



SoundStart

Lambton County Preschool Speech & Language Program

Tempting your Child to Talk

Sometimes young children are slow to use words because they don't have a need or a reason to communicate. The following activities set up situations that "tempt" young children to communicate! Ideally, your child will respond with a vocalization (any non-word sound) or a verbalization (any word or word-approximation). Your child may even give you a gesture or an action. Most children will send a message to us, although we may need to look closely! Respond to your child by saying for him what he would say if he had the words (i.e., if he hands you the bubble bottle and grunts because he can't open it, respond by saying something like "Open!".) Repeat these activities several times to give your child more practice. Don't withhold items, toys or activities to the point where your child gets frustrated. Communication is supposed to be fun! Model what you would like the child to say or do...then wait until you silently count to 10. Model again...then wait until you silently count to 10. If the child does not do or say what you had hoped, still share the item, toy or activity...then try it again!



Eat your child's favourite food item in front of them without offering any then wait for a response--then offer just one piece.



Activate a wind-up toy; let it run out then hand it to your child and wait for a response--then wind it up again.



Open a bottle of bubbles and blow some bubbles. Next, close the bottle tightly and give it to your child and wait for a response--then open the bubbles and blow some more!



Sing a song or play a social game with your child until he seems interested and excited, then stop the game and wait for a response--then sign or play again for one more turn.



Blow up a balloon and slowly deflate it. Next, hand the deflated balloon to your child OR hold the deflated balloon up to your mouth and wait for a response--then blow up the balloon again.



While your child is watching, place a favourite food item or toy in a clear container that your child cannot open. Give the container to your child and wait for a response--then open the container for the child.

(Adapted from Wetherby and Prizant, 1989)