



SpeakEasy Sandbox #46: Happy Birthday to Me

Preverbal

Activity: Wrap a present. Find some colorful, shiny paper, or decorate your own. Wrap up a few toys for your child to discover (these don't need to be new - just pick from what they already have, the wrapping will automatically make it exciting and new again!). Hand a present to your child and show them how they can **"OOOOPEN!"** This is great for language, engagement, taking turns, and fine motor skills!

First words

Activity: Have a birthday party! Stick some candles into a cupcake, a piece of fruit, or a playdoh cake. Sing to your child, or choose someone else in the room to sing to, and use a pointing gesture as you emphasize "YOU."
"Happy Birthday to YOU. Happy Birthday to YOU. Happy Birthday dear Mommy. Happy Birthday to YOU." You can add on even more by singing **"Happy birthday to ME!"** while each pointing to yourself.

Word combiner

Activity: Make a birthday crown. Your child can help decorate this with crayons, markers, stickers, glitter etc. Don't forget to offer choices and use pauses to help them participate more with their words! Take turns being the "birthday queen" or "birthday king." The king or queen gets to tell the others an action to do (like Simon Says): **"Birthday queen says JUMP!"**

Full sentences

Activity: Mail a birthday card! Set up a "mailbox" inside. Help your child write and/or draw a birthday message, then show them how they can label an envelope and put it in the box. Check the mail in your box together, and show your child how to look for their own name on the front of the envelope (you can point to the letters as you say them to build awareness, even if your child is not ready for reading yet). Don't forget to send a card back to your child!



Ask the OT:

Teaching your child to blow

1. Breathe into your hand to help your child understand the concept of air coming from the mouth.
2. Blow a small tissue that is held in your hand and watch it move together. Model, then let your child take a turn.
3. "Pre-blow" a bubble and catch it on top of a bubble wand, then show your child how to blow it off.
4. Try out those birthday candles! This takes a lot more breath control. Give a little extra help to round the lips with a thumb and finger on either side.

*The SpeakEasy Sandbox is a newsletter that provides the necessary tools to boost your child's speech and language development at home. **PLUS, find TONS more activities on our new app! Sign up at speakeasycommunity.com.***