



Southern Health
and Social Care Trust

December Communication Tips

Speech & Language Therapy Team

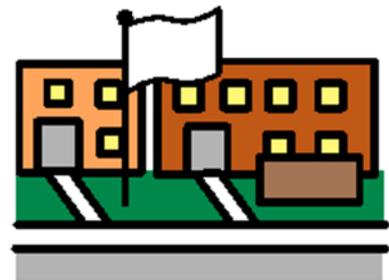
Christmas



speech therapy



school



Hello everyone and welcome to December! We hope you are all keeping well and looking forward to the Christmas break. As a Speech and Language Therapy team, we recognise that children all communicate in different ways and we want to give you some tips on how to encourage your child to develop their communication skills, their understanding and their vocabulary, during this winter season.

Here are some different ways that your child might communicate:

- PECS – If your child uses a PECS board, we have included some core ‘Christmas/Winter Vocab’ symbols, which you can cut out and add to your child’s PECS book.
- Core Boards/PIXON – If your child uses a PIXON board or a Core board, you can use the core ‘Christmas/Winter Vocab’ symbols to add to their fringe strips
- Makaton – If your child uses Makaton signing to communicate, you can have a look at our four new Makaton signs for this month. There are also some video links which give you more Makaton sign ideas for singing along to your favourite Christmas songs.
- If your child uses a voice output device then see if you or the SLT can add these core words onto the device
- If your child talks to communicate, you can still use all these communication ideas to help prepare your child for what happens in winter time as well as introducing them to new vocabulary or encouraging them to say words together.
- If your child does not use any of the above ways of communicating, you can use these resources to model simple language and show your child the visuals to help their understanding. We have also included some fun activities that you could do intensive interaction with your child.

Winter is such an enjoyable time of the year and we hope that these tips give you some ideas for how to encourage your child to feel that they can communicate effectively during the season activities. However, as a team, we really want to encourage you to use this communication tips all day every day, not just on Christmas day.

We will be sharing this leaflet with teachers, classroom staff and parents. We would love you all to send us some feedback on your thoughts of this month’s communication tips.

We hope you find these ideas useful and enjoy doing them at home with your child.

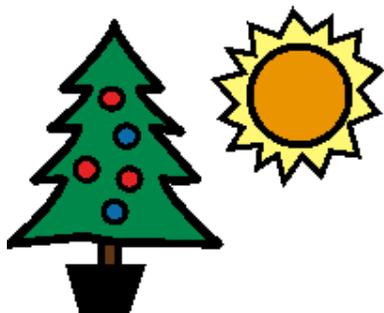
If you are not able to print this out, please get in touch with your child’s class teacher.

The Speech and Language Therapy Team

Christmas/Winter Vocab

Cut out these core symbols and use them either for your child's PECS book if they have one, or as visuals that you can bring with you when you are out and about. They can also be cut out and put on your child's PIXON/core board if they use one.

Christmas Day



Christmas tree



snowman



Santa Claus



gingerbread man



present



nativity



reindeer



wreath



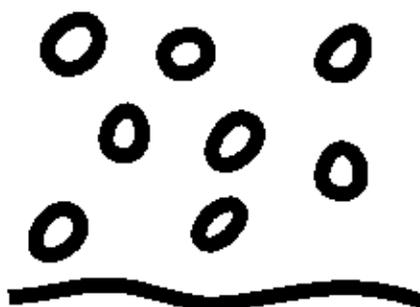
Christmas/Winter Vocab

These visual symbols can be used to prepare your child for what is happening this month e.g. use these visuals to explain when you are decorating the Christmas tree, listening to Christmas music or maybe even giving presents to family.

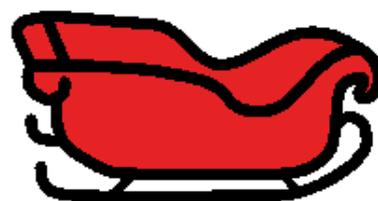
Jingle Bells



snowing



sleigh



angel



star



carol



Christmas card



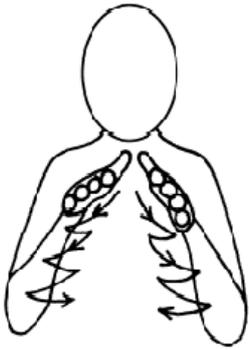
decorate



Christmas dinner



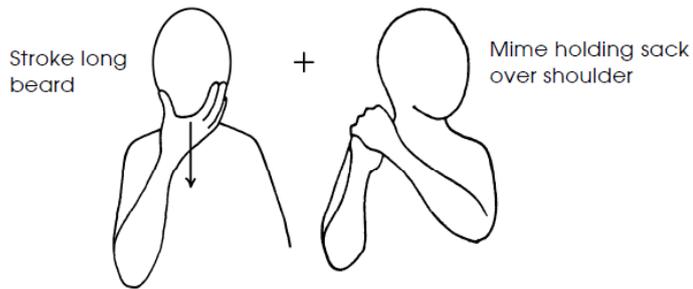
Makaton signs



Christmas tree



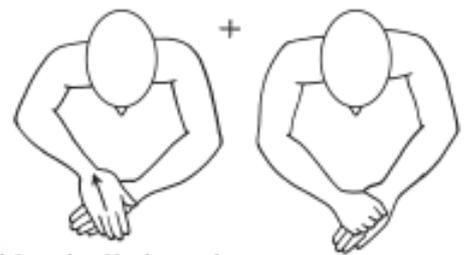
Snow



Father Christmas



Happy/Merry



Christmas

For more Makaton signs that go with Christmas songs, click on the link below:
[brighton_centre_concert - makaton_sheets.pdf \(downsjuniormusic.com\)](http://brighton_centre_concert_-_makaton_sheets.pdf)

Intensive Interaction / PIXON / Core board Activity

Play Snow Recipe

Combine 250g of cornflour with ½ cup of conditioner.

If it's too sticky add more cornflour, if it's too dry add more conditioner.

It should let you form it into little balls – try making a snowman!



Use this opportunity to chat to your child about different shapes, how the snow feels, how to build a snowman. Crumble it in your hands together. Make some snowballs and count them. You can use all this language on your child's PIXON board, if they have one. See some examples of how to do this below:

PIXON/Core board script:

- Do you **want** to **help** me?
- Let's **make** snow
- Are you **ready**?
- Let's **go**!
- You are a **good help**
- We are **all done/finished**
- **Look, I see** snow
- I **like** snow
- Will we **make more**?
- It looks **good/bad/silly**



This is also a great time to do some Intensive Interaction!

- Carefully watch what your child does or says and follow them as closely as possible.
- If your child pats the snow then you pat the snow!
- If your child lifts it up in the air to watch it fall then you do the same.
- The connection this builds will be enjoyable for both of you and of great benefit to your child's communication.

Decorating the tree together

Communication prompts:

As you decorate your Christmas tree together try to talk about the colours of the baubles, how the lights twinkle and what your child hopes Santa will bring. As well as talking try out some Makaton signs or model on the Core/PIXON board. All communication is welcome!

PIXON/Core board language to use:

The underlined words will be on your child's PIXON board if they have one, point to this word as you say it.

- Do you want to help / will you help me?
- Look, I see a Christmas tree
- It's a big tree / It's a little tree
- I like Christmas
- It's my turn / your turn
- Where will we put it?
- Let's put it here
- Will be put more on?
- The decorations are all gone
- We are all finished / stop
- It looks good
- I feel happy

decorate



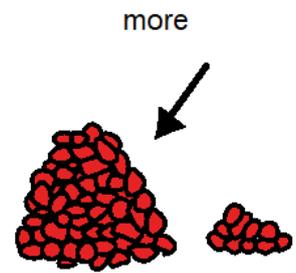
Christmas tree



Core Vocabulary Word of the Month

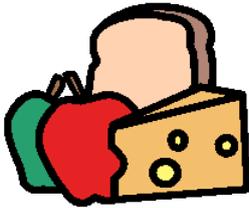
“More”

Activities where you can model “more” and encourage your child to use their AAC to communicate this to you usually include **giving things bit by bit** e.g.



food

Food

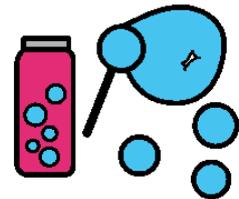


At snack or mealtimes give small portions of food. E.g. 1 crisp, 1 chocolate button, 1 half of sandwich, sip of juice.

Bubbles

Blow bubbles once. Blow again once they have communicated for more

bubbles



Puzzles

Give one piece and hold onto the rest. Give the next piece when your child communicates for more.

stacking toy



Stacking cups or blocks.

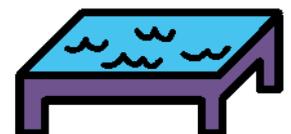
Begin to build a tower. Keep hold of all the pieces. Give a piece when your child communicates for more.

Water play

Put a tiny bit of water in the tray. You can pour more in when your child communicates for more.

water play

Don't forget you will have to point and model use of “more” before you can expect your child to do it. This stage of you modelling may go on for quite some time until your child points to the symbol themselves.



Once your child has learnt more you can model two word combinations with this e.g. more bubbles, more cars, more track, more juice, more please etc.