

# Expansions

## What is it?

*In the early stages of language development, children begin to combine words into short phrases to communicate their needs and observations. It is typical for children at this level to only say the key words and leave out the "in-between" words, for example, "dog run outside". Additionally, they may produce grammatical or vocabulary based errors. In order to teach children how to construct accurate, adult-like sentences, you can *expand* on what they have said.*

*add the correct grammatical markers and more details to model say the same thing in a more complete and meaningful way. This will increase your child's knowledge of sentence types, e.g. statements versus questions as well as a range of naming, doing and descriptive vocabulary in context.*



## *When and how do we use it?*

*In every day interactions with your children there are endless opportunities to expand on their phrases. This might take place at:*

- *Meal times*

*Child: "mummy cook"*

*Parent: "Yes mummy is cooking your dinner"*

*Child: "mummy (is) cooking"*

- *During play*

*Child: "Dolly dress"*

*Parent: "That's dolly's pretty pink dress. Dolly is wearing a pretty, pink dress".*

*Child: "Dolly wear dress" or "dolly('s) pink dress"*



- Reading picture books

Child: "ball"

Parent: "balloon. The red balloon is high in the sky"

Child: "balloon in sky"

- Completing daily chores/ activities

Child: "shoes"

Parent: "Yes, shoelaces. Mummy is putting on your shoes. Mummy is tying your shoelaces"

Child: "tying shoelaces"

This type of modelling has shown that children are likely to spontaneously imitate at least part of the expansion.

