



Parent Tip Sheet

Language Pragmatics

The social aspects of language, called pragmatics, include the ability to state needs, give commands, and express feelings.

For children to develop social relationships and negotiate their social environment, pragmatic language skills are necessary. Using language to interact appropriately with others, to understand and share their knowledge and imagination is vital to a child's language and social development.

Two aspects of language that are often the most difficult for children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing are 1) pragmatic language development and 2) expressive syntax (sentence structure). Even when your child may understand and can say the same amount of words at the same age as other children; and you can understand what your child says/signs, he or she may have not yet developed these skills.

After children have mastered basic skills to be understandable (phonology), have enough vocabulary (semantics), and sentence structure (syntax), children will use this combined knowledge to reach social goals.



- ✓ Identify daily opportunities for your child to state his or her needs; give commands; and express feelings.
- ✓ Model and foster using language to interact with others; request and provide explanations; and demonstrate shared understanding.
- ✓ Provide your child with the language to express their needs.
- ✓ Ask your child to teach the family how to play a game.
- ✓ Help your child understand the differences regarding appropriate social language for adults and peers, as well as familiar and new communication partners.
- ✓ Dig deeper into your child's understanding of social situations.
- ✓ Ask your child to tell you stories about things you, as the parent already know, to help with missing pieces.
- ✓ Tell jokes, say absurd things, play with humor and sarcasm.
- ✓ Ask questions using the 5 W/H words (What, Where, When, Why, How) instead of just yes or no questions.
- ✓ Follow your child's lead and pace in conversational turn-taking.



*Share these with your Early Intervention providers/parent to parent support providers who have experience with children who are deaf or hard of hearing and discuss ideas on how to implement these tips with your child. <https://handsandvoices.org/fl3/topics/tipsheets.html>

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Family Activity Plan

Language, Literacy and Social Emotional Skills

Eight Parent Tip Sheets have been made for you, families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH). These Tip Sheets can help you help your child grow skills like thinking, making friends, feeling confident, learning language, and beginning to read.*

Hang the Tip Sheets and this Activity Plan on your refrigerator to create fun, playful ways to include learning in your child's day!

Skills* I Want to Work On with my Child:

- ☐ Cognitive
- ☐ Early Literacy
- ☐ Social Emotional
- ☐ Visual Language
- ☐ Phonology
- ☐ Pragmatics
- ☐ Syntax and Morphology
- ☐ Semantics

What are my Child's Strengths and Interests?

Fun Activities I Can Plan:

Timing of Our Activity**:

What Went Well? What Needs More Work?

Questions for Our Providers:

* <https://www.handsandvoices.org/fl3/topics/tipsheets.html>

**Days of week/time of day/regular routine such as "morning wake up," "story time," "playing outside," "getting ready for bed," "mealtime," "bath time," etc.