

The Whistle Stop



About Language Express

Language Express provides speech and language assessment and therapy services for young children in Lanark, Leeds, and Grenville counties. Services are free and are available from birth until the end of Junior Kindergarten. Don't wait and see! We can help your child and provide helpful ideas for you and your child's caregivers or teachers.

When To Get Help:

- If your child is not meeting all of the communication milestones for his or her age. Check the milestones at www.language-express.ca.
- If your child is stuttering.
- If your child's play or social interaction seems different from other children the same age.
- If your child's voice doesn't sound right.
- If your child has a diagnosis such as hearing loss, Autism Spectrum Disorder, or developmental delay.

Language Express accepts referrals for children from birth until *November 30 of the year they turn 4*. For example, children born in 2016 must be referred by Nov. 30, 2020.

Call us for more information or to make a referral

1-888-503-8885

Words, Words, Words:

Why Building Vocabulary is so Important

The number of different words a toddler uses is directly related to later success at school. Research shows that 24-month-old children with larger vocabularies have better reading and math skills and fewer behaviour problems when they start Kindergarten.¹

Age	Children Should Say
12 months	3-5 different words
18 months	At least 20-24 different words
24 months	At least 100-150 different words, including some verbs
30 months	More than different 350 words, including many verbs

There are lots of things parents and caregivers can do to help children learn new words:

- Turn off the screens and spend time talking, reading, singing, and playing
- Expose your child to new experiences and the words that go with them by reading books and visiting new places
- Don't just use the words your child already knows. Instead of big, say "huge, enormous, gigantic, colossal..."
- New words will "stick" in your child's vocabulary if you:
 - » Show what the word means. Scamper to show your child what scampering looks like.
 - » Explain what the word means using examples from your child's life: "She is scampering like Grandma's puppy does when he runs away really fast."
 - » Repeat the word lots of times in different situations.


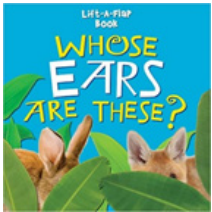



¹ Morgan, P. L., Farkas, G., Hillemeier, M. M., Hammer, C. S. & Maczuga, S. (2015). 24-Month-Old Children with Larger Oral Vocabularies Display Greater Academic and Behavioral Functioning at Kindergarten Entry. *Child Development*, 86(5), 1351-1370.



What to Look For in a Book:

- topics that interest your child
- unfamiliar words that are used many times
- pictures that show the meaning of unfamiliar words

(adapted from I'm Ready!: How to Prepare Your Child for Reading Success, J. Greenberg and E. Weitzman, The Hanen Centre, 2014.)

Age	Try this	Book ideas
<p>Infants</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to your baby's noises and gestures by imitating him and saying a word or two. If he reaches for your nose, touch your nose and say "Nose! That's my nose." • You probably know what your baby is telling you even if he isn't using words. Give him the words to go with the message. For example, if he is fussy and you know he is hungry, say "You're hungry." 	<p><i>Whose Ears are These?</i> by Claire Belmont. Babies are still learning basic words. This repetitive lift the flap book provides many opportunities to repeat words like "ears, hiding, furry" as you have fun peeking under the flaps.</p> 
<p>Toddlers</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose words to focus on. While you are reading a book about dinosaurs, you could focus on the word "prehistoric" or the word "extinct". • When a new word comes up, take the time to show and explain what it means, and then make a point of repeating the word over the next hours and days. 	<p><i>Ride the Big Machines Across Canada</i>, by Carmen Mack. This is a great choice for kids who love vehicles. Add to the words already in the book by talking about the pictures: a "diesel locomotive" instead of a train, a crane that "rotates" instead of turning...</p> 
<p>Preschoolers</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expose your child to "thinking and feeling" words like "think, believe, guess, hope, prefer, dislike, etc." • Encourage pretend play. Pretending to cook or shop or take the car to the garage provides fun opportunities to practice new words. Join in the play and add some new words to the game. Talk about how your pretend tea is "scalding" or the train cars are being "shunted". 	<p><i>The Legend of the Beaver's Tail</i>, by Stephanie Shaw. This beautifully illustrated book tells the Ojibwe legend of how the beaver got its tail, using lots of descriptive words like "glorious, waddle, admire".</p> 