



STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT ENGAGEMENT AND INTERACTION

HELP YOUR CHILD SAY MORE WORDS, MORE OFTEN!

OWL – Observe, Wait, Listen

- Observe what your child is interested in, follow their lead, be face to face
- Wait, stop talking, count to 5 to give your child more time to initiate
- Listen, pay close attention to your child's sounds, words and actions



Create Opportunities for your Child to Lead

- Communication temptations: offer a little bit, then wait... offer a choice, then wait...
- Follow your child's lead: imitate their facial expressions, sounds, words and actions
- Interpret: put into words what you think your child is trying to tell you or say it as they would if they could
- Comment: make a short comment that matches what your child is doing or saying at that moment (including a variety of words – action words, describing words etc.)
- Expand: your child's message, imitate what they say and add a few words

Taking Communicative Turns

- Routines within people games (e.g. peek-a-boo, chasey, tickles, action songs) can be great opportunities to allow your child an opportunity to initiate communication
- The repetitive, predictable nature of routines are a facilitative context for language learning
- Treat any reaction – like a wiggle, a smile, a reach or a sound – as if the child has taken their turn in the conversation
- Be enthusiastic and use fun sounds and gestures!

R – Repeat what you say and do. You might have to play the game several times, using the same actions and words so that your child understands how the game works and what to expect.	E.g. Before starting say: Let's sing 'row your boat!' and offer your hands out for your child to hold to row them back and forth
O – Offer your child an opportunity to take a turn during the routine to keep the game going, pause and wait expectantly to allow your child time to respond (e.g. make a sound, move their body, use a word)	E.g. When you get to the end of the song emphasise the word 'scream!' then tickle your child. Repeat the song and the next time you get to the end, pause and wait...
C – Cue your child if they aren't sure what to do (after waiting at least 5 seconds), point or gesture, model what they might do or say	E.g. Gesture 'tickle' hands, model saying 'scream!' (you could also model the sign and word 'more')
K – Keep it going and keep it fun! Try to read your child's body language to ensure they are enjoying the interaction and do not want it to stop.	The goal of people games is for your child to play with you in a back-and-forth interaction that involves you both taking turns.