

SPEECH BOX

LEGO PLAY: A FUN WAY TO BUILD COMMUNICATION SKILLS



LEGO can be used to help develop oral language and social skills!

LEGO play can help children:

- Follow instructions
 - Give directions and information
 - Improve vocabulary (e.g., using describing words and specific names of LEGO pieces)
 - Speak in full sentences
 - Understand and use adjectives (e.g., blue, small, big) and position words (e.g., between and behind)
 - Build relationships and work as a team
- Narzisi et al., 2021)

How to use LEGO to support communication skills

1. Choose a LEGO kit with instructions and all the pieces inside. Start with a simple kit and gradually move to more complex ones.
2. Assign roles to players (based on LEGO®-based Therapy for Social Skills). Roles can be switched each play session so everyone has a turn at a different job.
 - **Engineer:** Reads the instructions and describes which pieces are needed and where they go.
 - **Supplier:** Finds the correct LEGO pieces as described by the Engineer and gives them to the Builder.
 - **Builder:** Puts the LEGO pieces together according to the Engineer's instructions.

More ideas

Speech Practice: For example, if a child has difficulty with the "L" sound, encourage them to say words like "LEGO" often (e.g., "I need the blue LEGO, please," or "This is a long piece").

Following instructions: Start with simple LEGO instructions and gradually increase the number of steps (1, 2, or 3 steps). Use words like "next to," "on top," "before," and "after." For example, say, "Put the green LEGO next to the yellow LEGO."

Improve vocabulary and sentences: Help your child build their vocabulary and sentence skills by using LEGO play. Introduce them to specific names for different LEGO pieces and encourage them to use full, descriptive sentences when asking for pieces. For example, they could say, "Can I please have the red 2x4 plate?"

Social: A 'LEGO Club' can be formed. Children can communicate with others and build friendships. Encourage skills like problem-solving, patience, asking for help, and using kind words. Help them manage emotions by taking breaks and addressing any frustrations or sensory needs.



References

Lindsay, S., Hounsell, K. G., & Cassiani, C. (2017). A scoping review of the role of LEGO® therapy for improving inclusion and social skills among children and youth with autism. *Disability and health journal*, 10(2), 173-182.

Narzisi, A et al. (2021). Could You Give Me the Blue Brick? LEGO®-Based Therapy as a Social Development Program for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Systematic Review. *Brain sciences*, 11(6), 702.