

INCREASING COMMUNICATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

To encourage your child to make requests:

Offer choices wherever possible (if your child is pointing at the fridge you may ask “would you like milk or juice?”)

Put desired objects out of reach so your child has to ask for them.

Provide materials the children need help with but don't offer the help unless they ask. Withhold important elements of an activity (eg the ball to a ball game).

To encourage your child to request or ask for help:

Don't anticipate needs, e.g. leave a door closed instead of opening it and wait

Offer empty lunchboxes, cups

Fail to direct children to specific seats

Don't turn computer on if they want to use it.

Fail to turn on music or other equipment requiring adult input

Don't undo seatbelts on arrival at outings

After swimming, wait for children to ask for help when dressing

Fail to put out necessary objects for expected activities

To encourage your child to make choices:

Offer choices wherever possible throughout the day (e.g. choice of materials for activities)

Offer correct and incorrect items

Offer choices between two preferred items or activities

Offer choices between preferred and disliked items or activities

Offer choice to continue activity or finish

To encourage your child to ask for more:

Stop providing a desired item or activity

Stop part way through social interaction (eg playing games with your child or reading a book)

Give small portions of snacks

Turn off music halfway through song

To encourage protests or refusals:

Offer undesired activities, materials or food

Continue an activity past allocated time or past child's interest (encourage child to ask for stop or finish – model saying 'no' in an acceptable way)

To encourage a child to ask for attention:

Deliberately look away and get a 2nd adult to prompt “get attention” behaviour (e.g. tap arm)

To encourage a child to make comments:

Contradict expectations – do something unexpected in routine activity (eg deliberately make a mistake when reading a much loved book)

Give unexpected consequences (eg change the ending to a much-read book)

Be dramatic

To encourage problem solving:

During familiar scenarios, offer choice of correct and incorrect materials (e.g. whilst cooking, at mixing stage offer cup and spoon, encourage pointing/choosing)

Offer two items (e.g. child’s own hat or bag and someone else’s)

Whilst dressing, offer incorrect item first (e.g. shoes before socks)

