

## **Ways to Develop Conversation when Children have Complex Language**

### **Make comments**

Instead of asking a question i.e. 'What did you do at the weekend?' try commenting 'I went shopping at the weekend', 'Let's talk about what we did at the weekend.'

### **1 in 5 rule**

One question to five comments

### **Suggestions**

Wait for the child to open the conversation and make suggestions related to the child's focus of interest. For example;

Child say's "This dolly is hungry" you say "Yes, maybe she needs some dinner"

Child say's "He's not getting out" you say "Tell him to come out from under the table"

### **Reformulations**

Prove that you are an active listener by asking questions or making comments that are a way of rewording exactly what the child has just said. It encourages the child to develop his/her own ideas without having to be told. For example;

Child say's "He gonna fall2 you say "You think he's going to fall do you?"

(Encouraging the child to keep going)

Child say's "It's gone sticky" you say "You're fingers are sticking to it aren't they?"

### **Rhetorical Questions**

Ask questions out loud without expecting an answer. Leave time for the children to offer a response if they want to. There is no right or wrong to this type of question, this allows you to model questions without putting children under pressure. Children are more likely to respond if they aren't pressured as we all are!

When watching a spider man video say "Is he going to catch the villain?"

### **Rhetorical forced Alternative Questions**

Ask yourself aloud an 'either/or' question to give a clear adult model of questioning. Give time for the children to choose one of the alternatives.

"I wonder if she wants to go in the bus or the car."

"I wonder if Jack wants to go to bed or have a bath."

### **Rhetorical "wh" questions**

Adult asks who, what, when, why and where questions without necessarily expecting an answer e.g.

"What shall we have for dinner today?"

"Who can see some horses?"