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Aneurin Bevan  
University Health Board

## Speech and Language Therapy

### Information for parents and carers

### Helping your child with speech sounds

Children take time to develop their speech sounds. When children are still learning how to use their sounds, they may make some errors. They might:

- miss out syllables e.g., saying 'mato' for tomato
- miss out sounds e.g., saying 'for' for fork
- swap some sounds for others e.g., saying 'dun' for sun

These errors can make it difficult for people to understand them.

Your child is not being lazy. They are usually trying their best.

Making speech errors can be a typical part of development, particularly for young children. Take a look at our speech sounds development guide on our website for information on when different sounds develop:

[Communicating & talking skills :: Healthier Together \(cymru.nhs.uk\)](https://www.cymru.nhs.uk/communicating-and-talking-skills)

### **How you can help**

Therapy is most effective when we can work in partnership with parents/carers.

Here are some general ideas that may be useful to try before your child sees a Speech and Language Therapist.

### **Don't make your child repeat words**



Instead, just let them hear how you say the word. For example, if your child says "I want my big tar!" you could say "here's your big car".

### **Help your child to show you what they want**

Encourage them to use gestures, signing or pointing to help them to get their message across. You can do this by using gestures alongside your own talking e.g., by using a driving action when you're talking about a car or putting your hand towards your mouth when you're talking about food.

### **Narrow down the topic your child is talking about**

For example, "Are you telling me about something on the telly?" Or "Are you telling me about something that happened in school?"

## **Build self esteem**

Give them praise for listening or trying. If you have understood part of your child's conversation, repeat it back, this may encourage them to say more.

## **Slow down your talking**

This will set the best example for your child and will make it easier for them to notice the sounds in words.

## **For further information please contact**

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or, visit our website at: <https://abuhb.nhs.wales/hospitals/a-z-of-services/speech-and-language-therapy/>

