

Being a Good Speech Model

(Strategies obtained from Apraxia Workshop presented by Cari Ebert, M.S., CCC-SLP)

- Use short, simple phrases
- Speak slowly and deliberately – clearly articulating each sound and syllable
- Repeat key words frequently
- Get down to child's level so he can see how you move your tongue and lips
- Use animated voice with lots of inflection to make words sound more interesting
- Simplify words to make them easier to say
- Prolong vowels and enunciate consonants
- Verbal shaping (want = wa; more = mo; juice = doo; bubbles = bubo; open = opuh; water = wawa) is not considered 'baby talk'
- When simplifying words, keep the integrity of syllableness intact
- Early on, the *use* of sounds and syllables is more important than *accuracy*
- Even when the child is struggling with sound production, don't allow child to get stuck at the single word level and don't forget about verbs. "dee wawa" for "drink water"
- Capitalize on naturally occurring teaching opportunities (Place desired item in sight but out of reach. Avoid doing things for the child that he has difficulty doing himself. Avoid anticipating the child's needs.)
- Remember auditory cues are not enough for kids with significant articulation errors or apraxia. These kids respond best to a multimodal approach using all senses.
- Praise him for any attempt at talking