



ROLE SPEECH

A necessary component of make-believe play is that children take on and act out roles. One of the ways parents can support children is to help them use their pretend roles to *expand* their role speech—the kinds of things their role may say and do in different scenarios. In addition to the background building content discussed in the training, encourage families to try these tips to expand role speech with their children.

ENCOURAGE DRAMATIC PLAY

- Point out make-believe props that children can use as part of the play theme.
- Add details from stories and “real life” experiences related to the play theme.
- Help children imagine who they might pretend to be and who else is in their setting. Borrow ideas from storybook characters or virtual field trips (e.g., use your phone/camera to film a scenario to show children later).

CREATE DILEMMAS

- Add realistic or silly dilemmas for children to solve (e.g., the restaurant runs out of the food the customer is ordering).
- Brainstorm with children the kinds of things the different roles can do or say (or props they can use or create) to solve the dilemma.
- Encourage older children to think of a dilemma to solve.

EXTEND THE TALK

- Add new vocabulary and phrases, or teach children that they can explain, ask, or wonder aloud in their play.
- Use gestures or icons in make-believe play. This will help children who are non-verbal or have language delays communicate during their play.