Children are programmed to communicate as soon as they are born! The more words they hear from birth on, the greater chance they will have a strong vocabulary.

- Talk with your baby as you go about daily life.
- **Serve and Return**: Conversations between a parent and a child are best when the speaking bounces back and forth.
  - Hey Hugh! What are you drawing?
  - I’m Drawing a picture of us!
  - I see baby Leland here, tell me about him.
  - Us? I am excited to see it! Who is in the picture?
  - This is him holding a bottle of milk.
  - Me, you, Daddy, Laura and Leland!
  - I love how you added so much detail. Look! Laura even has a pretty bow in her hair!
- **Connect visual with the verbal** - help your child understand that pictures stand for objects and what looks like squibbles on a page to them are actually words.
- **Talk, listen, discuss and imagine** - Read books with your child and discuss the feelings and motivations of characters.
- **Encourage your children to talk ideas** - Give them opportunities to talk about their day, how particular event made them feel, what they thought about a book or event.
- **Promote expression in all forms** - Encourage your child to self-express using drawing, painting, dance, and acting.