

My Child has Trouble Understanding: Things You Can Work on at Home

- ❑ Turn off background noise (TV/radio/fans):
 - Create a quiet environment so you do not have to compete with other noise when you speak to your child.
- ❑ Change how you speak to your child:
 - Say less.
 - Be specific.
 - Repeat often.
 - Say important words a little louder and a little slower.
 - Use actions and gestures to add meaning to your words.
- ❑ Teach your child good listening rules:
 - Look at the person who is talking.
 - Don't interrupt.
 - Sit/stand quietly.
 - Keep your hands to yourself.
 - Enforce these rules at home and remember to use them yourself.
- ❑ If your child "echoes" or repeats what you say, it means he has not understood. You may need to help him out. (e.g., Adult: "Do you want puzzle or book?" Child: "Do you want puzzle or book?" Adult: "Do you want puzzle or book? I want book." Child: "I want book."). Give the book immediately.
- ❑ Use the same words in different ways to give your child lots of exposure to a word (e.g., "Apple is red." "Apple is green." "Cut apple." "Apple in tree." "Apple all gone.") Do this during playtime or everyday activities.
- ❑ Encourage appropriate behaviour. Children who do not understand often get confused. They may not always behave in the way we want.
 - Be specific (e.g., "Walk to the door." "Put on your shoes." "Blow your nose." "Come here now.")
 - Be consistent and predictable. A structured, daily routine makes it easier for your child to do as he is asked.
 - Encourage your child to use words (e.g., "no", "mine", "more", "go") instead of hitting or grabbing. Use these words yourself so he learns what to say.

Reference: "Receptive Language Delay/Disorders" – Deirdre Beckerman, M.A., SLP. Handouts/rec-dlys.doc. Adapted from "Receptive Language Disorders" Parent Handout – Pat Wevrick, C.H.E.O.