

## Speech and Language Therapy

# Using Questions

It is human nature to ask questions. They can be very useful. However, before we can answer a question, we first need to know the words and messages that we need so that we can answer them.

### What we can do instead

- It is more helpful to comment. Give your child the words they need rather than asking your child a question. For example, playing with farm animals, naming a cow while your child is looking at one is more helpful than asking 'where is the cow?' or asking 'what is this?' If you say 'cow' whilst your child is looking at it, they have more chance to learn the word.
- Commenting also gives you lots of chances to help your child learn lots of different types of words. You can describe things, say how things feel, say what something is doing, as well as name what something is.
- Sometimes it can be hard to reduce using questions so try to remember the rule: **'1 question for every 4 comments'** :
  - Comment 'hello cow'
  - Comment 'cow is eating'
  - Comment 'cow's tired'
  - Comment 'cow sleep'
  - Question 'shall cow lie down?'

### Give a choice

There might be times when you need to use a question. Some questions need a 'yes' or 'no' response. For example, do you want a drink?

- These can be useful questions to use if you need an answer in a hurry.

Some questions can have any number of responses. For example, what drink would you like?

- If your child has difficulty communicating, this can be a difficult type of question to answer. **Example:** if I ask you 'what drink do you want?', first you need to think about all the possible options of drinks that there might be.
- Instead of using this type of question, you can **give your child choices**. For example, 'do you want milk or water' is an easier question to answer in this instance.
- Where possible, **show** your child their choice options as well as tell them e.g. show them the two types of fruit they can have, show them pictures of two TV programmes they can watch.
- Accept the way that your child makes their choice (e.g. they might point, look at their choice, reach, say the word) and always name the one they have chosen. For example, if you give your child a choice of 'banana or apple' and they look towards the banana, say 'banana' as you give it to them.

**If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :**

Children's Therapies  
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Telephone 01422 261340

[www.cht.nhs.uk](http://www.cht.nhs.uk)

**If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.**

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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