

How to...

Support a child's development of sequencing and narrative skills

- **For a child to be able to re-tell stories and to explain things that have happened, they need to be able to:**
- Use words, and express ideas in the right order
- Understand and use concepts like 'first', 'next', 'then' and 'last' to help them with sequencing their ideas
- Sequencing skills are also important to help a child to be able to complete tasks which require certain actions to be completed in a set order (e.g. making a sandwich, or pouring a drink).

How can we help a child to develop these skills?

- Use sequencing pictures – these are available from the Black Sheep Press (2/3/4 part sequencing packs), SCHUBI (And Then...) and LDA. There is also a range of sequencing picture sets available online from Twinkl
- Start with sets of 2 pictures – encourage the child to put the pictures in order and then to re-tell the story using the pictures as prompts. Model back to show the child how to add more information and how to sequence their ideas when needed
- Model words like 'first', 'next' and 'then' to help them to sequence their ideas
- Move on to sets of 3, and then 4 pictures as the child's skills develop

If the child finds this difficult...

- Start with familiar stories – books they have read with an adult regularly. Read the story together, and then see if the child can re-tell the story using the pictures as prompts
- Start by modelling the sequence first – you put the cards in order, and then describe the sequence of events. Mix the cards up, and give them to the child – encourage them to put them back into the correct order, and to describe the sequence again
- Take photographs of the child carrying out an everyday sequence -e.g. pouring a drink, and then drinking from a cup. Print these out, and help the child to put the pictures in order, before describing the sequence

Next steps...

- Once a child is able to re-tell a story from pictures, see if they can tell you the steps of a familiar event (e.g. brushing their teeth), without picture support. If they need help, you might prompt them e.g. **“What happens first?”**, **“What do we do after we put the toothpaste on the toothbrush?”**
- Once they are confident with this, read books together and encourage them to re-tell the story afterwards from memory – use the pictures to prompt them if needed.
- Encourage them to tell you about a recent event from memory e.g. a craft activity or game they played earlier in the same day. As they become more confident, you can start to ask them about more distant events e.g. a birthday party they went to, or a family holiday.

Additional information:

For further information please contact Paediatric.services@acecic.nhs.uk or call ACE paediatric services on 01206 588100

Additional resources:

<https://www.talkingpoint.org.uk>

<https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/products/wellcomm/>

<https://www.elklan.co.uk/under-5s/early-language-builders>

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/>

<https://www.blacksheepress.co.uk/product/sentence-builder-expressive-skills/>

Nov 19