

Communicative Temptations

Communicative temptations create a reason for a child to communicate. They allow opportunities for initiation. Good ways to provide communicative temptations are to interrupt an established routine, “forget” to do something, or make desired items inaccessible. Some suggested activities are listed below.

1. Give the child part of their food or drink and wait or eat a desired food in front of them without offering any to them.
2. Interrupt an established routine and wait for their response.
3. Initiate a familiar game with the child until they express pleasure, then stop.
4. Open a jar of bubbles, blow bubbles, then close the jar tightly and hand it to the child.
5. Blow up a balloon and slowly deflate it. Hold the deflated balloon up to your mouth and wait or hand it to the child and wait.
6. Get the child interested in an activity that requires an instrument to complete, ex. A crayon for colouring, a spoon for eating, a wand for blowing bubbles. Have a third person come and take the item away and go to sit on the other side of the room within the child’s sight. Wait.
7. Offer the child a food or toy that they dislike.
8. Activate a windup toy, let it run down, then hand it to the child.

Adapted from Prizant and Wetherby, “Communicative Temptations”, “International Communicative Behaviour of Children with Autism: Theoretical and Practical Issues”. Australian Journal of Human Communicative Disorders, 13, 2, 1985 (pp 42, 43). And from “Sabotage” handout, CTC, 1998.