Using Questions

What is it?

When eliciting language from children it is important to ensure that as their communication partner we foster a. wide range of responses. One language stimulation technique that encourages different vocabulary use is questioning Asking your child to answer a wide range of questions, in different contexts, will not only increase their awareness of the environment, but it will result in the child talking about it.

Questions range from close ended questions, i.e. "What's this?" Or "Who is that" to open ended questions, i.e. "What have you done today?" Or "What should I do?" Although close ended questions are important in early language development, when you are working on eliciting maximum length of utterance, open ended questions are more effective.

How do you use it to elicit language?

Asking questions across different contexts, increases exposure and encourages use of varied and new vocabulary. Questioning encourages discussion about events that are in the 'here and now', as well as more abstract concepts or events. Asking questions is a skill we use frequently in verbal interactions.

When using it for language stimulation, the main thing to remember is to use a variety of questions. Question types you can use with your child include:

- Choice questions- giving the child an option, e.g. "Is it a doll <u>or</u> apple?"

- 'Wh' questions- Who? What? Where? When? e.g. "Who is outside?", "What's her name?" and "Where did we have lunch?"

- Experience questions- Get the child to talk about and describe their experiences, e.g. "Tell me about what we are doing tomorrow?", "How did it taste?", "What other animals do you know?"

- Sequencing questions, e.g. "What will happen after?", "How do I fix it?", "What happened at the start of the story? or What happened next?"

- Reasoning/ open ended questions- increase their use of imagination and higher level thinking, e.g. "Why do they go together?", "What will happen if I drop the glass?"

It is important to note that questions follow a hierarchy in order of acquisition in development. Questions asking about items in the immediate environment, e.g. "What is it?" are easier to respond to in comparison to those that ask a child to reason or explain, e.g. "Why did the boy wash the dog?"

My daddy did!

Who taught you how to do that??