

# Come Talk With Me



a monthly newsletter produced by  
**USC Caruso Family Center**  
for Childhood Communication

Volume 1 • Issue 10 • December 2016



## From Your Audiologist

- To ensure the best fit, have new ear molds made every six months for your child.
- Make sure you have extra cables, coils, rechargeable batteries and all selected accessories. Check to be sure they are all working. If something is broken or missing contact the manufacturer to request new ones.
- If you have recently moved, contact your cochlear implant manufacturer to provide your new address so that newly ordered items are sent to the correct location.

## Words Matter

- Children learn vocabulary more rapidly when the words are more meaningful to them. As we celebrate the holiday season, good words to target include: gift, chimney, lights, ribbon, tape, wrapping paper, believe, sleigh, vacation, wait, decorate, ornament, garland, elf, train, anticipate, Hanukkah and menorah.
- Typically once a child has a vocabulary of about 50 words, they demonstrate knowledge of how objects relate. Focus on teaching your young child how to combine words describing the location of an object. For example: “Santa chimney,” or “menorah window.”
- This season is a time of wonder. You can express the intensity of a describing word by using the words: very, really, extremely, so, too or pretty.
- Expand the older child’s vocabulary by teaching prefixes and suffixes which can be added to the beginnings or endings of words to slightly change the meaning. For example, you can change “celebrate” to “celebration,” “festive” to “festival,” “decorate” to “decoration,” “anticipate” to “anticipation,” or “tag” to “tagged.”



## Parent Strategies

- Children learn language through imitation. This starts early on when a young baby or child imitates facial movements or hand movements. Encourage and praise all attempts at imitation including motor movements and verbal attempts. This sets the stage for imitation of words and sentences as your child progresses.
- Consider the “Plus 1 Rule” when talking with your child. Add on to their utterances by adding 1 word, 1 grammatical structure or 1 concept.
- When your child asks you to repeat what you have said, pause and ask, “What do you think you heard?” We want to encourage children to respond instead of relying on adult repetition. This will give you information regarding what your child thought he heard. You will know what support he may need to understand the message stated.



# Read On!

- [Dream Snow](#) by Eric Carle
- [The Mitten](#) by Jan Brett
- [The Little Fir Tree](#) by Margaret Wise Brown
- [Bear Stays Up for Christmas](#) by Karma Wilson
- [The Polar Express](#) by Chris Van Allsburg
- [I Wish to be a Christmas Tree](#) by Colleen Monroe
- [The Christmas Miracle](#) by Jonathan Toomey
- [Hanukkah is Coming](#) by Tracy Newman
- [Oskar and the Eight Blessings](#) by Richard Simon and Tanya Simon



## When reading with your child....

- The single most important activity that you can do to build successful readers is to read aloud. Grab a book, spend time with your child discovering the wonderful illustrations in the books recommended in this month's newsletter.
- Talk about the book with your child. Talking about illustrations in picture books builds word knowledge.
- Reading aloud offers an opportunity to use words not associated with daily routines, e.g. cozy inside the mitten, one by one, crawl inside, a magical train, an evergreen tree, a fir tree, standing alone, covered in snow, stay up, stay awake, miracle, and woodcarver.
- Remember to turn off the television and other electronic devices, such as your cell phone, when you share a story with your child.



## Let's Chat

- Help your young child talk about where an item is by using the sentence pattern: noun phrase + is/are + location. Examples include: "The presents are under the Christmas tree," "The hot chocolate is on the table," "The toy soldier is in the box," or "The wreath is over the door."
- As we plan and prepare for the holidays, help your child talk about a reason or who something is for by using the word, "for." For example: "This present is **for** Daddy," "The cookies are **for** your class," "The noise makers are **for** New Year's Eve."
- While making plans for the winter break, help your older child talk about what they will be doing by targeting the future and future progressive tenses. "We **will go** to the mountains during break," "We **will be celebrating** Hanukkah at my grandmother's house," "Santa **will travel** to each child's house on Christmas Eve," "The children **will be playing** with their new toys."

## Social Stars

- Around the age of two, children begin telling simple stories by using strings of sentences that are unrelated to each other or a main idea. They are usually stating what is happening. Help your child do this by modeling story telling while looking at books or talking about something that is happening. Encourage your child to tell you what is happening as well.
- During the holiday season, families often give each other gifts. Now would be a good time to give your child "hints" so that they can guess what something is.
- The holiday season is about appreciating family and friends so be sure to help even your youngest child learn to be grateful and say, "thank you."
- As you continue to support your child's ability to talk about their thoughts, target the words, "hope" and "wish" this month. For example: "I hope I get a bicycle," "I wish it would snow on Christmas."

