

Ideas for increasing language during daily routines

When time is available and your child is not feeling rushed or overwhelmed, these ideas can help increase to your child's expressive language. These simple activities include *wait time* and cueing hierarchies which are strategies for increasing expressive language in children. Start off with trying to get one word or sound from your child then you can probe for your child to say longer statements by withholding items, modeling how you want him to ask for the items and waiting to give him what he wants until he makes a statement.

At the sink: while washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.

Goal: Using words to request

1. Place your child in front of the sink like you are going to wash his hands or help him brush his teeth
2. Instead of turning on the water, place your hand on the knob and *wait*
3. If he doesn't request, say "we need to turn the water on first."
 - a. If he says any word to request, then turn on the water and proceed to wash hands or brush teeth
4. If he doesn't request, say "water on?"
 - a. If he repeats your phrase or says any word to request, then turn on the water and proceed to wash hands or brush teeth
5. If he doesn't request or becomes overly frustrated, say "we need to turn the water on. I'll turn it on now" and proceed to turn on the water to wash hands or brush teeth.

At the table: while eating a meal or snack

Goal: Using words to ask for help

1. Place a food item in a container that is difficult for him to open without assistance
2. Place the container with food in it on the table in front of him
3. *Wait* to see if he asks for your help to open the container
4. If he doesn't, say "I can help you open that if you want"
 - a. If he says any word to request, then praise and open the container for him to get food items out of
5. If he doesn't respond, say "help open?"
 - a. If he repeats your phrase or says any word to request, then turn on the water and proceed to wash hands or brush teeth
6. If he doesn't ask for help or becomes frustrated, say "I will help you. I'm helping you open the container" and proceed to open the container and give him one food item or all items depending on if you would like to repeat the process

Goal: Using words to request a food/drink item

1. Give your child a choice between two items to drink or eat
2. Give him the names of each item (e.g., "do you want juice or soda?" or "do you want crackers or chips")
3. *Wait* until he responds with a word, gesture or pointing (depending on the language level) to give him the food/drink of his choice
4. If he does not make a choice, guide his hand toward the food item he is looking at and reinforce the name of the item by repeating it (e.g., "you want chips. yummy, these chips look good!").