

Teaching New Words to Children

- **Use interesting new words when talking with children. Explain what they mean.**

“Let’s race our toy cars. Whoops! We had a collision!” A collision is like a crash.”

- **Demonstrate what the word means, if possible.**

- With people, places or things: (balloon)

Show them the object. *“This is a balloon.”*

- With action and some other words: (skip, happy, under)

Act out the word. Say,

“I am going to skip. Watch me.”

“This is what I look like when I am happy.” Make a happy face.

“I am putting my hand under the chair.”

- With describing words: (smooth)

Show them something that is like the describing word. Show them a smooth rock and say, *“This rock is smooth. Feel this rock. It feels smooth.”*

- **Think of new ways to name a familiar item.**

Instead of *“Come and sit with me in the chair,”* say *“Come and sit with me in the recliner.”* You will introduce a new word and help children begin to understand that some things can be called by more than one name.

- **Try to turn the word into some kind of simple play activity.**

- Balloon: Blow one up and bat it around.

- Under: Hide things under tables, books, etc. and ask children to find them.

- Smooth: Let children pick up smooth rocks when they are on a walk.

- **Repeat the new word often during the day.**

- **Encourage children to say the word often: “Can you say collision?”**