

## Optional Language Building Activities

**Share the News-** Spend a short time each day talking to your child about a specific topic (see list below). Ask your child the question (ex. What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?). After your child responds, have your child ask you the question. Then, ask your child a follow-up question (ex. Why is chocolate your favorite? or Do you like any toppings on your ice cream?). Encourage your child to ask you a follow-up question, as well. Try to keep the conversation going for 5 minutes!

*Sample Share the News Conversation Starters:*

What is your favorite snack?	What is your favorite toy?	What is your favorite book?
What do you like to eat for dinner?	What makes you laugh?	What is your favorite TV show?
What do you like to eat for breakfast?	What do you like to do at school?	What do you like to play outside?

**Talk About Play-** Spend a short time each day talking to your child about what he/she is playing (see list below). Ask your child a question (ex. What toy are you playing with?). After your child responds, ask your child a follow-up question (ex. How does that toy work? or What will you do next with the toy?). Try to keep the conversation going for 5 minutes!

*Play Conversation Starters:*

What is ... ?	How did you make ... ?	What will you do next with the ... ?
How does ... work?	Why did you decide to ...?	Tell me about ...
Where is ... going?	Who is ...?	Why did you choose ... ?

***Favorite Moments-*** As you get your child ready for bed, think about your favorite moment of the day with him/her. Turn it into a dramatic story, and tell them why it was your favorite. Ask your child to share his/her favorite moment. Talk about your favorite moment versus his/her favorite moment. What's the same/different?

***Love Connections-*** Set aside a special time of the day to snuggle with your child and talk about love connections. For example, you might tell your child, "I love you as much as a bee loves flowers" or "I love you as much as a car loves gas." Ask your child to come up with his/her own love connections. Keep going back and forth :)

***Memory Game-*** Collect 3-5 objects (small enough that several fit on a table). Get a piece of cloth that is large enough to cover all the objects. Place the objects on a table, and introduce each object to your child using a two-word label to name each one: the name of the object and a word that describes it (ex. blue bowl, shiny spoon, pink clip). As you introduce each object, encourage your child to use a memory strategy to remember on purpose: *Memory Strategy 1-* "take a picture with your mind" (visualize each object while you name it) or *Memory Strategy 2-* say the words out loud to remember the object. Now, cover the objects, and have your child close his/her eyes. Tell them you're about to do some magic! Manipulate the objects. Start by taking away one object (later, you might take away more than one object or add another object). Lift the cover to reveal the objects. Have your child tell you what's different, being sure to use the two-word name for objects as they describe what has changed. Discuss how it went. Were you right? What did you miss? Play again with the same set of objects!

***I Spy Senses-*** Play "I Spy" with a twist! Go outside, close your eyes, and listen. Describe what you hear to your child (ex. "I hear something loud."). Have your child guess what is that you are hearing. Now let your child have a turn to tell you what he/she hears, and you guess. Next, try other senses (ex. "I smell something sweet."). Continue taking turns spying with your senses.

***Emotions Song-*** Draw and cut out 6 circles (*adding a popsicle stick to each optional*). On each circle, draw faces to show the following emotions- happy, sad, mad, scared, sleepy, and surprised (*see example on next page*). Sing the song "If You're Happy and You Know It" with your child. Have your child hold up the face that matches the emotion as you sing the song together.

***Name That Feeling-*** On small pieces of paper draw faces to show various emotions (happy, sad, mad, scared, surprised, etc.). Put the pieces of paper in a bag or bowl, and have your child close his/her eyes and take a piece out. For each piece have your child name the emotion, and then talk about a time that he/she felt that emotion. Next, ask your child how he/she knows when *someone else* is feeling that emotion (ex. someone who is sad may be frowning or crying). Keep going until you talk about all of the emotions!