



Use Signals to Keep the Conversation Going

Signal Silently

Our facial expressions and actions can show our children that we are waiting for them to take a turn. We can:

- open our eyes wide with anticipation. Raise an eyebrow or wink to signal that we expect something.
- smile to encourage our child and show her that we believe she can come through with her turn.
- silently mouth the word we want our child to say, and then wait.
- lean toward our child to show her that she has our focus and our interest.

Signal with Words

Our voice and our words can also let our children know what we expect of them. We can:

- say things like "Look" ... "Okay" ... "your turn" ... "What's happening now?".
- repeat what we have said with a questioning intonation or louder.
- say the same thing in a different way. "Katie want to go for a walk with Mommy?" Then "Katie go outside to see flowers?"
- change our question to a statement. "Is Tyler hungry?" Then "Tyler wants an apple."
- change our comment to a question. "It's time to take a bath." Then "Katie want to play in the tub?"
- shorten the message. "Is Tyler feeling a little hungry?" shortened to "Want a cookie?"