

Making Speech Sounds More Obvious for Your Child

Parents and caregivers can also have an important role when helping their children with their articulation. The following are some general strategies that can be modeled throughout the day and during daily routines to help highlight the sounds or words your child may be having difficulty with.

- **Model Clear and Correct Speech** – Focus on what your child says, and not how they say it. For example, if your child says “tun” for “sun”, you can say, “Yes! It is a sun.” This approach shows your child that you are interested in what they are saying while also providing a model of the correct way to say the word. When you focus on your child’s error, (e.g. It’s not a tun, it’s a sun) and insist they repeat your model, your child receives the message that they were wrong, which can make communication a frustrating experience.
- **Say it slowly** – When we talk, individual words can be said very quickly. By slowing down your speech models, you give your child plenty of time to hear all the sounds that go together to make a word
- **Exaggerate Sounds** – Add emphasis to specific sounds that your child may be having difficulty with (e.g. all “k” sound or all sounds at the “end of words” – ca**T**, moo**N**). This can be done in any one of the following ways:
 - Adding a gesture – e.g. pointing to where the sound is made
 - Stretching out the sound(s) – e.g. “sssssun”
- **Say it Louder!** – Make key words louder to attract your child’s interest and attention (e.g. “Yes, it is a SUN. The SUN is hot!”).
- **Repeat** – The more often you say a word, the more chances your child will have to hear the word and copy it (e.g. “Yes, sun. It’s a sun! A big, yellow sun.”). It is also helpful to expose your child to many words that have the same sound (e.g. sun, sit, snake, and sock).
- **Break longer words into smaller parts** – Longer words can be broken up into syllables. It may help to tap your hand on the table for each part of the word as you do it (e.g., telephone – telephone – te-le-phon-e; dinosaur – di-no-saur; macaroni – ma-ca-ro-ni).

For more specific cues and suggestions related to your child’s speech errors, please click [here](#).