

# Home Strategies

## Routines

Where could you add simple directions, gestures, signs, silly sounds, word approximations to your daily routines?

## Mealtime

- Go to your chair (point or take him there at first, then fade to verbal direction only).
- “Want to eat?” Use the sign, and pause--encouraging to try.
- Offer a choice of foods, using the words “Do you want \_\_ or \_\_?” Try to wait for an attempt of either the word or sign. If only reaching or pointing is attempted, help with the sign or say the word again before giving it.
- During the meal, comment if something is “yummy” or “cold” or “hot”. Try blowing on the food, making silly sounds “mmmm”
- Keep the drink in sight, but out of reach (as well as any favorite foods). Encourage signs or word approximations to request.
- Encourage “more” sign and word to receive seconds. Also ask “Do you want more?”, and encourage a head nod for “yes” or “no”.
- Model the sign “all done”, and ask “Are you all done?” before wiping mouth.

## Getting Dressed

- This is a great time to work on body parts and simple directions. When changing a diaper, give the new diaper to your child, and ask “where’s diaper?” When you are ready for it, hold out your hand, and say “Give to me.”
- When pushing head or arms through shirt, ask “Where’s \_\_?” use your child’s name as well as each body part. When the hands come through the sleeve, try “give me five”. Later, try “give me your (hands, feet, etc).”
- This is also a great time for “I’m gonna get your \_\_” (belly, nose, eyes, mouth, etc). Be playful, and pause to see if your child covers that part of their body. Even ask “where’s \_\_”, then tickle the body part.



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## Favorite Play Routines

- Choose a time of day to give your child undivided attention for a few minutes. During this time, offer favorite toys or activities with a choice of two. Try taking turns with whatever the special activity is (bubbles, ball rolling, car pushing, etc), and maintain attention for a few minutes.
- Use this time to make comments using signs and simple words. Keep a portion of this time for pure enjoyment; no question asking or requiring performance in any way.
- After a period of time, try simple questions “where’s \_\_\_?” or directions “get \_\_\_” or “give to me”.
- Demonstrate what your words mean through your actions. “Hug the bear”, “Go, Car, Go!” “Your Turn” (giving the toy to your child, etc).
- Sing familiar songs, stopping when your child looks away, and pausing frequently to help with the motions or to encourage a sign or word to fill in the blank for participation.

## Bed time and Book Reading

- Whatever is part of your bedtime routine is fair game for simple directions and interesting comments.
- Instead of taking the object to the child, or taking the child to the object, try “Go brush your teeth” or “Go get a book”, and then use visual cues or gentle physical cues to help follow through.
- When reading books, take time to look at the pictures, pointing to key pictures when you say the word “Goodnight light and the red balloon”, “Goodnight bears, goodnight chairs, etc”
- Give choices of which book to choose next, and give your child a turn to “read” to you by turning to their favorite page or pointing to a favorite picture.
- Books that give simple directions or allow for child participation are wonderful “Pat the bunny” or Lift the flap, Turn the page, etc.

While you may already be doing many of these things, use this as an opportunity to think of new ways to up the ante a bit and challenge both receptive and expressive speech and language skills! Try not to turn speech and language into a power struggle, but keep communication both fun and engaging for your child!



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