

Three easy ways to chat, play and connect with your toddler

Talking, sharing routines and meals help children feel safe, build confidence, and develop early communication skills. Here are three simple ideas you can try at home - no special equipment, no pressure, just everyday moments together.

1 Talk about what you're doing

Talking to your toddler throughout the day, while getting dressed, making food or going outside, helps build early language and connection. This matters even before children can talk back. If English isn't your first language, it's good to chat with your child in the language(s) you speak at home.

Try this: Say what's happening as you go - "now we're putting your shoes on" or "I can hear a bus." Pay attention to what they show an interest in and follow their lead.

Why it helps: Hearing your voice supports language development and helps your child feel secure and understood.

2 Play pretend together

Using imagination in play helps your toddler explore new words and ideas, not just what's happening in real life. It's a simple way to build language while having fun together.

Try this: Use a teddy or toy to act out a simple story, for example, "teddy is hungry", "teddy is eating", or "teddy is going to bed". Let your child shape what happens next and build the story around their ideas and imagination.

Why it helps: Pretend play encourages your toddler to practise new words, build simple sentences and express their ideas with confidence.

3 Enjoy meals together

Sharing food is about more than simply eating. It's a chance to talk, connect and build healthy habits, even if meals feel messy or rushed sometimes.

Try this: Sit together if you can, talk about what's on the plate and let your toddler explore food at their own pace. Notice what captures their attention and talk about it together.

Why it helps: Eating together supports communication and helps children feel relaxed around food.



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