

Mixing Up Words: Overcoming Kid's Language Mistakes

Sometimes all of us get our words mixed up, but we can fix it up when we make mistakes! Kids can mix up words in a sentence when they are first learning to make longer sentences to request (e.g. 'I can have that please?' instead of 'Can I have that please?'). Often it means that kids make a statement when they are really meaning to ask a question.

Being able to request (ask for) something appropriately is important in our everyday lives. Kids need to:

- ask for things they want at school or to get help from an adult
- ask others for items in play when sharing with others
- build independence by learning to ask for things they might like to buy from the shop/school canteen or borrow from the library.

How can you help reduce this word order confusion in the home/classroom? Here's some helpful tips and tricks:

- Model the *correct* sentence structure to help your child hear the correct way of asking for something using 'please'. This means that when the child says an incorrect sentence (e.g. 'I can have the apple please?'), you can restate the sentence in the correct form (e.g. "You mean... 'Can I have the apple please?").
- Use pictures or items to represent each part of the sentence and point to each picture or item as you say the word in the sentence. This helps to show the child the order to say the words so that their question makes

sense (e.g. I've finished my milk (point to cup). Can I please have some more (point to the milk bottle)?”

- Play 'shop keepers' and practise asking for items one at a time using the correct sentence structure. Remember you may need to model the *correct* sentence first so your child knows what to say.

If your child is having difficulty requesting appropriately there may be other grammatical structures they are also finding difficult. A language assessment will tell you if there are areas that can be developed that will help your child be successful when they communicate with others. For more information on how to help your child, call a Kid Sense Speech Pathologist to make an appointment on [1800 KIDSENSE \(1800 543 736\)](tel:1800543736).

Contact us today to make an initial enquiry or book an assessment for your child on 1800 KID SENSE (1800 543 736)

