

Supporting Communication - Requesting

A child working at the requester stage of communication is able to understand that their actions can have an effect on others e.g. by pulling or leading an adult by the hand they are able to communicate what they want and gain the object they need.

See 'Reasons to Communicate**' (Useful Tips)*

A child may ask for things by:

- Looking at you/eye gaze
- Smiling and other facial expressions
- Handing you an object
- Placing your hand on an object
- Pulling or leading you by the hand towards something
- Making a sound/ vocalising
- Making a gesture, action or signing (MAKATON)
- Pointing to an object
- Saying a word
- Using words and sentences

Teaching successful requesting (functional communication):

- Find the child's favourite activities/ toys/foods
- All adults to use a consistent word to label the item e.g. '*bubbles*'
- Provide first one free! - Adult blows bubbles placing no demands on child to try and interact or request- This also helps determine how motivated they actually are in what has been chosen
- Model word clearly and wait, repeat a second time and wait allowing for processing/ responding time- if no response reward with bubbles (their desired item); if they attempt some form of request reward with bubbles- After blowing bubbles, put the wand away and set the bottle down and wait/prompt the child to ask for more bubbles (e.g. using hand over hand approach to teach strategy), blow bubbles as reward – *It is really important that adults build in the pause/ wait time to allow the child time to respond/ initiate*
- If after a few repeats this is not working change the toy/ activity, speak with parents to see if there is anything in particular that might really interest the child. Adults to actively promote, model and teach concept of ***asking/ requesting more*** through use of MAKATON sign and spoken word applying it at snack times and during all play opportunities
- Respond quickly to all verbal/ non-verbal methods used by the child as forms of communication, some may be more subtle in nature than others
- **Use the 'interpreting strategy'** and reinforce by marking the object aloud such as 'you wanted Bubbles' placing emphasis on the desired item
- **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** - For detailed information about supporting children at different stages of the requesting process see: [Help Your Child Ask For What They Want \(southwestyorkshire.nhs.uk\)](http://southwestyorkshire.nhs.uk)

Links to EYFS: Communication & Language, Personal Social & Emotional Development

SEND Code of Practice: Communication & Interaction, Cognition & Learning, Social Emotional & Mental Health