Early social communication skills

Creating Communication Opportunities

Activities and strategies to try:

It is important to create communication opportunities to encourage requests and interaction.

- **Choices.** Offer the child choices at many different times in the day, like snack time or during play. Using objects show them one "do you want ball….." then show them the other "or bubbles" then hold both objects out in front of them and let them choose, always name the one they choose. Encourage them to scan both items first.
- **Giving items in small amounts.** Give the child a small amount of drink/food or one item at a time so that they have to ask or indicate they want more. You could do this with toys in a box or a bag, give them one at a time to encourage them to indicate they want more. It is important that they can see that more is available.
- **Do the unexpected.** Do things the child wouldn't expect, like putting a banana in a cup rather than a drink! See if they can indicate in some way that it's wrong.
- **Wait before helping.** Wait for the child to indicate they need help with everyday tasks like putting their coat on. Position yourself next to the child to indicate that you are there to help. Allow time for the child to give an indication that the need help before stepping in to help. Waiting before helping provides the child with the opportunity to indicate they need help (e.g. bring a cup to you).



Accept any form of communication the child displays even if this is not verbal e.g. reaching for you or the object, using eye contact or giving you the object . Always model the name of the word or action.

Measuring progress: The child is able to make requests more consistently. Help them generalise these skills by using these strategies with a variety activities.

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