

September 2020 - *Bubbles, Bubbles, Bubbles!*

Bubbles are fun and kids love them. This makes them an excellent tool for encouraging language development. In a study from Lancaster University, psychologists found that children who can lick their lips, blow bubbles, and pretend that a block is a car, are most likely to find learning language easy. (<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2006/06/060628095606.htm>)

In addition to being calming, there are many other benefits to blowing bubbles. Bubbles are an incredible way to introduce new vocabulary, increase attention and eye gaze, practice making requests, strengthen muscles, practice oral control for spoken language development, and to promote critical thinking skills for children.

What you'll need:

Bubbles

Take a moment to consider the environment for where you plan to play and what will work best for your child based on their specific hearing needs. Is hearing assistive technology being worn and working properly? Does your child need to see your face while communicating? Try to create an optimal listening environment. Sit or stand where your child has access to your face, sounds, and signs. Where possible, reduce background noise and distractions.

Tips:

-Encourage communication by talking or signing (or use both) while you blow bubbles. Start with routines "Ready, set, go" Practice using adjectives and actions words such as stomp, sticky, clear, blow, pop, go up, open and reinforce concepts such as big, little, wet, and small. Use different words that mean the same like enormous, tiny, large, small etc.

- Practice turn taking, making requests, and eye contact. Watch for the anticipation of more bubbles and wait until your child requests 'I blow' or 'more bubbles', I want, open, again, all done, etc . Wait for eye contact before you blow more.

-Promote problem solving and critical thinking skills. Screw the lid on tight and give it to your child when it is their turn. Let them practice asking for help, or trying to problem solve on their own. Blow the bubbles against something so they pop before rising and let them tell you how to blow bubbles up in the air. Forget to dip the stick in the bubbles again and just keep blowing. Tell them it is broken and let them show you what to do.

-Reinforce numeracy by counting bubbles or repeating a routine of counting backwards. '3-2-1 bubbles!' 10-9-8-7.....1 blast off!

-Make observations together. Ask your child questions such as 'do you see the rainbow inside?', 'what colors do you see?', 'which one is the biggest?' Experiment and discuss how blowing softer or harder impacts the size of the bubbles.

-You can also teach body parts as bubbles land on them such as head, shoulders, finger, hand, foot, etc.

-Have your child try following different directions like popping the bubbles with different techniques such as clapping the bubble between their hands, poking the bubble, stomping on the bubble, or slapping the bubble.

*****Pick one or a few of these tips to focus on each time you play. Repetition is key to building vocabulary - so have fun playing this everyday activity many times this month!***