

## Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service

### Good Vocal Care

It's important to look after your voice. To support good vocal care children should be encouraged to follow the following advice -

- Try to reduce coughing and clearing the throat. Offer a sip of water to your child to encourage drinking instead.
- Make sure your child has access to water at all times and sip regularly to lubricate the voice box
- Avoid shouting across a room or talking over background noise when talking to your child and. Turn off background noise, use noise makers to alert attention or go nearer to your child so that a softer voice can be used. Encourage your child to do the same.
- Encourage your child not to use a whispered voice. If they have a sore throat, encourage, drawing, and taking and showing instead.
- Keep fizzy and caffeine based drinks to a minimum as these can dry out the voice box.
- Try to avoid your child speaking for long periods at any one time.
- Be aware that pollen and dusty environments can dry out the vocal folds.
- Encourage your child to have period of voice rest for 20 minutes each day e.g. during calm quiet activities, e.g. drawing, colouring, looking at books, construction puzzles, riding a bike etc. Play games where you can use miming and gesture instead.
- Encourage activities that help your child to relax e.g. listening to music etc.
- Identify times when your child shouts and look for ways to reduce these.
- Look for opportunities to show expressions on feeling without shouting using natural gesture and noise makers e.g. to attract attention or express anger.