

How to Enhance Children's Vocabulary? 2 Essential Methods to Implement in Daily Life!



Source: Speech Therapist Mom Miss Carley

Vocabulary skills can be divided into two categories: expressive and receptive. Expressive vocabulary refers to the words that children can say, while receptive vocabulary refers to the words that children can understand when they hear or see them.

Generally, children have a larger receptive vocabulary than expressive vocabulary. For example, a one-year-old child can say about five words, such as "Daddy," "Mommy," "Grandma," "street," and "ball." However, they can understand more words than they can express. For instance, if a parent says, "Where is the light?" the child may be able to point to it. They can also understand questions like "Do you want a bun?" or "Are you drinking milk?" and phrases like "Let's go to the street."

Expressive Vocabulary Levels by Age:

- **1 year:** Can say some single words.
- **1.5 years:** About fifty words; can use some single words to form short sentences.
- **2 years:** Can reach two hundred to three hundred words.
- **3 years:** About five hundred to one thousand expressive words.



In fact, the way and amount of time parents converse with their children daily is directly related to the children's vocabulary development. So, how can we enhance children's vocabulary in daily life?

Method 1: Stimulating Language Environment

During infancy and toddlerhood, parents should engage in more conversations, play parent-child games, and sing songs to encourage interaction. In the process, parents can try to use different types of vocabulary to describe their children's actions. For instance, when a child is playing with a toy car, instead of just saying the noun, "Yes, that's a car," parents might also add adjectives, saying, "Yes, this car is red and very big." They can also use verbs, saying, "Ah! You are driving the car," or "You are sitting in the car." Additionally, using locational words like "Now the car is on the table...under the table" can expose children to a variety of vocabulary and help them express themselves better.

Method 2: Aligning with Children's Interests

If a child enjoys reading, engaging in parent-child reading can introduce many new words. Furthermore, parents can describe the events happening around them based on their child's abilities and interests. For example, at the supermarket, parents might say, "These are bananas and apples." When in the car, they can talk about the scenery outside.

If the child has the ability, parents can also describe events that happened earlier, such as, "This morning we played at the park and kicked a soccer ball," allowing the child to use more vocabulary related to past experiences.

For older children with higher vocabulary skills, parents can play word games with them, such as naming fruits, modes of transportation, or animals. They can also engage in activities where they compare words with specific characteristics, like naming red foods—tomatoes, strawberries, and apples. Alternatively, parents can ask children to think of words related to a specific term. For example, when thinking about summer, they might come up with ice cream, heat, rain, and swimming. These activities not only enrich children's vocabulary skills but also enhance their associative thinking and imagination.