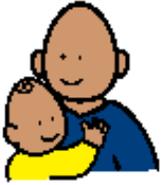


Golden Rules for Interaction (1)

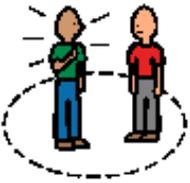
encourage eye contact



Encourage eye contact

Getting your child's attention and encouraging eye contact will help to develop two-way interaction and communication.

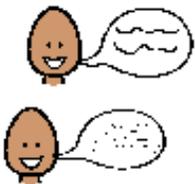
encourage turn-taking



Encourage turn-taking

Turn-taking is basic to interaction and communication, it is a social skill and requires consideration for others. Some children need to be taught how to take turns either non-verbally or verbally, perhaps using a motivating toy or activity. It is important to have realistic expectations of your child's turn-taking abilities, if s/he cannot take turns with one adult, s/he will not be able to take turns in a group of children. Use brief but regular opportunities during the day to practise.

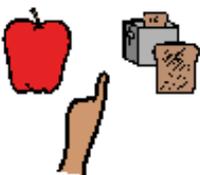
reduce your language



Reduce your language

Be detectives - identify your child's level of understanding and reduce your own language to match this, for some children this will be single words, for others it may be short sentences. As your child's understanding develops you can then increase the complexity of your own language.

give choices



Give choices

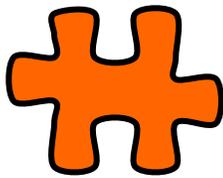
By giving your child a restricted choice, perhaps using objects/symbols, you can help him/her understand and respond appropriately. Rather than "What do you want to eat?" offer visual and restricted choices, "Do you want biscuit or apple?"

use your child's name

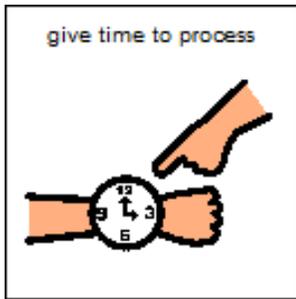


Use your child's name first, to get attention

You need your child's attention if s/he is going to understand what you say. Make a habit of using your child's name first and don't assume that s/he knows that "everyone/all" includes him or her.



Golden Rules for Interaction (2)



Give time to process – remember to wait.

Spoken language is difficult for some children to process; you need to give them extra time - sometimes counting to a particular number (five, ten, or even twenty) helps you to remember to wait and gives your child the extra time they need.



Use 'first and then'

A way to help your child understand the concept of time and sequence of events is to use the word "then" to link what will happen, e.g. "Shoes on, then coat, then play outside."

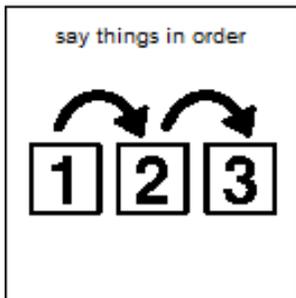


Use 'finished'

Unlike the word "NO", finished can be both positive and negative. Praise and reward your child when an activity is finished, e.g.

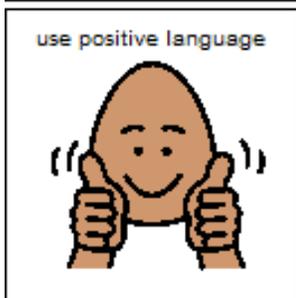
"Good boy, dinner finished, now ice-cream!" Once s/he understands the word in positive situations, you can use it more negatively to finish less desired activities or behaviours.

Accompanying the word with a sign may be useful for some children and will help develop a concept of time and a calm response to a change in activities.



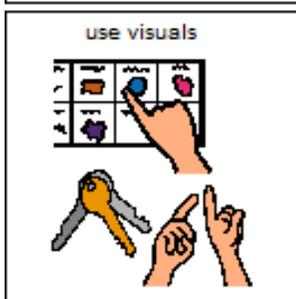
Say things in the order they will happen

Your child is likely to understand and do things in the order in which you say them, e.g. "Put your coat on, then go in the car, then go swimming," rather than, "We will go swimming if you put your coat on and get in the car."



Tell your child what to do rather than what NOT to do

Using positive language will help your child respond more positively to problematic situations. Avoid the tantrum-producing "NO" when possible, e.g. "Sit on the chair" rather than, "No! Stop jumping on the chair, you will break it."



Use visual ways to support understanding

Some children are visual learners so it is useful to use visual clues to help them understand. Tone of voice or facial expression are not generally helpful, but gestures, objects and symbols can support your verbal instructions and can be referred to repeatedly to check what was communicated.