

Supportive Steps: Expressive Language



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Model

Model language throughout the day. Use sentences at your child's level to show how to ask for something, reject something, or describing and commenting what they can see



Choices

Offer your child choices throughout the day, even if you already know what they want. For example, if your child points at the fridge to indicate they want milk, offer them a choice of “milk or juice”. Always label the items you have and try not to use language like “this or that”. Give your child whichever item they label / point to / look at, even if it is the “wrong” choice. If your child chooses “wrong” re-offer the same choice.

Requesting

Provide opportunities for you child to ask for “more” of something. For example, during snack time, give them 3 slices of apple and wait for them to indicate that they want “more”, then give them more while modelling “more apple”. You can do the same during play, for example, when completing a puzzle, the adult can keep hold of the puzzle pieces and give them one at a time.

**Find out more
here:**



Pause

Try to use the “5 second rule” to wait before modelling language to your child. Children can take longer to process than adults, so may need this time to think!



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Correct through modelling

Try not to tell your child what they said was “wrong”. If they use the wrong word or put words in the wrong order, model back what they were trying to say. For example, if your child says, “on chair... teddy sit” you could say “yes, teddy sits on the chair”.



Label and comment

When playing with toys or giving your child something, always label what it is. For example, when you give them their cereal in the morning, make sure you label “breakfast”. It is also useful to talk about what you and your child are doing. For example, if you’re making a drink, describe you how you “pour the water”, or if your child is on a trampoline, comment on how they’re “jumping, bounce bounce bounce!”.

Match plus one

When your child says something, model back what they’ve said and add *one* word. For example, if your child has requested “more cake”, you could model back “want more cake” or “eat more cake”. If your child says “car” you could add “blue car” or “car driving”.



Consistency

Make sure the language you’re using throughout the day is *the same*. For example, if you’re labelling a cup try to always call it a “cup” rather than calling it a cup or a glass or a beaker.



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