

Children's Therapy and Family Resource Centre

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Create Opportunities for Talking

Sometimes children are very good at letting us know what they need or want without using words. To encourage kids to use their words, you may need to be more creative and set up opportunities for talking. For example ...

Asking For Something

- Place a favourite food or toy in a clear container that your child cannot open while they are watching. Put the container in front of them and wait.
- Put a favourite toy out of reach but still within sight so they will have to communicate with you.
- Blow up a balloon and slowly let the air out. Hand the balloon to your child or hold the balloon to your mouth and wait.
- Stop a favourite activity and see if your child will show you or tell you he would like to continue.
 - Ideas: bouncing your child on your knee, rolling a ball back and forth, blowing bubbles, playing "chase," reading one page of a book, etc.
- Start a wind-up toy, let it stop, and hand it to your child
- Sing songs with your child. After singing a song once or twice, stop part way into the song and see if your child will say the missing words.
- Roll a ball to your child. After the child returns the ball several times, immediately roll a rattle or another toy to them.



Getting Your Attention

- Give your child only part of what they need for an activity and then wait:
 - Ideas: a piece of paper without crayons, a bowl of soup without a spoon, a train track without the train, one shoe instead of both, a cup with no juice, etc.
- Do something surprising in front of your child and see if they respond:
 - Ideas: pour milk onto a plate instead of in a cup, put a shoe on your hand instead of your foot, put them in a bath with no water, put a coat on your legs instead of your arms, etc.



Do the unexpected to encourage talking!