

HANDY HINTS **3**

Language Development
Use of words

Building these activities into daily life will help all young children to develop language, and may be particularly useful for children who are slower to talk than others.

Ask open questions

Ask open questions instead of closed ones, such as "What's that?", "Who's that?", "Do you want orange or milk?", "Is that man drinking or sleeping?", "Is that a dog or a cow?".

Everyday objects

Have a box with five or six everyday objects, such as a cup, brush, socks. Each day show the child one item at a time and help him or her to use it. Say the word that is most likely to have a meaning for the child, such as "Brush your hair: look, Mummy's brushing her hair, brush, brush, brush".

Use repetitions

When learning to talk, it is important that a child hears the same words again and again, so parents should be advised to repeat phrases such as "There's a cow, can you see a cow?".

Short stories

Tell short stories, then move on to longer rhymes and encourage the child to join in.

Use pronouns

Play games that involve pronouns - his, hers etc, and games that involve names of parts of the body.

Use everyday tasks

Use occasions and tasks such as getting dressed to help the child to practise what he or she is learning to understand. For example, ask the child to fetch clothes. Ask for one item at a time until the child fully understands. Use clear simple pictures when introducing new words and stories.