

Communicating with Toddlers

Does your child have trouble communicating? These strategies may help facilitate communication:

The “one upper”

When your child says a word or a phrase, repeat the word or phrase, adding a word.

Example:

Child: bubbles.

Parent/Clinician: blow bubbles!

The narrator

Sit with your child as he/she is doing an activity. Narrate through that activity.

Example:

The child is playing with cars

Parent/clinician: Go car go! You have a green car. Your car is fast.

The withholder

While playing with your child, hold onto a toy you know he/she wants, so he/she can communicate to ask for it.

Example:

The parent is holding a ball.

Child: Ball, please!

*The goal is not to frustrate your child, but to manipulate the environment to encourage him/her to ask for things.

The rearranger

Rearrange a toy or desired object out of reach of your child, so he/she has to communicate to obtain the object

Example:

Parent/clinician puts doll on a high shelf

Child: I want doll!

The forgetful

Pretend to be forgetful during a routine that you and your child have established.

Example:

Parent/clinician starts to put on shoes without socks.

Child: I need my socks!

The pauser

During a familiar song, pause. This may encourage your child to fill in the blank.

Example:

Parent/clinician: Old McDonald had a _____

Child: Farm!

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