Auditory-vocal communication requires the coordinated development of sensory and motor circuits around sounds that convey social information. When communication sounds are learned, the brain must use experience to build auditory and vocal motor circuits that are functionally coupled to perceive and produce the same acoustic signals. Unlike other animals, humans and songbirds learn the vocalizations they use to communicate. Behavioral studies of speech and song perception suggest that early vocal learning shapes auditory processing and perception for life. I will describe our research using songbirds to understand how early experience of vocal communication may shape the development of response selectivity and tuning in auditory cortex neurons.