

**talking
matters**



Talking Tips

for the
whole
whānau



**Kōrerotia
mai!**



**Talk
to me!**

**talking
matters**

Talking Matters partners with whānau, whānau supporters and educators to enrich the language environments experienced by children in their earliest years.



**Back and forth
responsive talk literally
grows babies' brains.**

Their brain doubles in size in their first year of life and by their third birthday they have grown 80% of their neural connections!

Make the most of their first 1,000 days and use these tips throughout your everyday life.

**It takes a village to raise a child –
so share these tips with everyone.**

01



Talk about what you are doing and thinking.

Kōrerohia āu mahi me ōu whakaaro.

We all have an internal monologue as we go about daily life. “Are these eggs fresh?”
“I might make two pieces of toast today, I’m hungry.”

Why not share this with pēpi, toddlers and young children? This is a great opportunity to share the gift of language.

Comment on what they’re doing or looking at.

Kōrerohia ā rātou mahi, me ā rātou kitenga.

When we describe what babies and toddlers are doing or looking at, we’re giving them words and sentences that match their interest at that moment. This tells them we’re interested in them and invites them to ‘take a turn’ (remember a turn can be verbal or non-verbal). Don’t be shy to use ‘juicy’ words e.g. you might say the water is cold, but you could also say it’s chilly, or freezing.

02



Name things they are interested in.

Whakaingoatia ngā mea hirahira ki a rātou.

You might not find a carton of eggs that interesting, but that doesn't mean babies feel the same! Their world and community is new to them – share the gift of language by naming things they look at, touch or taste.

03



04



**Get down to their level:
face to face.**

**Heke iho ki ō rātou taumata,
kia kanohi ki te kanohi.**

Kanohi ki te kanohi is the foundation for any genuine connection and most important for babies and toddlers. Not only do they learn from our facial expressions, they're taking note of the shapes our lips are making as we speak. They want to copy us. Being face to face helps us notice what they're interested in too.

05



Tune in. Āta aromia rātou.

Take a moment to tune in to what your baby might be thinking and feeling. They love spending time with you. Attunement helps you connect and respond. Follow baby's lead.



Imitate them and add words.

Whakatauritehia tō reo me tō whakaaritanga ki a rātou, ā, whāngaihia ētahi kupu hou.

Imitating the sounds and gestures baby makes is fun. It can go on for hours! Next time you imitate pēpi, add a word or short sentence about what you're doing to take it to the next level.



06



Wait for their response.

Tatari ki ā rātou whakautu, ki ō rātou whakaaro.

Babies and toddlers are learning so much every single day, it's incredible how much they're taking in. Sometimes it can take them a wee bit of time to respond as many of their movements, sounds, gestures and words are new to them. Give them time. Don't assume they don't know.

07



08



Touch, hug, hold.

Kōmirihia, awhitia, puritia.

Talking isn't the only way we connect and communicate. We connect with babies through loving touch, and we can never cuddle a baby too much. Scientists have also discovered that the more you hug your baby, the more their brain grows!



09



**Take turns,
don't do all the talking.**

**Kia tāutuutu te kōrero.
Kia kaua māu anake e kōrero.**

It's your job to explain the world to pēpi and tamariki. But remember to pause for moments to let your child take a turn. It might take them a while to form a response, show them you want to hear it. A toddler might use a single word or a sentence. Give them space to share their thoughts and ideas.

**Repeat.
Toaitia.**



Children LOVE repetition and they learn so much from it. Next time they want to hear or sing the same waiata again why not add another verse? Or why not add movements this time? Indulge their need for “one more time”, keep it fresh for you and teach them something new. It's how they learn.

10



Follow their lead, do what interests them.



Tukua mā rātou koe e arataki, ā, whāia ngā mahi hirahira ki a rātou.

When playing with babies and toddlers, go with the flow and follow their interests. Their attention often jumps from one thing to another and that's natural for their age. Once you're tuned in and following their lead it can be a surprise as to what they're interested in. We want to talk about the plants, but they're obsessed with the slugs and snails. Go with it. It's interesting to them.

11



12



Encourage them, be positive.

Ākina rātou, ā, kia ngākau atawhai.

Encourage them to try new things and remember to use the new and specific words that go with a new activity. Communicate caring and positive responsiveness: "Your brother loves watching you twirl the poi. After your turn you can show him how to do it."

13



Make faces, use gestures. Kia whakaari tō kanohi me tō tinana.

As you talk about things you see, why not add a gesture and facials to go with it. This can give another layer of meaning to the word, helping them to understand it faster.

Be silly, relax, have fun.

**Kia pārekareka, kia whakatā,
ā, kia hākoakoa.**

Laughter is a universal language and your baby thinks you're funny – that's all that matters. Seeing your baby smile makes you want to do it more.

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All the talking tips

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Building brains through early talk

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