



7 STRATEGIES TO

IMPROVE

COMMUNICATION



# POWER OF COMMUNICATION

Teaching your child the POWER of communication is the foundation  
for building communication skills

# ASD COMMUNICATION → BEHAVIOR



Autism primarily affects communication;  
lack of Communication leads to behaviors,  
Behaviors are communication!

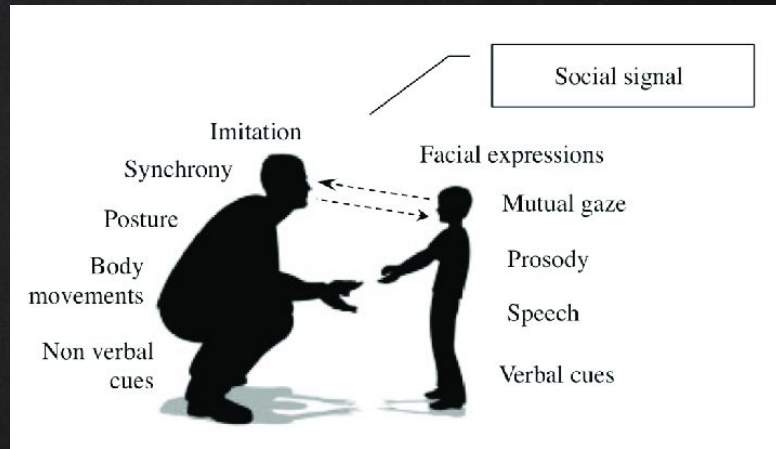
**YOUR CHILD'S CURIOSITY CAN  
LEAD TO MANY  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
COMMUNICATION!**





# Principle: 1

## Acknowledge your child's nonverbal attempts to communicate







## (2) CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF COMMUNICATION WHILE YOUR CHILD BUILDS VERBAL SKILLS

- ✗ Basic Sign Language
- ✗ Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
- ✗ AAC (Augmentative Alternative Communication) device (android/ios app)

COMMUNICATION is Key!

## ALWAYS THINK ABOUT....

- ? What is my child trying to Communicate (verbally or nonverbally)...
- ? What alternate methods can I introduce @ home while we are building verbal communication skills



# STRATEGIES TO INITIATE COMMUNICATION

You can embed these practices in your day-to-day-schedule





## (1) FOLLOW YOUR CHILD'S LEAD IN ORDER TO FACILITATE SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

- ✗ Get on the floor with your child while they play
- ✗ Use your child's "special interest" to motivate joint attention
- ✗ Join in when they engage in sensory seeking behaviors



Allow your child to "invite" you into their activity, then engage.



## (2) SIMPLIFY YOUR LANGUAGE & MODEL VERBAL SPEECH IN ORDER TO BUILD VOCABULARY

\*Keep it simple



Speak to your child in 3–5 word phrases,  
using keywords, and basic concepts;

Examples:

“You want a cookie?”

“Get the red car”

\*Model communication



Make a conscious effort to model verbal  
language skills for your child

Examples:

“it’s a big ball”

“Look under the table”



### (3) CREATE OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE DAY FOR YOUR CHILD TO PRACTICE COMMUNICATION

#### Snack time

\*You can create 6-10 opportunities for communication during snack time!

#### Turn-taking

\*Simple turn-taking games build basic communication skills

\*Interact with your child

\*Include your child in family activities

#### Requests

\*Structure the environment so that your child does not have access to their preferred items.

\*Don't act as if your child is not "in the room"...

your child is always listening!



## (4) ALWAYS ASSUME YOUR CHILD HAS SOMETHING TO COMMUNICATE

- ✗ Provide opportunities for Choice-Making
- ✗ Reinforce verbal approximations
- ✗ Acknowledge your child when they enter a room

Just because a child is nonverbal, does not mean they don't have something to 'say'

## (5) REINFORCE COMMUNICATION “ATTEMPTS”

When your child demonstrates the any form of appropriate communication, reinforce!

Be consistent

Biggest mistake is when parents take communication attempts for granted





## (6) USE VISUAL SUPPORTS TO HELP WITH PROCESSING AND WORD RECALL



A complex idea can be conveyed with just a single still image, often visual information can be processed easier than auditory information.

## (7) USING SIGN LANGUAGE WHILE MODELING VERBAL SPEECH

Extra layer of Modeling

Promotes generalization

Words change but sign language conveys the same message  
(Useful for Bilingual families)