

What is WellComm?

WellComm is a screening tool used by professionals. It helps identify children who might have a language difficulty.

Using the WellComm tool children are given a traffic light score of **green**, **amber**, **red**.



Children who are **green** are not considered in need of any extra help.

Children who are **amber** need extra support from you to help develop their language skills.

Children who are **red** need extra help from you to develop their language skills and may require help from a specialist referral.

Please do not panic if your child doesn't score green.



Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS

Section 7: (42-47 months)

Why is it important?

For most children, how much language they hear impacts on how much language they learn. In turn this affects their talking. Talking to your child can make a world of difference.

Research tells us that:

- ... 4-year olds who are spoken to frequently have experience of **45 million words**. Whereas, 4-year olds who are only spoken to when they are being told to do something have experience of less than **13 million words**. **This is a massive difference of 32 million words!**
- ... How quickly children learn to talk by the time they are 2½ years old is affected by how much time adults speak to them.

What can you do everyday to help your child with their talking?

Did you know talking to your child will help them to increase their vocabulary? Talking to your child during shared activities such as joint book reading, play or shared household chores can help.

Use these *WellComm* cards to help to give simple ideas on how you can support your child's language.

If your child does need a little bit of extra support from a professional there's lots of help in Sandwell for them and for you.



Section 7: (42-47 months)

7.1 Role Play

Can the child pretend in a range of scenarios?

Why is this important?

Role play is how children learn to 'act out' situations or events. They use knowledge of their own experiences to pretend to be someone else e.g. nurse, daddy, or a character from their favourite story.

What can you do every day to help?

Play games where you take on the role of someone else e.g. a nursery teacher, police officer etc. If you have costumes or things around the house to wear that mirror the role you are acting, put them on. Model what to do and say as you play with your child e.g. if you are pretending to be working in a coffee shop speak to your child as if they were ordering as a real customer.

Encourage your child to take on their new role. Children love role play and pretending. If they find it tricky, help them to think of the things they can say or do.

Create the 'pretend environment' together e.g. make a shop using tins, packets and coins.

Section 7: (42-47 months)



What did you do to support language development?



Section 7: (42-47 months)

7.2 Understanding 'many' and 'few'

Can the child understand the terms 'many' and 'few'?

Why is this important?

These types of words help children to distinguish between different amounts of objects. They need to understand that 'few' means a 'small amount' and 'many' means 'lots' before they can use it in their talking.

What can you do every day to help?

Talk about 'many' and 'few' during everyday routines e.g. 'many' peas on a plate but a 'few' fishfingers. You could also do this during play by sorting objects into categories e.g. 'few' versus 'many'.



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What did you do to support language development?



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7.3 Understanding 'long' and 'short'

Can the child identify 'long' and 'short' objects?

Why is this important?

Children learn words to describe objects in more detail after they are able to name the object. Words such as 'long' and 'short' are used to describe what something looks like and how things are different from each other. Children learn that paying attention to the details of what is being said is important and can influence the overall message.

What can you do every day to help?

Model these words in your talking with your child, e.g. 'Mummy has long hair and Daddy has short hair', 'It's a short drive to Nanna's' or 'Grandad is wearing a long scarf.' You can do this by sorting objects around the house into 'long' and 'short'.



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What did you do to support language development?



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7.4 Learning the meaning of 'why?'

Can the child respond appropriately to 'why' questions?

Why is this important?

'Why' questions help the child to find out more about the reason for something that has happened, e.g. 'The boy was crying because he fell off his bike.' Children learn how to answer 'why' questions after they are able to answer 'what' and 'where' requests.

What can you do every day to help?

Share genuine interest in 'why' something has happened with your child, e.g. 'why did Marshall stop running?' Discuss and help your child to think of the reasons.

As your child becomes more familiar with talking about 'why' something has happened, you could start asking your child 'why' during everyday activities and routines, e.g. when sharing 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' with your child, ask 'why' questions, such as 'Why is Baby Bear crying?'



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What did you do to support language development?



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7.5 Understanding 'first' and 'last'

Can the child respond appropriately when asked to identify the 'first' or 'last' item?

Why is this important?

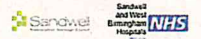
'First' and 'last' are words used to describe the order and position of objects or events.

What can you do every day to help?

In the morning put the child's clothes out. Ask them which item needs to be put on 'first' and 'last'.

During everyday routines you could ask your child what to do first, e.g. 'Shall we get dressed first?'

Use a collection of toys and put them in a line. Ask them which toy is 'first' in the line and which toy is 'last'.



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What did you do to support language development?



Section 7: (42-47 months)

7.6 Understanding and using four-word sentences

Can the child understand and use sentences such as 'Is it breakfast yet?'

Why is this important?

As children's language develops, they need to understand more complex instructions and use longer sentences.

What can you do every day to help?

Play 'Simon Says' with the child's toys. Give instructions for where to hide the toys that include the **name** of the toy, a **positional word** (e.g. in or under), an **action** and a **place**. E.g. 'Make Batman jump on the table.'

Reverse roles so that the child is telling you what to do with the toy.



Sandwell Keeps Talking



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7.7 Using comparatives: 'bigger', 'longer' and 'smaller'

Can the child use comparatives to describe objects and pictures?

Why is this important?

Comparative words help children to compare objects based on their size.

What can you do every day to help?

Put out some items of different sizes e.g. two sizes of cars. Point to the smaller of the two objects, then point to the bigger one. Say 'This car is big and this one is....' Encourage the child to use the word 'bigger'.

Look through books together and talk about objects that are 'bigger', 'longer' and 'smaller'.



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7.8 Understanding opposites: Wet/dry

Can the child understand and recognise when something is wet or dry?

Why is this important?

Opposites are words used to describe differences, e.g. the oven is *hot* and the fridge is *cold*. The words 'wet' and 'dry' are useful words for children to make sense of the world around them.

What can you do every day to help?

Begin with the word 'wet'. Use bath times to explore the idea of things being wet. Provide cups, jugs etc and encourage the child to 'wet the dolly's hair.' When the child confidently understands the word 'wet', they will be ready to learn the concept of 'dry'.

Use the CBeebies show 'Kit and Pup' and watch the episode called 'Wet and Dry'.



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7.9 Understanding and using pronouns: his and her

Can the child use the appropriate pronoun in a range of situations?

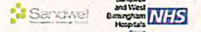
Why is this important?

'His' and 'her' are used to describe something that belongs or relates to a male or female e.g. man/woman, boy/girl. For example the boy wears *his* shoes; the girl likes *her* new bike.

What can you do every day to help?

During everyday routines emphasise 'his' and 'her'. For example, when getting ready to go out the adult could say, 'James has put his coat on; now Mummy is putting her coat on.'

Use 'his' and 'her' when looking at books, e.g. 'Look, that boy is wearing his scarf.'



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7.10 Linking sentences using 'because'

Can the child use the word 'because' to link two ideas?

Why is this important?

'Because' is a word that can be used to make sentences longer by adding more information.

What can you do every day to help?

Gather 3-4 items and put them in a bag or pillow case, e.g. a car, a cup, a sock and a spoon. Keep the objects hidden from view.

Ask the child to put their hand in the bag, feel one of the objects and guess what it is. Ask them why they think that and encourage them to respond using the word 'because' e.g. 'I think it's a car because it's got wheels.'



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