

### Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or [whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net)

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please email [whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net](mailto:whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net). We will try our best to meet your needs.

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**Speech and Language Therapy**

## **Creating Opportunities for Communication**

**A guide for Parents/Carers**



As adults, we often anticipate children's needs because we want the best for them and want their needs to be met. However, if we always anticipate their needs, they do not have a reason to communicate with us. We can create situations that encourage communication in lots of different ways.

### Using bubbles:

- Open the bubbles & blow a few.
- Once your child is interested & is looking/popping the bubbles, close the pot.
- Wait until your child asks you, in some way, for you to blow them again.



### Placing things out of reach:

- Put your child's favourite toy/food somewhere they can see it but not reach.
- Wait for them to request that they want it. This may be by eye contact/pointing/sign/words.

### Using balloons:

- Blow the balloon up & then let it go.
- Retrieve the balloon & wait for your child to ask you to blow it up again.
- As you are blowing you can pause & wait for them to ask for you to blow it again.



### Offering choices:

- Give your child a choice of two items at snack time/when playing e.g. "apple or banana?".
- This allows you to model the language & your child an opportunity to communicate their choice



### Give toys/food bit by bit:

- When playing with toys that have pieces/parts, hold items back & give them to your child one at a time.
- Give your child a little bit of food/drink at a time e.g. only one crisp.
- Wait for your child to request that they want more.

### Using books:

- Look through a book a few times & name the same pictures each time.
- Once your child is familiar with the book, point to one of the pictures & say nothing, wait for them to communicate in some way either by naming it or looking at you to name it.

### Singing:

- When singing familiar nursery rhymes, stop & wait at a particular point, waiting for your child to communicate that they want the song to continue or fill in the gap.

### Creative stupidity – do something silly

- When giving food – give a yoghurt without a spoon/ unopened crisps/cup with no juice & wait for your child to communicate that something is missing.
- When dressing your child 'accidentally' put an item of clothing on wrong e.g. sock on hand & wait for them to communicate something is wrong.

**REMEMBER: ACCEPT YOUR CHILD'S COMMUNICATION WHETHER IT IS EYE CONTACT, POINTING OR A SPOKEN WORD BUT ALWAYS MODEL A VERBAL REQUEST BACK**