

Speech and Language Therapy

Helping children with unclear speech

React to what your child says; not how clearly they speak

Children often don't realise that they are mispronouncing words so correcting them can be confusing.

Repeat what your child says correctly, so they hear good examples

For example:

If your child says "boon" for spoon, say "Yes here's your spoon!"

Slightly emphasise the sound that is mispronounced or omitted.

Don't make your child repeat the words

Drawing attention to a child's mispronunciations and making them repeat words can affect their confidence in talking. It's more useful to acknowledge what they have said rather than comment on the error they made.

Your child may be able to make a sound but not use it in words

This is quite normal. For example, they may be able to articulate 's' but still say 'dock' for 'sock'. The best way to help this sound to develop in words is to repeat the words correctly so they hear good models.

If you can't understand what your child has said

Put the blame on yourself and say something like 'I'm sorry my ears aren't working very well can you say that again'. Ask them questions such as 'who are you talking about? What were you doing?'. This may provide you with extra clues to work out what they are saying.

Or ask them to show you what they mean or draw it if they can. If you still can't understand them then acknowledge this rather than pretend you have understood