**Connecting and communicating: 7-17 months**

*This video shows how communicating with babies helps them learn language. When your baby makes sounds, you can show interest by responding or copying the sound. This encourages baby to learn to talk. When you use words like ‘throw’, ‘put’ or ‘make’, you can do the actions to teach what the words mean.*

[Mum sings ‘Old Macdonald Had a Farm’ and mimics what the child is saying]

Narrator: Mimicking is a great way to help your child start forming words. If he makes an animal noise, try making one back. If he is saying a word, try to guess it. By responding when your baby makes noises, you encourage your baby to learn to talk.

Narrator: Using action words like ‘throw’ and ‘put’ and ‘make’ are great for teaching your child about language. Hearing the words that go with actions can help your baby’s brain make the connection between words and their meanings.

[Mum and daughter getting toys out of a basket]

Mum: He blows air. He blows air. [Laughs] A ladybug. A big red ladybug. Look, touch it. Give him a kiss. Oh, that’s nice. He’ll like that.

[Mum and son play with a toy and Mum talks about the actions]

Narrator: Action words can be used in lots of situations. Your child needs to hear lots of different words and to hear them used in different ways. This helps your child to learn the meaning, as well as the sounds, of words.

Mum: And another one, up, over. One and ... two! All the different colours and pictures. See? Bunny rabbit in the hat.

Narrator: Your child is exploring the world around her. Letting your child take the lead gives her a sense of control, and encourages exploration.

[Mum and daughter sitting on the floor with a beaded toy]

Mum: ... and green. [Daughter shakes the toy] Give it a shake. Shake shake shake.

Narrator: Show interest and talk about the things your child shows you. Your baby thrives on your attention and will slowly start to understand what you are talking about.

Mum: Look. Red, blue, orange and green. Lots of different colours.