

TIPS TO HELP YOUR CHILD HAVE A HEALTHY VOICE

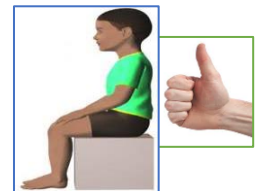
Just as parents encourage their children to brush their teeth to keep their teeth healthy, it is important that children learn how to keep their voice healthy. This is called **vocal hygiene**. When kids do the following things over a long period of time, their voice may sound hoarse, weak, or strained:

- Yelling, screaming, cheering, or crying
- Using funny cartoon voices
- Talking extremely fast or loud
- Coughing or clearing their throat repeatedly



Below are tips to keep your child's voice healthy now and in the future.

1. Encourage them to drink lots of water.
2. Encourage healthy habits, like eating a healthy diet, getting regular exercise, getting enough sleep, washing hands frequently.
3. Encourage them to rest their voice if they are sick.
4. Discourage them from overusing their voice in general.
5. They should avoid extremes—yelling, whispering, high pitch, low pitch, “funny voices”. They could use clapping, gestures, or other visual ways to show excitement.
6. They should avoid talking in noisy places or from a distance. If they need to communicate in these conditions, encourage them to use gestures or visual cues. If they need to get someone's attention, they should try strategies such as flicking a light switch or stomping their feet.
7. When they speak, encourage them to use good posture, and breathe from the diaphragm.



4	Shouting
3	Loud Voice
2	Speaking
1	Whisper
0	Silent

Visuals for using appropriate volume of voice

Visual cues can be helpful for providing feedback about the volume of someone's voice. See below for a sample voice meter. Start by demonstrating what each level sounds like, and what changes can be made, so that the feedback can be clear and meaningful.

Voice Meter Example by The Watson Institute.

Click the link for detailed instructions:

<https://www.thewatsoninstitute.org/watson-life-resources/situation/voice-meter/>

Sounds like...	
5	Yelling, screaming
4	Loud Talk
3	Normal Talk
2	Whisper
1	Silence

Remember...

- Be a good example. Make it a family rule to use “inside voices”/“normal voices” at home. Take turns when talking. If everyone waits their turn to talk, it will be easier to use an “inside voice”.
- Praise your child when they use good vocal hygiene! Tell them exactly what they are doing right, e.g., “Wow, you are using an inside voice and I really like it when you do!”.

VOICE METER

4	Shouting 
3	Loud voice 
2	Speaking voice 
1	Whisper 
0	Silent 