

Building Blocks

OF LANGUAGE

EVERYDAY LABELS

Children build language by connecting words with people, objects, actions, and experiences. Repeated, meaningful exposure helps children understand and eventually use new words. Simple strategies can support vocabulary development during everyday routines, play, books, and conversations—at any age or developmental level.



HOW TO DO:

Repeat & Model

- Repeat important words.
- Model words naturally.
- Use familiar activities.
- Don't require repetition.

Use Actual Names

- Give the actual name of the object or action
- Add color and size descriptors.
- Avoid using "it" and "that."

Expand Their Language

- Repeat what they say.
- Add one or two words.
- Model complete phrases.
- Don't require imitation.

Connect Words Together

- Group related words.
- Connect words to actions, routines, and preferences.
- Pair words with visuals.

Instead of:

"Give me *that*"

Try:

"Give me the *cup*."

If your child says:

"Dog!"

Respond with:

"Yes! A big dog!"

How to connect words:

Pictures

Point to the picture while naming the item.

Gestures

Pretend to sleep while saying "sleep."

Actions

Say "jump" while jumping.

Real objects

Hold up the spoon while saying "spoon."

Books

Connect the word to characters and events in the story.

Routines

Use the same words repeatedly during familiar activities.