

Communicative Temptations

from Wetherby &
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When trying to help your child to actively participate in communication, there has to be a need, an opportunity, and a reward for his or her efforts. Communicative Temptations are a way to make sure that these three things happen.

One of the most important things that we can do to assist in a child's development of communication, is to not anticipate his or her needs/wants. By not anticipating, you give your child an opportunity to show what s/he needs/wants. If the need is then fulfilled, there is a great chance that your child's efforts will be rewarded, and that s/he will try the communication method again. Your child can learn to be an active communicator, not a passive communicator.

1. Eat a desired food item in front of your child without offering any to him or her.
2. Activate a wind up toy, let it deactivate and hand it to your child.
3. Give your child four blocks to drop in a box one at a time (or use some other action that your child will repeat, such as stacking the blocks or dropping the blocks on the floor), then immediately give your child a small animal figure to drop in the box.
4. Look through a few books with your child.
5. Initiate a familiar and an unfamiliar social game with your child until s/he expresses pleasure, then stop the game and wait.
6. Open a jar of bubbles, blow bubbles, then close the jar tightly. Hand the closed jar to your child.
7. Blow up a balloon and slowly deflate it. Hand the deflated balloon to your child or hold the deflated balloon to your mouth and wait.
8. Hold a food item or toy that your child dislikes out near your child to offer it.
9. Place a desired food item or toy in a clear container that your child cannot open while your child is watching. Put the container in front of your child and wait.
10. Place your child's hands in a cold; wet or sticky substance, such as jello, pudding or paste.

11. Roll a ball to your child. After your child returns the ball three times, immediately roll a rattle or a toy on wheels to him or her.
12. Engage your child in putting together a puzzle. After your child has put in 3 pieces, offer your child a piece that does not fit.
13. Engage your child in an activity with something that can be easily spilled (or dropped, broken, torn, etc.). Suddenly spill some of the substance on the table or floor in front of your child and wait.
14. Wave and say "bye bye" to a toy upon removing it from the play area. Repeat this for a second and third toy, and do nothing when removing a fourth toy. These four trials should be interspersed throughout the other temptations, rather than be presented in a series.
15. Hide a stuffed animal under the table. Knock, then bring out the animal. Have the animal greet your child the first time. Repeat this for a second and third time, and do nothing when bringing out the animal for the fourth time. These four trials should also be interspersed when presented.
16. Put an object that makes noise in an opaque bag and shake the bag. Hold up the bag and wait.
17. Give your child the materials for an activity of interest that needs an instrument for completion (e.g., piece of paper to draw on or cut; bowl of pudding or soup). Hold the instrument out of your child's reach and wait.
18. Engage your child in an activity of interest that needs an instrument for completion (e.g., crayon for drawing, spoon for eating, or wand for blowing bubbles). Have a third person come over and take the instrument, go sit on the distant side of the room, while holding the instrument within your child's sight and wait.