

Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service

Lisp Advice Leaflet

What is a 'lisp'

A lisp happens when a child pushes their tongue too far forward between the front teeth so that the 's' and 'z' sounds are more like 'th'. For example, the word 'sun' might sound like 'thun'. This type of lisp is part of typical speech development.

What can I do to support my child's lisp at home?

There are lots of things you can do at home to help your child with a lisp:

- Model the right way to say a word, e.g. if your child says 'I want to wear the blue **thock**', you can say 'you want the blue sock?', using a clear 's' sound. This means that your child is hearing the right way to say the word.
- If your child is willing and able, use a mirror to demonstrate how the tongue stays behind the teeth when making a 's' sound and how it sticks out between your teeth when making the 'th' sound.
- Choose 4 or 5 simple 's' words that you and your child say lots each day. For example, 'sock', 'sandwich', 'soap', 'sit down' or any family/friends names starting with 's'. When saying these words talk about the 's' sound and emphasise it. Your child can have a go at copying you if they are ready, remembering to keep their tongue behind their teeth.

Remember that most children grow out of lisps when they are ready or motivated to make a change to their speech. Having a lisp is quite common and there is no need to work on this if it is not causing a difficulty.

You can find more information and demonstrations on the Cbeebies Parenting website: 'Is a lisp inevitable?'

To access this information click on the link or scan the QR code.



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