and over if your child is not yet talking (ie: "Look, I am rolling the playdough. ROLL, ROLL, ROLL. I rolled it into a ball.").

2. FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE USING SOME WORDS:

Try to build your playdough using different tools and making different objects. You can model new vocabulary this way. Some words you can target could include; Functional words: "help, more, all done, want." Action words: "open, close, cut, slice, push, pull, stretch, squeeze, smash." Directional words: "in/on/under, top/bottom, in front/behind, above/below." Describing words: "big, little/small, bumpy, smooth, long, short, tall, soft, hard" and colors. If they say a word, encourage your child to say the same words back (without forcing them to) and praising your child when they do.

3. FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE COMBINING WORDS AND USING SIMPLE PHRASES:

Ask your child questions about what they made and what they are doing with their creations. If they are unsure of the vocabulary, you can observe what they are doing and model words, phrases, and sentences. Ask those important WH (who, what, where, etc.) questions described above and build onto what they say. If they say a one word to talk about what they made (ie: snake), you can say, "yes, you made a green snake" or "you made a skinny snake" or "your snake is sliding."

4. FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE USING SENTENCES:

There are so many fun playdough sets that children can use to start pretend play and that encourages children to use longer phrases and sentences. You can even just pretend with the playdough you have! You can pretend you are at a restaurant or bakery and your child or you are the cook/baker. Your child can pretend taking an order and pretend to pay for the food (ie: cake/cookie/pizza) they just made. Model talking in sentences, asking questions, answering their questions, but most importantly....have fun and play!