

## AACS Speech –Language Pathologists Series



*Supporting the  
Special Needs  
Community from  
birth through life*



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### Using Music to Expand Your Child’s Speech and Language Skills

For early imitation skills – sing and do hand motions to songs. Sit your child on your lap face to face and help him/her to do the gestures as you sing.



Sing a song with syllables instead of words. Sing ba ba ba ba in the tune of Baa Baa Black Sheep or try La La La La La La in the tune of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. Start with sounds that may be easier for your child, and then have fun trying others.

Songs like Old MacDonald include those early developing animal sounds (moo, baa, nay, meow, woof).

Vocal play with sounds and sound combinations while tapping on a drum, shaking an egg.....create a rhythm and a beat with sounds. Use music as a way to pace simple phrases.

Use pictures of songs to help with choices. Offer a choice of two pictures and let your child pick the picture that goes with the song he/she wants to sing. (i.e. barn to represent Old MacDonald, bus for “Wheels on the Bus”, star for “Twinkle Little Star”)



Sing familiar songs at a slower than normal rate and leave a high-frequency word out for your child to fill in. A high frequency word in a song would be one that occurs over and over throughout the lyrics. Examples of high-frequency words in songs would be the word “boat” or “stream” in Row Row Row Your Boat. Pause and look expectantly at your child when you reach the word you would like your child to attempt. Make a big deal over any attempt to let your child know she or he just did a great job! This is a fun activity and builds confidence. Repetition of the same songs makes them comfortable and confident to increase their attempts at singing and increases their participation.



Be fun and crazy and make up a tune with a simple phrase to go along to encourage finding body parts, labeling objects or food, etc. (Ex. “I wash, wash my arm” – as I wash my arm, “I wash wash my nose – while rubbing nose, “I wash wash my toes” – etc.. etc.,) wait and see if the kiddo will tell you what to “wash” next.

Use words to control the music, like freeze tag. When music stops, they yell “stop”. When they want it on, they say “on” or “go”.

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