



down syndrome  
south australia

We help people with Down Syndrome march to the beat of their own drum.

# Chatter Challenge

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Chatter Challenge was developed to meet parent needs.

How could parents incorporate speech and language activities, that were developmentally appropriate, into daily life.

It has been written in parent friendly language.

- Authors: three special educators with over 10 years experience each ( Two with degrees in Hearing Impairment )
- Editing: two speech pathologists (one a parent of a young son with Down syndrome)



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## The project

- Home based program with a focus on pre-speech
- For parents and carers of children with Down syndrome or children with speech and language delay
- There will be two stages
  - Stage 1: birth to 18 months
  - Stage 2: 18 months -3years
- Includes rationales (why children need this skill)
- Provides practical examples



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## The eight chapters

1. Listening
2. Attending
3. Feeding
4. Oral Motor
5. Receptive Language
6. Expressive Language
7. Social language
8. Speech

These areas cover the pre-requisite skills for future language development



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## Structure of the Chapters

Each chapter

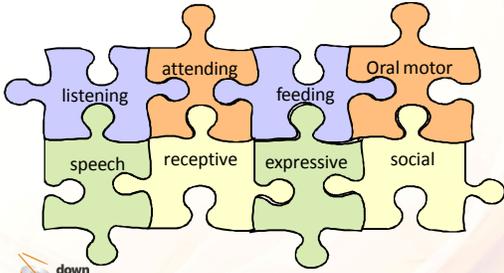
1. Defines the skill
2. Rationale
3. Describes how to work on it
4. Gives practical examples



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## All areas work together

Skills are all interrelated. Activities may be selected from different sections and worked on at the same time.




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## Jackson's Day

listening




feeding



oral motor



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## Attending Skills : Rationale

Working on attention will extend the time a child is able to attend to one activity. Improving concentration will be helpful in all areas of learning as it will allow them to focus on what you are trying to teach.

**Tips to help and maintain attention and concentration**

- Using a small table and chair helps children maintain focus by providing good postural support.
- Keep your child's eyes and hands attending to what he is doing at the time. Use prompts such as "look here" and tap the object or the table to get his attention. You may need to use coactive movement (hand over hand) to encourage attending to an object.
- Keep looking at the object or activity yourself, be a good role model.
- Choose toys or materials to play with that your child is interested in.
- Adding a surprise to games will help add to the enjoyment and interest, eg. hiding toys or wrapping them in paper.
- Break down tasks into small steps, encourage your child to do a part of the activity if he is having difficulty.
- Give your child TIME to do a task. Count slowly to ten (in your head) before you jump in and help. Sometimes easier said than done!

## Attending Skills

- Turn taking
- Joint attention
- Matching skills
- Sorting games
- Object functions




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## Joint Attention

Follow your child's lead.




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## Tips to help concentration

- Choose a quiet space
- Choose something of interest to look at together.
- Keep it short
- Draw their attention to the object
- Wait for a response
- Pack away together.




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## Listening

Check hearing regularly




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### Listening skills

- Awareness of sounds  
What's that?
- Auditory discrimination  
High low, loud soft
- Auditory memory  
2-4 digit span (adults)



### Listening Memory



- O



### Feeding

We all use our speech muscles when we breathe, swallow and eat. Therefore it makes sense that we don't wait until speech emerges to work on the necessary skills for the development of speech sounds.



### Finger Feeding



- Independence
- Sensory information
- Portion size
- Finger food first then spoon
- Check empty mouth

Blaine, Lola, Jackson





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### Taste, temperature and texture

Temperature changes

- Start with room temperature
- Explore different temperatures with hands  
 eg play ice cubes on a tray  
 play with warm play dough
- Introduce temperature changes using favourite foods
- Pick time when not too tired or hungry.

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### Oral Motor

It is very common for infants and children with Down Syndrome to have low muscle tone and weak muscles in the lips, tongue and palate. In fact many speech and intelligibility problems are due to this low muscle tone. Many speech pathologists think that by helping improve muscle strength and control this will help later with articulation and intelligibility.

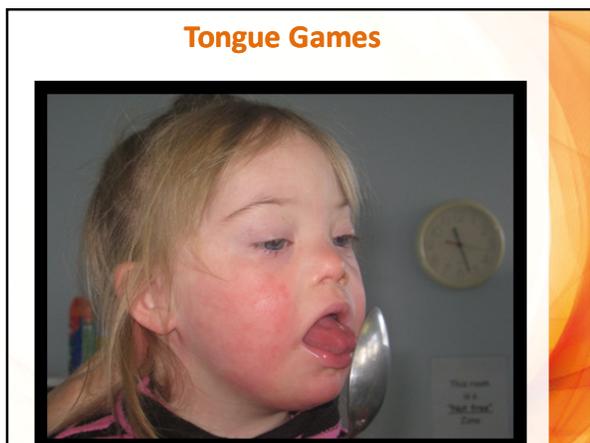
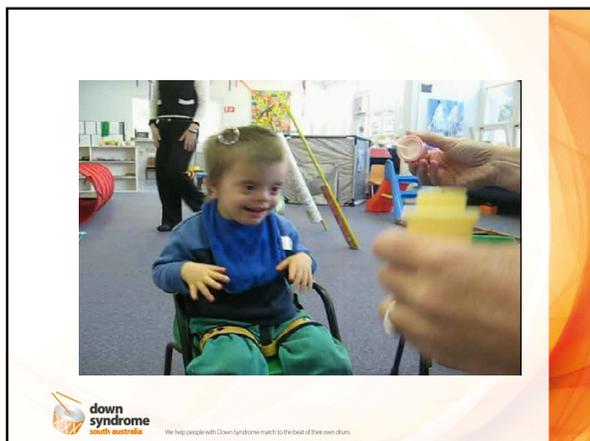
Kumin 2003

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### Blowing games

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### Receptive language

Research has shown that children with Down syndrome frequently can understand much more language than they can express. Therefore their receptive language skills are usually much better than their expressive language.

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We help people with Down Syndrome reach to the best of their own dream.



- ### Receptive language
- Gain the child's attention
  - Come down to his/her eye level.
  - Simplify your language and use key word signs to help deliver your message.
  - Slow down your rate of speech
  - Allow time to process...WAIT.
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## Receptive language

Learning the names of

- Nouns
- Verbs
- Concepts
- Questions



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## Teach Action Words



- Draw
- Glue
- Cut
- Paint
- Climb



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## Expressive Language

All the things we use to make ourselves understood

- Gesture
- Eye contact and gaze
- Positioning and pointing
- Facial expressions
- Body language
- Signs and symbols
- Behaviour
- Ipad /picture



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## Expressive language

- Motor imitation toy
- Motor imitation body – blow kisses etc.
- Imitation non speech sounds – achoo
- Imitation speech sounds



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### Expressive language

- Transport
- Clothes
- Body parts
- Toys
- Everyday objects
- Animal names
- Food
- Family

Dominant hand index and middle fingers straight and held in "V" formation.  
Place tips of fingers in palm of non dominant hand and then bounce fingers up in imitation of jumping. Bounce twice.

jumping

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### Social Language

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### Social Language

- is the language of intent
- a request
- a greeting or farewell
- to protest
- to be friendly and socialise
- to ask for information

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### Turn taking

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### Choice making

- Start with controlled choices
- Limit to 2 objects
- Make sure choices are acceptable
- Reward immediately with toy/object

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## Learning to Initiate

Present a special toy or food just out of reach.  
 Put on a D.V.D and forget to turn on the T.V.  
 Forget to turn on the light.  
 Give your child dinner and forget to give him the spoon.  
 Forget to tie up his shoe.  
 Put on one sock.



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## Speech Rationale

Speech is a verbal language, or the process of producing voice and sounds and combining them into words to communicate. Speech involves strength, coordination and the timing of precise muscle movements. Speaking also involves the coordination of many brain systems to formulate and produce a spoken message.

(L.Kumin 2003)



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## Speech

WHY TEACH SPEECH SOUNDS ?

- Children will practice easy sounds
- Tend not to practise more difficult sounds
- Use same sound for a number of words . . . 'ee' sound for feet, seat, read.



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## Playing with sounds

- Practise listening to symbolic sounds
- Practise listening to vowel sounds
- Practise listening to consonant sounds
- Imitate sounds



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## Speech

### Sound effects

#### Learning sound effects:

Baa	Moo	Yum/yum	
Choo choo	Ouch	Waaaa	
Grrr	Quack	Brummm	
Meow	Oh oh		

#### What to do

- Make the sounds as they occur naturally in everyday life.
- Take your child for a walk to feed the ducks
- Go on a train ride.
- Use puppets to make sounds. Eg the puppet could fall down and say "ouch" or make puppet cry using a "Boo hooo"
- Use exclamatory expressions such as Oh oh , yummin or ( or other familiar expressions.)
- Exaggerate the tone of your voice and your facial expressions.
- Play with toy animals and make the sounds. See PG. See more ideas, pg. 9 Listening skills.



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## Speech Sounds



p



b



t



d  
(as in drum)

**How to use speech sound cards to teach your child to listen to and play with sounds**

When using the speech sound cards please keep the following in mind.

1. Make sure your child is in a responsive mood before you begin e.g. they are not too tired or hungry.
2. Play with cards regularly i.e. several times a week.
3. Keep sessions short, e.g. do short bursts of 5-10 minutes at a time.
4. Focus on a few sounds each session i.e. Pick 4-8 cards for one session. Next time choose 4-8 different ones.
5. Hold each speech sound card near your mouth. This is so your child can see the picture on the card (which they will learn to associate with the sound) as well as your lips (which show them how to produce the sound).
6. Make the sound 4 or 5 times. Make sure you are producing only the sound (i.e. "p, b, t, d") and not the name of the picture which represents the sound (i.e. "bubble, bubble, bubble").
7. Then wait for your child to respond. They may respond by looking, smiling, moving their lips or even by attempting to produce the sound.
8. Respond any attempt at production (both nonverbal and verbal) with a smile, clap, verbal praise etc.
9. Then put the card in a box or a bag and continue with the next card.

**NB.** Remember that the aim at this stage is to teach your child to look at, listen to and play with speech sounds (not to produce them).

