

Oxford Craniofacial Unit

LEARNING BODY PARTS

Information for parents and carers

Identifying body parts and body awareness is an important part of your child's development. Children first learn to identify their own body parts (for example, when you ask your child to "Show me your nose"), then the body parts of others (for example, "Show me mummy's nose"). They then learn how to label the parts (e.g. when you point to your child's nose and ask "What's this?").

Playing in front of a mirror

- Start by sitting up close to a mirror with your child.
- Point to the mirror and say, *"Look at the little boy/girl."*
- Wave your child's arm and say, *"Hi, little boy/girl."*
- Ask *"Where is your foot?"*, then wiggle your child's foot and say, *"There's your foot."*
- Go through all the parts of the body. Spend some time on their face, asking where your child's eyes, nose, ears and mouth are.

Playing with a doll or teddy

When playing with a doll or teddy, carry out familiar actions and talk about the parts of the body:

- Pretend to give the doll/teddy a bath. Wash each part of the body, then dry each part.
- Brush the doll's hair/teddy's fur.
- Pretend to feed the doll/teddy with a spoon. Tell the doll/teddy to open its mouth.
- Other things you can do include putting a plaster on the doll's leg, blowing the doll/teddy's nose, closing the doll's eyes and clapping the doll/teddy's hands.
- Sing this song (to the tune of *Where is Thumbkin*) as your child points to the parts of the body on the teddy or doll. If your child does not know the body part, help them to point to it.

*"Where is teddy's **nose**?
Where is teddy's **nose**?
There it is,
There it is."*

Repeat the song, naming different parts of the body or pointing to the same body part on each other (e.g. *"Where is your **nose**?"*, then *"Where is mummy's **nose**?"*).

Songs, rhymes, games and books

Sing the following song (to the tune of 'Here we go round the mulberry bush') to your child when they are in the bath:

"Now it's time to wash your *toes*,
Wash your *toes*, wash your *toes*,
Now it's time to wash your *toes*,
Get them nice and clean."

Repeat the song naming different parts of the body, then change the song as you dry your child:

"Now it's time to dry your *hair*,
Dry your *hair*, dry your *hair*,
Now it's time to dry your *hair*,
Get it nice and dry."

Sit with your child in your lap. Hold up one of their *feet* and say:

"One little *foot*, I love you,
One little *foot*, I love you,
Shake it to the left (move your baby's foot to the left)
Shake it to the right (move your baby's foot to the right)
One little *foot*, I love you."

Repeat the rhyme with different parts of the body.

Sing songs which involve body parts, for example:

- If You're Happy and You Know It (clap your *hands*, stamp your *feet*, blink your *eyes*, shake your *head*, etc.).
- Heads and Shoulders, Knees and Toes.
- Hokey Cokey.

Catch Me

- As your child crawls or walks away from you, go after them.
- When you catch your child, tickle a part of their body and say, for example, “I caught your arm” or “I caught your tummy”.
- Repeat the game, catching different parts of your child’s body.

Blowing Bubbles

- Blow one or two bubbles at a time.
- Name the part of the body (yours or your child’s) that the bubble lands on.
- Long lasting bubbles are great for this.

Books

- Choose books about babies, children, people and faces.
- Talk about the body parts and point out the same features on your child.

Further advice

If you have any concerns or questions about your child's communication development, please speak to their Speech and Language Therapist.



If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALS@ouh.nhs.uk**

Author: Sarah Kilcoyne, Principal Specialist Speech and Language Therapist
August 2018
Review: August 2021
Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Oxford OX3 9DU
www.ouh.nhs.uk/information

