

What is Communicating Matters?

Communicating Matters is a set of training materials aimed at all early years foundation stage practitioners. Its main aims are to deepen practitioners' understanding of children's communication and language; to deepen practitioner understanding of how their own communicative behaviour affects children's use and display of communicative behaviour; to help practitioners reflect on and develop their practice to promote children's communication and language more effectively.

Communicating Matters modules can be accredited at Level 3 via CACHE.



Useful Websites:

Birth to Five Service

www.birthtofive.org.uk

The ICAN 'Talking Point' website

www.talkingpoint.org.uk

British Stammering Association

www.stammering.org

For parents of under-threes

www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk

National Deaf Children's Society

www.ndcs.org.uk

Inclusion Development Programme

www.nationalstrategies.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/node/116691

Birth to Five Service

Supporting
Parents and
Carers to
understand their
child's
communication



**Guidance for Early Years
Foundation Stage Settings**

Birth to Five Service

Birth to Five Service

The Old School

Lamb Gardens

St Giles, Lincoln

LN2 4EG

**Developed by Lincolnshire
Early Years Practitioners
Communicating Matters 2009**



Managed Service on behalf of



Children are individuals. They have different abilities, different experiences, different cultures and different interests. Thus, any child's development in communication and language is likely to differ in some respects from that of any other child.

Most children in Early Years settings do not experience any significant difficulties in developing competence in communication and language. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage most children are able to communicate effectively and use language for a variety of purposes. However, there are some children without a clear, specific disability but whose rate of developing communication and language seems to lag significantly behind that of most other children.

There are those children with a specific communicative difficulty, or with a disability or disabilities that impact upon their communication.



Practitioners need to ensure that they seek to make every child's pathway an integral and valued part of the collective communication and language experience in the setting.

Practitioners need to work closely with children's parents and other professionals working with these children. This partnership can ensure that all children with communication difficulties can receive consistent support across both home and setting.

Communicating Matters Module 3 Focus 1 and 2
Sure Start Primary National Strategy 2005

This guidance has been put together by Lincolnshire practitioners engaged in Communicating Matters 2009 to support Early Years settings in working effectively with parents to support children's communication and language needs.

Make parents aware of the importance of sharing information about their child in order for you as a setting to plan for their child's individual needs and to support them as parents in developing their child's communication and language.

Encourage parents to recognize how their child may communicate and express themselves in different ways, for example through art and creative activities, dancing, music and movements.

Encourage parents to recognize that their child's behaviour may be a result of frustrations if they are not able to communicate their needs verbally. Support parents and children in developing strategies to communicate needs, such as use of visual aids.

Make parents aware of the importance of giving clear, simple instructions. This will help their child process what is required of them and enable to respond appropriately.

Suggest using a visual timetable in the home. Show parents how it is used in the setting and give examples of pictures and symbols. Discuss key times when it could be used at home to support their child.

Encourage parents to ask questions that will extend their child's thinking, for example, if their child's block tower keeps collapsing, instead of fixing it for them, ask 'how could we make it stronger?'

Suggest that parents maintain their child's friendships outside of the setting, for example, having a friend to play after school; going to the park with other parents and children.

Make parents aware of support groups in their local area. Draw their attention to activities at their local Children's Centre. Encourage them to join the library where they can borrow books and take part in story telling activities.

Work together with parents to help their child build up a collection of words that they can use and understand. Use shared and consistent names for key objects (lunch box, coat) to help their child learn vocabulary.

During transitions to other settings, recommend that parents share information with new practitioners. Encourage them to share their child's full learning record with their next setting.

Encourage parents to model correct use of language instead of making them repeat it. For example, *ran* instead of *runned*. This will provide their child with a model of the correct language.

Promote the importance of talking with children about day to day activities and playing together.

Make parents aware of giving their child sufficient time to respond to instructions, questions and dialogue.

Practitioners need to make positive, professional relationships with parents. There should be a two-way flow of knowledge and information between parents and practitioners about children's speech, language and communication development.

Inclusion Development Programme: Supporting children with speech, language and communication needs 2009