



# How to Help Your Child Reach the 40 Million Word Goal

Research tells us that children who hear 40 million words or more in the first four years of life develop early conversational skills, learn to read on time, do better in school, and have more communication opportunities in the future. While this word count can seem intimidating, with intention, practice, and continual conversations, you can help your child meet their 40 million word goal! Here's how:

- **Make Listening Easier:** Reduce noise makers around the house like the radio, TV, and loud appliances.
- **Use LSL Strategies and Techniques:** The LSL strategies and techniques you learn in intervention will help your child learn spoken language. Make sure to use them in your everyday routines.
- **Speak in Phrases and Full Sentences:** Single words are not enough. When you talk to your child using phrases and sentences, you're not only providing more meaning, you're using a natural conversational style that helps their brain map sentence structure and word order.
- **Get Silly and Sing:** Sing a song your family has always enjoyed, or try making up your own songs, using words in a singsong way.
- **Read Books at Least 15 Minutes a Day:** Set a goal to read aloud to your child for 15 minutes every day. You can read to them while they eat breakfast, before bedtime, in a doctor's waiting room, or while in the car or on the bus.
- **Talk About the Five Senses (Touch, Smell, Sound, Sight, Taste):** Simply by describing and talking about the five senses pertaining to objects, you can explore a multitude of language opportunities!
- **Explore All the Details:** A leaf can spark language about stems, tree branches, bark, roots, and soil! Think through all the endless connections and details from the objects in your day-to-day routine.
- **Let Your Child 'Listen In' When Talking to Other People:** Your child learns much of their language by overhearing conversations around them. Make sure they have plenty of opportunities, in close range, to hear you talking with other people.
- **Use an FM or Remote Microphone:** Talk to your audiologist about remote microphone technology that connects your—or their teacher's, caregiver's, or coach's—voice directly to your child's hearing devices.
- **Add New Vocabulary to Known Words and Concepts:** Break out your trusty Thesaurus and start exploring all the synonyms for the common words you already use. Big can become large, huge, enormous, gigantic!