

## Reasons to Communicate

### Why do children need reasons to communicate?

All children and most adults need motivation (a reason to do something). Children are more likely to be motivated to communicate if the adult captures their interest and the activity is relevant to them and exciting.

### Creating opportunities to communicate across the day?

There is a wide range of different ways children can communicate. Some use talk, some use single words, some make sounds, and some will just reach or point for things they want. It is important that we know what communication skills your child is using and what is their preferred way of communicating. We need to seek out opportunities to give your child a reason to communicate. For example, we need to avoid interpreting what your child wants and giving it to them before they have had chance to communicate what it is they want. Below are some strategies to create opportunities or reasons to communicate.



### Out of reach

Put the child's favourite toys, teddies, and activities in sight but out of reach. Instead of getting it themselves and playing with it they will have to communicate what it is they want before playing with it, this may be by standing by it, pointing, or looking at it or saying the name of the item they want.

### Motivational toys that will need adult help.

Blowing bubbles, blowing up balloons and letting them go, windup toys, pop up toys and music. These are all toys and activities that the child might need help playing with. The idea is to pause once you have made the toy work giving the child the opportunity to communicate the need for the play to continue.

### Holding back

If the child really likes puzzles, posting games and certain foods, instead of giving them all the items at once, gather the spare pieces or the food and give them one bit at a time, waiting and pausing for them to communicate they would like more. There are lots of opportunities throughout the day where this strategy can be used.

### Offering a choice

Always offer the child a choice of two items instead of giving them the same thing, even if you know which one they will choose. You could hold two choices in front of them and encourage them to point to the item they want.



For more ideas and games to play see the book "Motivate to Communicate" by Simone Griffin