

Speech and Language Therapy Service in Hackney

Children with Social Communication differences in Hackney may be able to access extra support from Speech and Language Therapists and Specialist Teachers.

Who to contact

Children under 5 years old can be seen by a Speech and Language Therapist in the Early Years Team at nurseries or in Children's Centres.

Learning My Language.....

Learning My Language is a Speech and Language therapy Programme for children with social communication difficulties and their parents. Each session parents are supported to learn about the different aspects of their child's communication.

Find out more from your Speech and Language Therapist.

Our contact details

Speech and Language Therapy

Tel: 020 7683 4262

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Facebook:

www.facebook.com/gethackneytalking/

Supporting Social Communication



Homerton Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust



Children's Integrated Speech and Language
Therapy Service for Hackney and the City

What is social communication?



We all use a variety of social communication skills any time we interact. The development of these skills starts early in life and happens over a number of years, generally without a lot of direct teaching.

Social skills include:

Conversational Skills -

greetings, starting conversations, listening skills
Play Skills - joining play, turn-taking, sharing, coping with 'no', coping with losing, ending play

Understanding Emotions

- reading facial expressions/body language, understanding tone of voice, awareness of own body language, labelling emotions, emotional regulation skills
Dealing with conflict - anger management and self-regulation skills, has the ability to ask for help

Friendship Skills - knowing how to make friends

What signs might a child with social communication differences show?

A child may display some of the following characteristics:

- Using **eye contact** less often than you might expect
- Preference for **non-verbal communication** such as pulling you by the hand
- Preference for trying to **do things for themselves** instead of asking for help
- Being **less likely to respond** e.g. not responding to their name.
- A preference for **play** that may be **repetitive** and may be focused on **specific interests**.
- A preference **for playing by themselves** and a dislike of **sharing toys** and **taking turns** with others.
- Anxiety and upset when **moving between activities**, for example from playing on the iPad to bed-time

How will this affect my child?

Children vary in the way they develop their social communication skills.



Early intervention which focuses on your child's social communication can help make a difference to their future.

How can I support my child at home?

Be face-to-face

Be face-to-face with your child so that it is easier to observe what they are interested in and so you can notice when they try to communicate with you (for example if they hand you a toy to ask for help).

Follow their lead

Follow your child's lead and show interest in their play, rather than directing their play. They will be more likely to pay attention to you when you do this.

Use familiar songs and phrases

Use songs and phrases from your child's favourite books and TV shows in the real world. e.g. 'jumping in muddy puddles' from Peppa Pig

Encourage any type of communication

Accept any means of communication, including speaking, making noises, gestures, pointing, reaching and facial expressions

Imitate

Imitate your child's actions, sounds and words. For example, if they bang the spoon on the table, you do the same. It is more likely that they will pay attention to you if you copy them.

Encourage social interactions

Help them learn skills to join in with other children. Playing games at home to support turn-taking and listening to others, for example singing songs with actions.

