

FACILITATING LANGUAGE PRODUCTION



If you have concerns that your child's language is not developing at an appropriate rate, the first step is to get an evaluation from a licensed speech-language pathologist. If your child is demonstrating signs of a language delay, here are some ways to help facilitate language in the home environment.

★ Place desired items (toys, sippy cup, a favorite food, etc.) in view, but out of reach. When you see signs that your child wants a given item, and they do not make a verbal request independently, ask them what they want. If they still are not able to tell you, give them a verbal choice of two items. Reward the child with the item when a verbal attempt is made. Your child does not need to say the word correctly; they just need to make an attempt to say the word.

★ Focus on FUNCTIONAL action words. Some examples of these are: want, go, open, more, put, up, down, again, help, on, off. Try to focus on functional nouns as well (ex. shoe, cup, water, etc.). While it can be tempting to work on animals, shapes, and colors, etc. remember the goal for now is for your child to use functional and meaningful words to communicate with you.

To learn more, visit www.facebook.com/franklycomm

★ Reduce your number of verbalizations when specifically trying to get your child to request something - even if this means long periods of silence. It is important for your child to learn that communication results in a desired action. If you do all of the talking for them, they really have no reason to *want* to communicate more. For example if you say, "Do you want the cookie? Yes? You do? OK, here is the cookie." This shows your child that they can receive a cookie without asking, so they have little reason to use words to request another one in the future.

★ Provide linguistic mapping. This is where you use simple language to translate a child's non-verbal intention. For example, if a child holds up their toy car respond by saying something like, "That is a car. Vroom vroom!"

Please note that these recommendations are not meant to replace those of your speech-language pathologist or personal physician. They are most effective when used in conjunction with individualized treatment sessions provided by a speech-language pathologist.