

SPRING

INTO SPEECH

Hooray for warm weather! Now that the winter storms have finally ended, it's time to get outside and spend time together while enjoying nature. During spring there are so many opportunities to incorporate speech and language into your everyday activities with your child. The following are just a few things you can do with your kids and some ideas on how to bring a focus to what they may be working on in speech therapy.

🌻 Gardening

Working in the garden gives young kids the chance to learn new vocabulary and use these words in conversation. For young kids, repeat action words (dig, pat, lift, etc.) while practicing these actions. Talk about where the plants are going (in, on, behind, etc.) in the garden. Older kids can describe the plants they see. Have them walk through the steps of planning a garden. Talk about what the garden may look like later in the summer time. Make predictions about colors or the height of plants if planting seeds. Make a list of what plants need to grow and be healthy.



🌻 Nature Walk

Take a walk through a local park or your own backyard and talk about the nature that you see. If your child is working on a particular sound in speech therapy, see if she/he can find items that start with their sound. Help younger kids learning new vocabulary for the animals and plants they see. Encourage your child to asking questions about what they find outside. Ask your child questions about the new things they see. Have older children make educated guesses about the things they see and have them describe these items. For example, as your child spots a rabbit run by ask them about how the rabbit moves, what they eat, where they live, and



other related questions. This encourages your child to think about the nature they find in new ways.

🌻 Picnic

Prepare the food for your picnic with your child. Have them choose food items to bring on this trip. Ask your older kids to sequence the steps of making the foods items like sandwiches and ants-on-a-log (peanut butter and raisins on celery. Talking about actions that your do is a good way for children to learn verbs (cutting, spreading, etc.). Plan together what you might need to eat your lunch. Do you need plates, spoons, forks, napkins, and/or a blanket to sit on? Have your children help you find a place to sit and have your meal. For younger children put an emphasis on preposition words (on, in, off, up, down, etc.) as you set up your picnic and make your food. Have your child name the foods food and their colors.



🌻 Go to the zoo

As you are on your way to the zoo have your children make predictions about what animals they might see there. With older children who have been to the zoo before, ask about what animals they remember seeing. Can they tell you a story about their last visit? Have they read a book about one of the animals at the zoo? As you enter the zoo allow the older children to hold the map. Are they able to find familiar letters and names on the map? Have them search for animals that start with the sounds they are working on in speech therapy. With younger children you can practice matching animal sounds with the animals they see. Children can practice descriptive words to talk about the new creatures they see while naming their colors and patterns (stripes, spots, etc.).



I hope that this spring you and your child have a chance to bring more speech and language skills into your family events. I encourage you to relate these events to books you read together. Remember that simply talking about what you and your child are doing together can enrich their experience and increase their knowledge.

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