



Speech and Language Therapy Advice Sheet

Top Tips for Voice

Before your child comes to see a speech and language therapist there is a lot of advice you can follow to help their voice. Here are our top tips:-

1. Keep your child hydrated. Have a drink/water bottle to hand during sports, drama and meal times.
2. If your child has been using a loud and forceful voice as can be expected at a birthday party, sports match or drama club, encourage them to rest their voice by having some quiet time. Can they play on their tablet, watch TV, read a book or do some quiet play such as puzzles, model making or drawing.
3. Try and keep the home free from smoke and dust. Avoid strong household chemicals, such as those found in some air fresheners and cleaning fluids, all of which may cause irritation. If the air in your home is particularly dry, try putting damp towels on the radiators or small bowls of water underneath them.
4. If your child frequently feels the urge to cough to get rid of the “frog in their throat” encourage them to sip water rather than clear their throat.
5. If your child typically talks in a loud voice, rather than constantly telling them so, use a signal, which is a gentler way of letting them know they are talking loudly. This signal could be touching your ear or lowering the palm of your hand. You could ask your child to come up with a signal with which they feel comfortable using.

6. Encourage the whole family to follow general voice care advice at home:

- Have face to face conversations rather than between rooms/up and down the stairs (easier said than done!)
- Avoid talking over noisy backgrounds such as the TV/radio/play station.
- Encourage turn-taking so your child doesn't talk over their brothers and sisters, friends or other family members.

If you have tried using these strategies and you are still concerned about your child's voice you can:

- Look on our website for the 'Quick Reference Guide'. This will guide you when the best time to refer your child to Speech and Language Therapy. The referral forms are also available on the website:

<https://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/childrens-centre/your-childs-hospital-journey/therapy-services/childrens-therapy-referral/>

- You can access further information from the following websites:

www.gosh.nhs.uk
www.britishvoiceassociation.org.uk