

# Talking During Bathtime

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## What's special about bathtime?

Bathtime is an ideal situation for language development. It gives you a chance to spend pleasurable, relatively unhurried time with your child. If your child's bathtime is in the morning, you have an opportunity to talk about plans for the day. An evening bath is a great time to discuss what happened during the day. A time to anticipate or a time to reflect—the bath routine can be a wonderful time to talk.

Taking a bath is a more playful time than other daily routines. It gives you and your child a chance to "play" with language too! In addition, bathtime can involve lots of action. There's splashing, washing, and playing with bath toys. So jump in! Take advantage of this important learning opportunity.

## Bathtime Ideas and Concepts

Language is based on experiences. Through interaction with the world, children learn meaning. Here are some ideas or concepts that are a part of the bathtime routine. Help your child learn these concepts by talking about them during bathtime.

### Nouns:

Towel, washcloth, bathtub, faucet, soap, shampoo, bubblebath, names of bath toys, drain, plug, showerhead, nozzle, bathroom, wall, soap dish, sponge, etc.

### Body Parts:

Head, leg, arm, eyes, chin, wrist, ankle, etc.

### Actions:

Rub, wash, scrub, splash, dry, rinse, kick, squirt, drip, pour, wiggle, etc.

### Adjectives:

Wet/dry, clean/dirty, cold/hot, empty/full, big/little, rough/smooth, warm/cool, slippery/spongy, hard/soft, etc.

### Location:

Up, down, in tub, out of tub, behind ear, under water, next to tub, over head, on the washcloth, stand up, etc.

### Time Concepts:

Before/after, next, first, last, now, later, etc.

## Water Concepts:

Sink/float, solid/liquid, bubbles, waves, pour, spray, etc.

## Sample statements to use during bathtime:

Bathtime concepts can be practiced in unlimited ways. Here are some examples of statements that are tailored to children in: (1) the early stages, and (2) the later stages of language development. Use statements and questions like these to encourage language development during bathtime.

Purpose	Examples	Concepts
Naming	(1) "Look, a boat!"	Nouns
Expressing Opinion	(2) "Oh, what a nice bubble. I like this bubble."	
Describing	(1) "On your hair!"	Location
	(2) "The soap is under the water."	
	(1) "I'm cold!"	Adjective
	(2) "The water is too hot to get in now."	
Explaining	(1) "The boat stays on top. It floats."	Water concepts
	(2) "We can't pour that big bucket of water into that little cup. There's too much."	
Comparing	(1) "Dirty hands, clean face."	Adjective
	(2) "That brush is rough. But the soap is smooth."	
Requesting	(1) "Give me the towel."	Action
	(2) "Could you pull the plug?"	
Giving directions	(1) "Please, get in the tub."	Actions
	(2) "Tilt your head back. I need to rinse off your hair."	Location
Predicting	(1) "Oh, the duck will fall!"	Water
	(2) "I think the soap will float. What do you think?"	Concepts
Pretending	(1) "You be Shamu."	Action
	(2) "Why don't you make a splash like Shamu?"	

### Talking Tips for Parents

Use these suggestions during everyday activities to encourage your child's language development:

1. Keep talking fun.
2. Reward and praise your child's communication attempts. It's not necessary to correct your child's grammar or pronunciation.
3. Use facial expressions and gestures to help your child understand.
4. Keep your sentences short and simple.
5. Speak slowly and clearly. Repeat for your child if necessary.
6. Emphasize key words you want your child to learn.
7. Repeat main ideas frequently, in as many different ways as possible.
8. Set a good example for your child. Model correct speech. It's not necessary to ask your child to repeat exactly what you say.
9. Give your child enough time to respond. Your child may take a long time to organize thoughts and feelings and put them into words. Avoid the tendency to interrupt your child.
10. Discuss your child's language abilities with your speech and language clinician. Try not to expect too much—or too little—of your child.
11. Avoid placing too much pressure on your child to talk. Your child may not want to "perform" verbally in front of others.

By using statements appropriate to your child's language level you will find that you can make bathtime a fun way for your child to learn language.

### Vocabulary

*Concept*—A general idea or characteristic applicable to several objects or events, which helps organize knowledge about the world.

*Model*—To provide an example of good speech or other behavior; to demonstrate a desired verbal response.

*Speech and language clinician*—A person who is qualified to diagnose and treat speech, language, and voice disorders.

#### *Refer to:*

- 2.1 Language Development
- 3.5 Pairing Movement With Learning
- 4.2 Learning Action Words
- 4.4 Help Your Child Learn Comparison Skills
- 5.1 Tips for Parents on Learning at Home
- 5.2 Talking During Mealtime
- 5.4 Talking During Dressing
- 5.5 Talking and Television