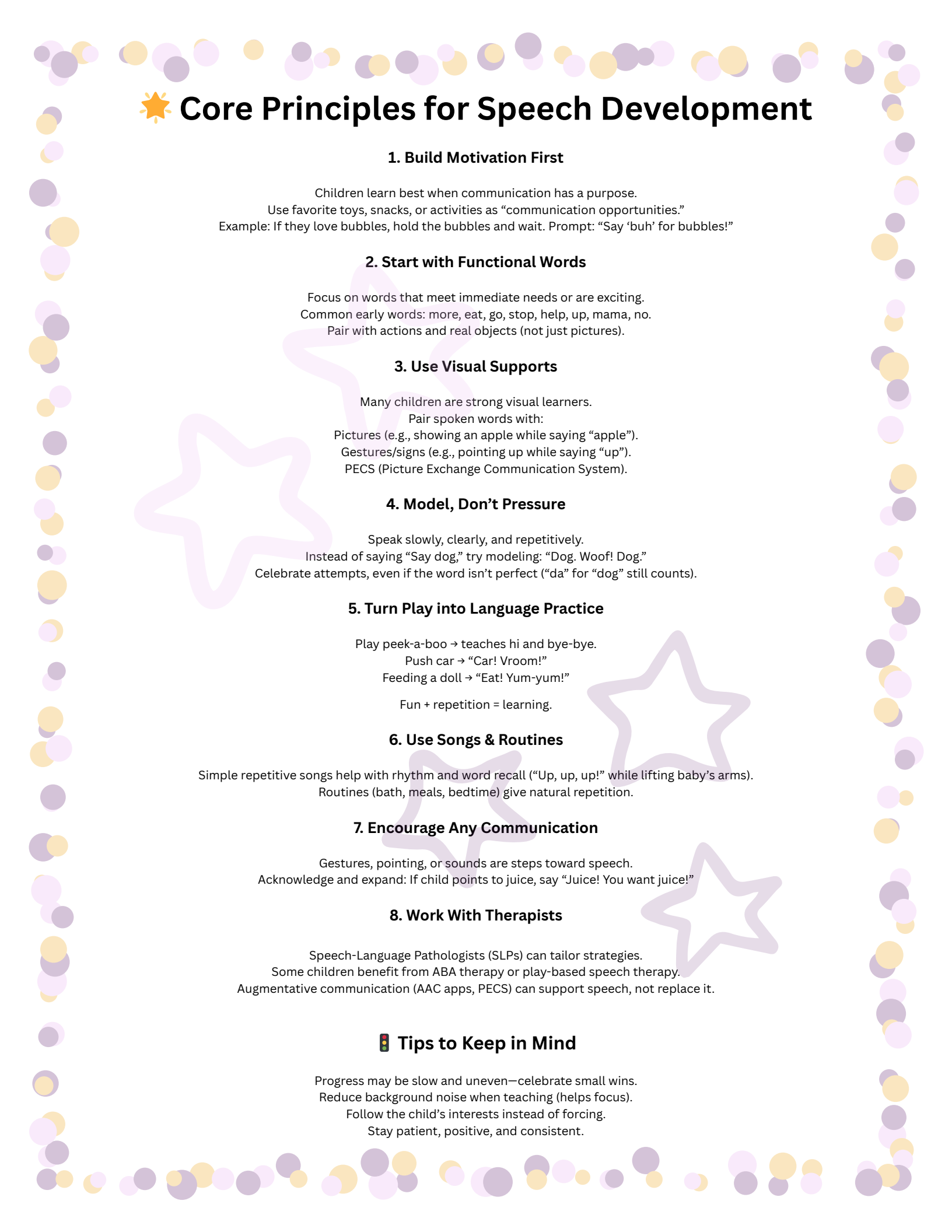




Core Principles for Speech Development

1. Build Motivation First

Children learn best when communication has a purpose.
Use favorite toys, snacks, or activities as “communication opportunities.”
Example: If they love bubbles, hold the bubbles and wait. Prompt: “Say ‘buh’ for bubbles!”

2. Start with Functional Words

Focus on words that meet immediate needs or are exciting.
Common early words: more, eat, go, stop, help, up, mama, no.
Pair with actions and real objects (not just pictures).

3. Use Visual Supports

Many children are strong visual learners.
Pair spoken words with:
Pictures (e.g., showing an apple while saying “apple”).
Gestures/signs (e.g., pointing up while saying “up”).
PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System).

4. Model, Don’t Pressure

Speak slowly, clearly, and repetitively.
Instead of saying “Say dog,” try modeling: “Dog. Woof! Dog.”
Celebrate attempts, even if the word isn’t perfect (“da” for “dog” still counts).

5. Turn Play into Language Practice

Play peek-a-boo → teaches hi and bye-bye.
Push car → “Car! Vroom!”
Feeding a doll → “Eat! Yum-yum!”

Fun + repetition = learning.

6. Use Songs & Routines

Simple repetitive songs help with rhythm and word recall (“Up, up, up!” while lifting baby’s arms).
Routines (bath, meals, bedtime) give natural repetition.

7. Encourage Any Communication

Gestures, pointing, or sounds are steps toward speech.
Acknowledge and expand: If child points to juice, say “Juice! You want juice!”

8. Work With Therapists

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) can tailor strategies.
Some children benefit from ABA therapy or play-based speech therapy.
Augmentative communication (AAC apps, PECS) can support speech, not replace it.

Tips to Keep in Mind

Progress may be slow and uneven—celebrate small wins.
Reduce background noise when teaching (helps focus).
Follow the child’s interests instead of forcing.
Stay patient, positive, and consistent.