

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!

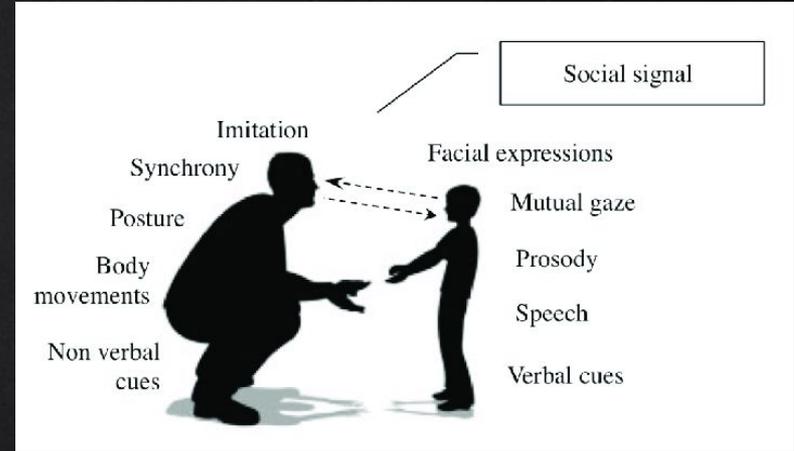


**YOUR CHILD'S CURIOSITY CAN
LEAD TO MANY
OPPORTUNITIES FOR
COMMUNICATION!**



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)