

# Dealing with Frustration

by Judith M. Creighton, Ph.D.

## Introduction

Frustration is the angry feeling that develops when we can't have what we want. Everyone knows what it's like to be frustrated. Children with speech and language problems are often frustrated.

It's not easy to deal with your child's anger and frustration. But your child needs your guidance about what to do with angry feelings. The best time to talk with your child about how to deal with anger is when you are both feeling friendly. Try the following methods to help your child learn to manage anger and frustration.

## Share your ways of dealing with anger.

First, your child needs to know that you get angry, too. Explain what you do to keep from showing anger in dangerous or foolish ways. Start by talking about the last time you felt frustrated. Tell what you wanted to have happen, what did (or did NOT) happen, and how you felt. Bring up the issue of your child's anger carefully and matter-of-factly. Ask your child to talk about the last time the child felt angry. What did your child want to have happen? What did happen? How did your child feel? How was the feeling expressed?

Try to help your child identify successful and not-so-successful ways of expressing anger. Be honest about your own anger. It really helps children to know that their parents are not perfect. Also try to help your child recognize the kinds of situations which are likely to cause anger. Point out how you prepare for difficult situations. Talk about the times when your child handled problems without getting angry. What did your child do to "keep cool?"

## Help your child learn control words.

A child with speech and language disabilities is often made to feel like a second-class communicator. People may consider your child babyish, stubborn, or stupid for "not getting the idea." Other children can be particularly cruel. They are more likely than adults to deliberately shame or avoid your child.

Your child needs to practice some control words until they are known very well. Some of these are: "Stop!" "Wait!" "My turn!" or "Me, too!" If your child can't form these words, find other ways to express the message. A simple "No" with some gestures may do the trick.

Your child also needs to have some social words ready. In order of importance, these may be: "Thank you." "I like you." "I don't like it." "This is fun."

## Provide opportunities for successful play with other children.

Speech and language delayed children need good humor, persistence, AND some play materials which other children enjoy. Show your child and describe in words the meaning of good humor and persistence. Find play materials for your child that don't require a lot of language for successful use. Tell other children that your child is trying very hard to be a friend. Make your house and outdoor play area inviting so children will come into your child's territory. You can be nearby to help resolve problems.

## Help your child prepare for possible frustrating interactions.

Adults who interact with your child can create more complicated problems. Few adults would openly admit to negative feelings about a child with a disability. But, many adults are short-tempered with such children. Some adults tend to talk down to a child with any kind of delay. Finally, some adults are cruel but will say, "I didn't mean it" or "I was just kidding" if you challenge their behavior.

Be sure to share and talk about good times, too. It's not necessary to dwell on anger and frustration. (Your child might decide that being angry is the best way to get your attention.)

## Help your child learn acceptable ways to deal with frustration:

1. Use words, rather than actions, to express your anger.
2. If one way of doing something doesn't work, think of another. Or, get help with the problem,

rather than hitting the person or object which is making you angry.

3. If you have a problem, it's all right to cry. But it's not all right to give up on trying to reach your goal.
4. If someone won't do what you want, try to persuade that person that it's important to you. If it's not important to them, trade. (Do something in exchange).
5. If you can't solve a problem, leave it for awhile. Do something else. Or, think about it some more. Then, come back to the problem.

All of these techniques may be standard for adults, but children have to learn them by experience. Your language delayed child is not unique. Talk about which ways of dealing with anger work best. Explain the situations where one technique is better than another. Point out how other people deal successfully with their problems. Try to describe what they are doing. Praise your child when the child deals with anger successfully.

### **Help your child learn what behavior is not allowed.**

For your own survival, you have to have some house rules about expressing frustration. There are some ways of expressing anger that are not allowed. People may not hurt other people or animals. People may not destroy other people's property. (Most children break these rules occasionally, or act as if they're trying to.) Your punishments for infractions should be established with your child ahead of time. For hurting people or trying to, brief banishment from people—a time-out—is best. For hurting others' property, a child should be expected to make some repayment. Depending on the age and ability of the child, an apology should be made.

If you are consistent and use the teaching methods suggested here, you can help your child learn to manage frustration. As your child gets older and more experienced, the child will get better at dealing with frustration. There may also be less frustration as your child progresses in speech and language therapy.

#### *Refer to:*

- 9.3 Talking About Your Child's Feelings and Behavior
- 9.4 Dealing With Negative Behavior

# Talking About Your Child's Feelings and Behavior

by Linda M. Levine, M.Ed.

## Introduction

Chris is a daydreamer. His favorite expression is "in a minute." His parents feel they can't "get through" to him. They yell at him every day but he doesn't change.

Jessie hates her teacher today and never wants to go back to school again. At the dinner table, Jessie spills her milk and refuses to eat. Her behavior irritates her parents. She is sent to her room after a shouting match.

When children are unhappy or angry it influences their behavior. Parents naturally want to direct them and give advice. How this is done makes all the difference. Parents can help their child express feelings without "acting up." Behavior can be improved without hurting your child's feelings. Here are some suggestions to help parents deal with their child's feelings and behavior.

## Avoid a power struggle with your child.

Children at any age tend to resist if they feel overpowered or unfairly treated. Even preschoolers are individuals with ideas and feelings of their own. When children feel overpowered by adults, they often wage a "power-struggle" in which they may be stubborn or rebellious.

A cycle of push-pull between children and parents is not easy to live with. When children are unhappy, angry, or acting up, they need help in dealing with their feelings. They need to change their behavior so that resistance to authority does not become the main way in which they react to other people.

## Improve communication with your child.

Learning how to talk to children without hurting their feelings can result in better behavior, cooperation, and feelings of self-worth. Helping your child learn to communicate feelings may result in less anger and frustration. The following guidelines may help you and your child develop a good system of communication:

### 1. Accept the child.

We can accept a child without necessarily approving of the child's behavior. When your child pulls the cat's tail, tell the child firmly that no one may hurt the cat. Then follow up with a demonstration of how to pet the cat, showing it affection. Let the child follow your example. Give immediate encouragement for the good behavior. The child should always be made to feel "O.K." as a person, even though the child's behavior may not always be correct. Your child will know that the action was bad, not the child.

### 2. Send "I-messages" to communicate your own feelings.

I-messages are statements of fact. They tell your child how the child's behavior makes you feel. I-messages help your child understand that you have feelings, too.

Say: "I need help in picking up the toys."  
Instead of: "You sure made a mess."

Say: "I can't understand you with all that screaming."  
Instead of: "You better shut up."

Avoid name-calling when you are angry. You might try "I really get upset when I see your clothes all over the floor" instead of "You're such a slob!" An angry attack on a child will produce similar feelings of anger and resentment in the child. This will not solve the problem.

Be sure to share your feelings when your child's behavior pleases you. For example: "I like it when you go to bed on time."

### 3. Help your child identify feelings.

This will help your child name, understand, and deal with feelings. Your child will know that you understand the problem and care about the child. When you help your child identify negative feelings, those feelings disappear more quickly. For example:

"You are sad because your dog died."

"You are mad at me because I won't let you go outside to play."

"You are pretty worried about that test. You're not sure you'll do well."

If your child is behaving badly due to anger, it is especially helpful to identify the child's feelings. Then, explain what behavior you expect. "I know you are angry at your friend. But you may not hit him."

#### 4. Expand on what your child says.

A good way to get children to talk about their feelings is to repeat what they are saying. Then, expand on the thought.

Child: "Teri is my best friend. But I hate her!"

Parent: "Teri is really your best friend. But for some reason you do not like her right now."

Child: "I don't like her because she's playing with Sandy. They didn't ask me to play!"

Repeating thoughts and adding to them tells your child that you have heard, that you are interested, and that you would like to listen if there is more to tell.

#### 5. Tell what to do, instead of what not to do.

How many times does it take for your child to do as you ask? Putting requests in a positive way helps children know exactly what behavior you would like.

Instead of:	Say:
Don't run.	You need to walk.
Don't touch that.	Look. But, please don't touch.
Don't slam the door.	Close the door quietly, please.

#### 6. Set a good example.

Don't expect your child to show more self-control than you do. Remember, children will imitate adult behavior. If you yell and scream when you feel angry, your child will follow your example.

#### 7. Give your child encouragement.

Avoid nagging and warning. Encouragement shows your faith in your child. Too high a standard for the child invites failure. Too low a standard does not show faith. Encouragement builds a child's feelings of self-worth. Express confidence in the child's ability by saying such things as:

"I know you can handle it."

"I know you'll be able to come up with a way to solve this one."

By using these communication tips, you can help your child express feelings and maintain good behavior.

*For more information:*

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Samalin, N., and M. Jalbow. 1987. *Loving your child is not enough: Positive discipline that works.* New York, NY: Viking-Penguin.

*Winning ways to talk with young children.* Publication 721, October 1979, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

*Refer to:*

9.2 Dealing With Frustration

9.4 Dealing With Negative Behavior

# Dealing With Negative Behavior

by Linda M. Levine, M.Ed.

## Introduction

As a parent, one of your most challenging jobs is guiding your children. The job seems easy when your children are cooperative and happy. It is not so easy when they have temper tantrums or refuse to pick up their toys! Most children are not well behaved all of the time.

Parents need to be consistent when they try to help their children understand what is expected of them. Young children lack self control. They slowly improve in behavior as they learn what is expected at home, in school, and in public.

All children act up at times. But it is considered a problem when children constantly tease, show little consideration for others, are rough with toys, pets or furniture, or do things which annoy and upset family members. It is said that these children lack discipline. Too often parents try to solve the problem with a system of rewards and punishments.

## Using Discipline

Some parents think discipline means punishment. But discipline is really teaching children the rules for living. A parent's job is to set up firm rules for children and be consistent in applying them. *The goal of discipline is teaching children respect for rules, for property, for others, and for themselves.*

When children are young, the rules are simple: "Don't touch the hot stove," "It's time to go now," and "Stay near me in the store." As children get older, the rules become more complicated and children develop a "mind of their own." Parents often lose patience at this stage.

When parents make the effort to train children when they are young, family life can be much easier later on. If discipline is just a series of rewards and punishments, of overpowering children because you are older and bigger, then problems may develop. When the children get older, they may no longer feel they have to listen to you. Power works with young children as a temporary measure. But it does not help children change the way they behave over the long run.

## Why do children misbehave?

You might ask why children act the way they do. It is a combination of experimentation, natural curiosity, and immaturity. All children are concerned mostly about themselves until they are taught otherwise. They don't think about what will happen next. They sometimes misbehave because they want attention, or are trying to show parents that they too can be powerful. They sometimes misbehave because they are angry at having been spanked or punished.

Parents often give in to the demands of children because they think this makes children feel loved and wanted. Parents can show the most respect for children by gently and firmly insisting that the rules be followed. Parents often allow a child's unruly behavior to go on too long. The parents become angry and the child receives a spanking. Children imitate their parents. This type of behavior teaches them that it is all right to shout and hit when they are angry.

## Tips for Parents

Here are some tips to help you teach children good behavior—and to help avoid misbehavior.

## Pre-Toddlers and Toddlers

As soon as babies begin to crawl (eight or nine months) and explore their world, parents can begin to use some of the following suggestions:

- *Trade*—Substitute another toy or object for the one the child should not be playing with.
- *Take action*—Tell the child "no" only one time, and then start moving in the direction of the child. Children know how many times you will call their names before you get serious enough to start moving towards them.
- *Distract*—Anticipate situations that might cause problems. Distract the child's attention to something else.
- *Change the environment*—Don't expect your child to act like an adult. If you are going to the doctor's office, provide some toys to play with while you are waiting. If you don't want your child to break valuables on the coffee table, remove them until the child is old enough to understand. It is

often more efficient to change the environment than to change the child.

### Pre-School to Junior High School

As children mature, there are additional ways to help encourage good behavior. These methods are good for children ages two to eleven.

- *Praise good behavior*—One of the most effective ways you can encourage good behavior is by using praise. Parents often take the good things children do for granted and only catch them being naughty! Be on the lookout for good behavior. Remember to offer praise (even for attempts). Your child will try to please you more often by doing the things that will make you happy.
- *Reward behavior you want to see repeated*—Rewards can be as simple as telling the child you like whatever the child is doing. Or, you can give hugs and kisses. Older elementary children may respond to additional rewards such as stickers or a special outing.
- *Let your child know what behavior is unacceptable*—If a child is not behaving according to your rules, do something about it right away. Take the time to stop the car, stop your shopping, or whatever else you are doing. Then help the child understand what is acceptable behavior—and what is not.
- *Try different methods of discipline other than punishment*—Punishment is the least-effective long-term type of discipline. If you can change the behavior of your child in a positive way, it will have a much more long-lasting effect.

### Time-Out

What can parents do when negative behaviors occur? **Time-Out** is a good way to help children understand which behaviors are acceptable and which are not:

First, ask your child to stop the unacceptable behavior. If the child doesn't stop, say "You have decided to have **Time-Out**." Remove the child from the situation. Don't talk or pay attention to the child. After an appropriate time, lead your child back to the activity. Do not remark on the **Time-Out** situation.

Younger children (three to five) should receive **Time-Out** for just a minute or two. Older

children can be sent away from the situation. They may return when they decide that they can behave properly. It will help your child develop good feelings of self-worth to come back to the problem situation and handle it well. **Time-Out** allows your child to change behavior without being labeled a "bad child."

When you combine **Time-Out** with a reward system, you will help your child maintain good behavior.

### Summary

The example you set for your child is the best discipline of all. If you want your child to become a responsible person who exercises self-control, then your actions are the most powerful way of teaching. You need to set the rules at first. But, eventually your good example will help your child understand the reasons behind the rules. At this point, your child will truly gain self-respect and respect for others.

*For more information:*

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Dreikurs, R., and V. Soltz. 1964. *Children: The challenge*. New York, NY: Hawthorne Books.

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Samalin, N., and M. Jablow. 1987. *Loving your child is not enough: Positive discipline that works*. New York, NY: Viking-Penguin.

*Refer to:*

- 9.1 Developing Responsibility
- 9.2 Dealing With Frustration
- 9.3 Talking About Your Child's Feelings and Behavior

# Help Your Child Use Gesture to Communicate

by Carolyn A. Weiner, M.A., C.C.C.

## What is gesture?

Gesture is the movement of any part of the body for the purpose of communication. Gesturing may take many forms. It may include pointing to things, pushing things away, or pulling people where one wants them to go. Gestures include facial expressions such as smiles or frowns to communicate likes and dislikes. Although gesturing may be easily understood, it is not a formal method of communication such as sign language.

## How is gesturing related to communication development?

The ability to use gestures marks an important step in the development of communication skills. A child who can signal likes, dislikes, and requests by gesturing can be an active communicator in the family or classroom. When your child is able to gesture, the child has mastered a number of skills, including:

- Recognition of people in the environment
- The ability to understand the meanings of specific actions (such as going to the kitchen, going to the door, picking up a pencil)
- The ability to understand the basic rules of communication ("I want something. I ask for it. I either get it or I'm told 'no.'")

A child who is not yet gesturing is said to be at the "pre-gestural" level. At this stage, the child does not try to communicate. Any communication depends on the ability of people around the child to figure out what the child may need. An example of pre-gestural communication is crying. A child's crying is an automatic response to discomfort. But, people around the child respond as if the child were calling for help. Each time the child cries someone comes to help. Over time, the child begins to connect crying with someone coming. Eventually, the child will learn to cry or to call on purpose to get someone's attention. At this point, gestural communication has begun. Further examples of pre-gestural and gestural communication behavior can be found in the chart below. Look at this chart to determine at what level your child is communicating.

## You can help your child learn to communicate with gestures.

Most parents teach gestural communication to their children unconsciously by attending to cries, facial grimaces, gazes, and squirming as though these actions were intentional communication. If your child is not yet using gestures, you can teach them by using the following tips for parents:

1. Act as though your child's behaviors are an attempt to communicate. If your child looks toward the window, say, "Would you like to be closer to the window? O.K." Then move your child or help the child move toward the window. If your child frowns during feeding, say, "You don't like it?"
2. When possible, respond to your child's behavior by changing your actions. If your child squints at a light, say, "Too bright?" and move the light. If your child looks at a stuffed animal, say, "You want this?" and bring it to the child.
3. When you communicate with your child, use gestures as well as words. For example, wave when you say "hi" and "good bye." Reach for things when you say "Give to me." Shake your head and frown when you say "no-no."
4. When appropriate, help your child form and use a gesture. Your child may frown in response to a music box. Help the child push it away. Say, "No music box."

## Summary

The chart below offers some specific gestures that you can help your child to learn. The first column on the chart describes pre-gestural behavior. This is probably what your child is doing now. The second column gives the related gestural behavior you can help your child to learn. You may need to place your child's hands in the gesture desired. Show your child an appropriate gesture and encourage the child to imitate it.

### Refer to:

- 2.1 Language Development
- 3.1 Infant Stimulation
- 7.2 Sign Language, Speech Development, and Your Child

## Pre-Gestural and Gestural Communication

### Pre-gestural

1. Allows head to be turned to see an object.
2. Watches someone cause objects to do things, such as winding up a music box.
3. Responds negatively to sounds, sights, actions, objects, food, etc.
4. Attends to objects that make noise.
5. Allows someone to move hand to grasp objects.
6. Shows signs of stress during activity.
7. Shows signs of pleasure.

### Gestural

1. Turns head by self in order to see object.
2. Examines an object. Indicates an interest in making the object work by gesturing a request, or trying to make the object work.
3. Pushes away undesired items.
4. Uses objects to make noise.
5. Reaches for objects.
6. Uses gesture to ask for activity. For example, may reach out to get picked up.
7. Uses gesture to ask for activity to stop. For example, frowns, pushes toys away, moves away from activity.





# Sign Language Can Help Your Child

by Sharon Hendrickson, M.S., C.C.C.

## What is sign language?

Sign language is a means of communication. People using sign language make movements with their hands to communicate.

## How is sign language used in speech therapy?

Sign language is often used with traditional speech therapy as part of a program of total communication. Sign language can help many children learn to talk. It is easier to learn new things when we are shown as well as told. A child can see an adult sign the name of an object or action while hearing the corresponding word. This helps the child understand and remember the word and its meaning. The process develops listening skills and visual attention. Both skills are important in the development of spoken language.

Signing helps the child learn a word's meaning and how to communicate it effectively. Many children who begin to communicate by signing soon learn to say the corresponding words. Then they learn how to use the words in phrases and sentences.

## What are different types of sign language?

The *speech and language clinician* or special teacher working with your child will select a signing system for the child. There are many different systems of signs which vary from country to country. For instance, you may read or hear terms such as "ASL" (American Sign Language) or "SE" (Signed English).

In general, ASL is often used with children who are just beginning to develop communication skills. Many programs for preschool-level children with communication problems tend to use ASL. SE is a system of signs which more closely correspond to written English. It includes signs for many language forms including plurals and different kinds of verb forms. Programs for school-age children with hearing problems often favor the use of SE or other systems which closely correspond to written English.

## How does a signing program work?

1. The first step is to develop a vocabulary which is:

- Meaningful and useful for your child
- Within your child's physical abilities to sign
- Appropriate to your child's learning level

Your speech and language clinician, working with you and your child's teacher, can choose a vocabulary of signs for your child. The following signs are often included in introductory programs:

your child's name	"go"
"eat"	"all done"
"drink"	"Mommy"
"Daddy"	"more"
"bathroom"	"milk"
"car"	"sleep"

names of other family members, pets, and favorite foods

2. The second step is to teach these signs to your child. Teach the meaning of each sign by using it together with the object or action it names. It is helpful to give as many examples of its meaning as possible.

To teach your child the sign for "cat," use the appropriate sign each time the child points to, watches, or approaches a cat. While saying "Look at the cat!" make the sign for cat. Then help your child to make the sign as well. Later on, the same series of steps is used to teach simple phrases.

During speech and language therapy sessions, the clinician may use pictures or sets of toy objects to teach the meaning of signs and to practice their use. As your child masters new signs in therapy, you may be asked to help the child practice them at home.

## How can I help my child develop total communication skills?

1. Remember: parents are a child's most important teachers. You are the very special people who help your child use new knowledge in the real world. Take time to practice often with your child. Praise your child's efforts.

2. Know the signs your child is learning and use them frequently while talking.
3. Encourage your child to use signs and words instead of just gesturing.
4. Become familiar with how your child makes different signs so that you will understand what the child is trying to communicate.
5. Encourage your child to make sounds while signing.
6. Accept signs that are not exactly made. Some children will have trouble making some signs.
7. Continue to tell your speech and language clinician what additional signs would be useful for your child to learn.

### Summary

Signing can give the communication-handicapped child success in conversing with others. This reduces the frustration that often accompanies speech and language disorders or delays. As a result, social behavior often improves as well. The child who can tell you that the soup is too hot is unlikely to push it over to communicate discomfort. The child who can sign "car" to ask to go for a ride has learned that signs and words can convey information and influence others. Used as part of a total communication approach to speech and language therapy, sign language has helped many children to become successful communicators.

### Vocabulary

*Speech and language clinician*—A person who is qualified to diagnose and treat speech, language, and voice disorders.

*Total communication*—Use of additional ways of communicating, such as sign language or communication boards, to expand the conversational abilities of the child with severe speech and language disabilities.

*For more information:*

Ricekehof, L. 1978. *The joy of signing: The new illustrated guide for mastering sign language and the manual alphabet.* Gospel Publishing.

*Refer to:*

7.1 Help Your Child Use Gesture to Communicate



# Augmentative Communication

by Sharon Hendrickson, M.S., C.C.C.

## What is augmentative communication?

"Augment" means "to increase." Some people do not have the physical ability to talk well enough to communicate. These people need a way to increase their ability to communicate.

"Augmentative communication" refers to special devices and methods of communication which provide alternatives for spoken language.

We all use alternative methods of communication. People with poor handwriting may use dictating equipment or typewriters. Pictures of seatbelts on car windows remind us to "buckle up." Pictures on restroom doors provide information for persons who are unable to read printed signs.

## What types of augmentative communication devices are available?

Augmentative communication devices vary in expense and type of material used. Every individual is unique. Every augmentative communication system must be specially designed to meet the needs of the person who will depend upon it. There are many types of augmentative communication devices. New materials and new devices are rapidly being developed to help people with communication problems.

*Communication notebooks and boards* are made to show common pictures, and sometimes letters, numbers, and words. To communicate, the person points to the appropriate part of the notebook or board. Specialized electronic devices may provide sound as well as pictures. Various switches enable people to control microcomputers by blowing, sucking, blinking eyes, or making some movement other than touching the keyboard.

## What type of augmentative communication device is best for your child?

Augmentative communication devices are usually designed by a team of special education or rehabilitation specialists. An occupational therapist may determine the type of body movement which can best be used. For example, it may be easiest for your child to point to a communication board or use a switch on an electronic device. The *speech and language clinician* will use information provided by parents

and teachers to determine the vocabulary items to use. Together, team members will select an augmentative system which will:

- Allow the individual to communicate most effectively
- Be easiest to operate
- Be most economical while meeting the person's needs

Team members consider many factors in developing an augmentative communication system. These include:

### 1. Physical ability

Can the person write or operate keys on a typewriter or computer? Can the person point accurately to pictures or printed words? Even head movements or "chin-pointing" can be used to indicate one of just three or four items per page. If the person has this ability, a multi-page communication notebook arranged by topic may be a good choice. Electronic communication devices now on the market can be controlled through finger movements, hand movements, or movement of almost any body part, including eye movements, head movements, or even blowing and sucking.

### 2. Choice of symbol system

Popular ways of representing words or ideas on a communication board or other augmentative device include pictures, Rebus symbols and, of course, the printed words themselves. For example:

- Pictures (photo or drawing)
- Rebus symbols
- Words

Some electronic systems also store phrases and sentences which may be combined for spoken or printed output.

### 3. Method of item selection

If a person cannot point or push a button to indicate desired items on a board, a scanning method of item selection will be used. With a manual communication board or notebook, the caregiver points to each item across the surface until the individual indicates that the desired item has been reached. Any movement under the

individual's control may be used as a signal. A two-step scanning procedure may be used with either communication boards or electronic devices. The individual signals when the desired row of items has been indicated. This is done by a pointing helper or by movement of a light along a row of words or other *symbols*. The helper or light begins to indicate items in that row until the communication-impaired individual again signals. This shows the final choice of word or phrase.

Some devices allow an individual to select a series of words or phrases before printing them or repeating them aloud. Using such a sophisticated device, persons with severe communication and physical disabilities may learn to write homework, print letters, and even program computers.

#### 4. Materials available

There are many materials commercially available to construct individualized communication systems. Choice of materials depends on sturdiness, attractiveness, and cost. Electronic devices and systems involving microcomputers are generally more expensive.

#### 5. Method of transportation

Does the device have to be mounted on a wheelchair? Must the device be hand-held?

### The Role of Parents

Parents and other family members are people who can "make or break" their child's augmentative communication system. With a simple communication board or a sophisticated computer-based device, it still takes people to send and receive the communication. Parents can help their child by:

- Contributing useful, meaningful items to the system's vocabulary. For instance, one mother asked that her daughter's vocabulary include names of soap operas which the two watched together. Family members, friends, and teachers are more likely to use the communication system for conversation if it includes really interesting things to talk about.
- Using the augmentative communication system creatively. If a person is asked the

same questions day after day, answering those questions will soon become a chore. Talk about your child's preferences; ongoing, past, and future activities; holidays; pets; and other members of the family. If the communication system contains questions or single words like "what," "who," or "where," encourage the person using the system to ask such questions. Many people require extra practice, since they have never before been able to ask questions.

- Providing many opportunities for communication.
- Encouraging your child to use the device to communicate at a comfortable language level. Your child's speech and language clinician will be able to help you do this.

### Summary

It is important for communication-impaired persons and their families to remember that we are living in an exciting time. Advances in augmentative communication are occurring every year. Everyone should have assistance in developing and using as much spoken language as possible. Augmentative communication devices may then help to close the gap between the individual's need to communicate and the ability to do so.

### Vocabulary

*Augmentative communication*—Refers to special devices and methods of communication which provide alternatives to spoken language.

*Communication notebook or board*—An aid for people with speech difficulties, containing pictures or representations of numbers, the alphabet, and commonly used words. The person uses the board to communicate by pointing to the pictures which express the desired message.

*Impairment*—Physical weakness or damage, or a functional problem.

*Symbol*—A sign that stands for or represents something else.

#### Refer to:

- 7.1 Help Your Child Use Gesture to Communicate
- 7.2 Sign Language Can Help Your Child

# Reading With Your Child

by Linda M. Levine, M.Ed.

## Introduction

Learning how to read is one of the most important areas of language development. Parents often ask teachers, "How can I help my child with reading?" The answer might surprise you. You can help at home even before your child is ready for school.

Experts studied a group of school-age children who were good readers. The good readers had had several things in common when they were of preschool age. They had family members who:

- Read books, magazines, and newspapers
- Looked at books and magazines with them, and who READ TO THEM
- Talked to them about what was happening around them
- Pointed out words in books and other media
- Took the time to teach them new words

## Pre-reading Activities

One of the most important things you can do to help with reading is something that does not involve books. It is teaching new vocabulary words and language skills during everyday activities. Even a trip to the market can be important for teaching pre-reading skills. Take time to help your child name the different kinds of fruit and vegetables. Help your child "read" the words on the boxes and cans. (This word is "soup.") Thinking skills can be developed while sorting the laundry. (My shirt is bigger than your shirt.) All this new information will help your child improve language skills and help get ready for reading in school.

## Why read together?

Reading books or magazines together can be an enjoyable experience for parents and children. Reading to children will encourage good language development. Listening to stories is the basis for good reading. Children learn how a book works, where the beginning is, and how the story goes from page to page until the end. They learn that the pictures can be clues about the story. When they hear new ideas and new words, children expand their world and develop their thinking skills.

## Tips On Reading With Your Child

### Reading to your baby

You can start reading to your child when the child is very young. Eight to ten months old is not too early. Babies can enjoy looking at pictures in cloth books, in magazines, and even in toy catalogs. It is not necessary to read a story to a baby who has not yet learned how to speak. Just looking at the pictures is fine.

1. Sit in a comfortable chair with the baby on your lap.
2. Hold the book so that the pictures can be seen. Point to the pictures on the page. Raise and lower your voice, with lots of OOOHs and AHHHHs.
3. If the baby points to something or imitates the sounds you are making, give hugs and praise.
4. Lift the page a little, and encourage your baby to help turn it.
5. As the child learns to speak, start reading the stories. Take time to look at the pictures together. Stop reading the story if your child wants to talk about a picture. You may be surprised at the creativity and intelligence of some of your child's ideas.
6. When your child is able to take care of a book, get some books the child will enjoy. Owning books is as important as owning toys. Some good books can be bought inexpensively at supermarkets, bookstores, or rummage sales.
7. Take your child to the library as soon as the child can sit still for the toddler story time.

### Reading to the preschool child

1. Set aside some time each day to enjoy reading together. Choose a quiet, special time when the child is not doing something else.
2. Allow your child to choose a book for you to read.
3. Take time to look at the pictures. Help the child name things and tell what is happening. Use books with large and colorful pictures.
4. Raise and lower your voice as you are telling the story. If you are paying attention to what is happening, so will your child.

## Reading with the school-age child

When your child starts school and starts learning how to read, it becomes a good opportunity for the child to read to you! Continue reading together daily.

1. You and your child can take turns reading to each other. Praise what your child does well. Avoid criticism.
2. Remember that reading together should be fun. Don't use story time to teach reading. Remember to stop before either one of you becomes restless, tired, or bored.
3. Take advantage of your child's interests. Choose dinosaur books for dinosaur fans, etc.
4. Don't make your child choose between reading and watching television or playing outside. Let these activities all have their own place in your child's daily life.
5. If your child misses or stumbles on a word while reading out loud, just say the word. Don't make your child feel like a serious error has been made.
6. Ask your child's teacher for suggestions for reading to your child. If your child is reading a book at the proper ability level, the child will have good feelings about reading.
7. Remember that children learn by imitation. The BEST way to encourage reading is by reading yourself.

### For more information:

Beck, Joan. *How to raise a brighter child*. New York, NY: Pocket Books.

Cullinan, B.E., and C. Carmichael, eds. 1977. *Literature and young children*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Dodson, F. *Give your child a head start in reading*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Dodson, F., and A. Alexander. 1986. *Your child: Pregnancy through preschool*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Hendrick, J. 1980. *The whole child*. St. Louis, MO: C.V. Mosby Company.

Larrick, N. 1969. *A parent's guide to children's reading*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster (also Pocket Books, paperback).

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

1834 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20009

(800) 424-2460

Send for their list of publications, including their guide for selecting, purchasing, and using children's books.

### Refer to:

2.1 Language Development

3.1 Infant Stimulation

4.1 Learning New Words

5.0 Home Activities for Speech and Language Development

8.2 Suggested Reading for Children

8.3 Pre-Reading Skills



# Suggested Reading for Children

by Linda M. Levine, M.Ed.

There are hundreds of excellent books for children. The following lists provide a good beginning. Ask your local librarian to help you with additional authors and titles.

## For the Baby and Toddler

Author	Title
Richard Scarry	Early Words Little Word Book
Dorothy Kunhardt	Pat the Bunny
Stephen Lewis	Zoo City
Any toy catalog	

## For the 2- to 3-year-old

Tana Hoban	Count and See
Leo Lionni	Swimmy
Anne Maley	Have You See My Mother?

## For the 3- to 5-year-old

Mercer Mayer	Frog Goes to Dinner
Maurice Sendak	Where the Wild Things Are
Dr. Seuss	The Cat in the Hat
Paul Galdone	The Little Red Hen

## For the 6- to 8-year-old

Dubose Heyward	The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes
James Marshall	George and Martha
I CAN READ BOOKS, published by Harper and Row. Authors include Syd Hoff, Edith Hurd, Carla Greene, Nathaniel Benchley, Russell Hoban and Lillian Hoban. They also publish I CAN READ sports books, EARLY I CAN READ BOOKS, I CAN READ science books, and I CAN READ mystery books.	

## For the 8- to 10-year-old

Laura Ingalls Wilder	Little House on the Prairie
E.B. White	Charlotte's Web

## For the 10- to 12-year-old

Author	Title
Roald Dahl	Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
Judy Blume	Are You There God, It's Me, Margaret

## 50 of the Best Authors for Young Children

Author	Title
Anno, Mitsumasa	Anno's Alphabet Anno's Counting Book Anno's Journey
Bemelmans, Ludwig	Madeline Madeline and the Bad Hat Madeline in London Madeline's Rescue
Brown, Marcia	The Three Billy Goats Gruff All Butterflies How, Hippo Once a Mouse Stone Soup
Brown, Margaret Wise	Four Fur Feet The Noisy Book Nibble, Nibble The Runaway Bunny 1,2,3 An Animal Counting Book Where Have You Been?
Buckley, Helen E.	Grandfather and I Grandmother and I Michael is Brave My Sister and I
Burningham, John	Mr. Gumpy's Outing Mr. Gumpy's Motorcar Seasons John Burningham's ABC
Burton, Virginia Lee	Mike Mulligan and His Steamshovel Katy and the Big Snow The Little House
Carle, Eric	The Very Hungry Caterpillar Do You Want to Be My Friend? 1,2,3 to the Zoo

Author	Title
dePaola, Tommie	Strega Nona Charlie Needs a Cloak The Cloud Book Watch Out for Chicken Feet in Your Soup Nana Upstairs, Nana Downstairs
de Regniers, Beatrice S.	May I Bring a Friend? A Little House of Your Own Poems Children will Sit Still For It Does Not Say Meow What Can You Do With a Shoe?
Domanska, Janina	The Turnip Din, Dan, Doin, It's Christmas I Saw a Ship a-Sailing If All the Seas Were One Sea Spring Is What Do You See?
Dr. Seuss	The Cat in the Hat Green Eggs and Ham Horton Hatches the Egg Horton Hears a Who The Sleep Book The ABC Book The Shape of Me and Other Stuff
Duvoisin, Roger	Petunia Petunia, I Love You Petunia's Treasure Veronica See What I Am
Ets, Marie Hall	Play With Me Gilberto and the Wind In the Forest Talking Without Words
Fisher, Aileen	Cricket in a Thicket Feathered Ones and Furry Going Barefoot In One Door and Out the Other Listen Rabbit The Ways of Animals Where Does Everyone Go?
Flack, Majorie	Ask Mr. Bear The Story about Ping
Freeman, Don	Dandelion Corduroy Mop Top Quiet! There's a Canary in  the Library
Gag, Wanda	Millions of Cats Nothing at All

Author	Title
Hoban, Russell	A Birthday for Frances A Bargain for Frances Bedtime for Frances Bread and Jam for Frances
Hoban, Tana	Look Again Is It Red? Is It Yellow? Is It Blue? Circles, Triangles and Squares Dig, Drill, Dump Over, Under, and Through Push Pull, Empty Full
Hutchins, Pat	Rosies's Walk Changes, Changes Don't Forget the Bacon Goodnight, Owl The Surprise Party
Keats, Ezra Jack	The Snowy Day Goggles Hi, Cat Louie Peter's Chair Whistle for Willie
Krauss, Ruth	The Carrot Seed The Backward Day A Hole is to Dig A Very Special House
Langstaff, John	Over in the Meadow Frog Went a'Courtin Oh, A-Hunting We Will Go
Lionni, Leo	Swimmy Alexander and the Wind Up Mouse Fish is Fish Frederick Little Blue and Little Yellow On My Beach There are Many Pebbles Inch by Inch The Biggest House in the World
McCloskey, Robert	Make Way for Ducklings One Morning in Maine Blueberries for Sal Lentil
Milne, A.A.	When We Were Very Young Now We are Six
Minarik, Else H.	Little Bear Father Bear Comes Home A Kiss for Little Bear Little Bear's Friend Little Bear's Visit



Author	Title
Munari, Bruno	Bruno Munari's ABC Animals for Sale The Birthday Present Bruno Manari's Zoo The Circus in the Mist The Elephant's Wish Who's There? Open the Door
Pienkowski, Jan	Shapes Numbers
Piper, Watty	The Little Engine That Could
Potter, Beatrix	The Tale of Peter Rabbit The Sly Old Cat The Tale of Benjamin Bunny The Tale of Jemima Puddleduck The Tale of Jeremy Fisher The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy Winkle The Tale of Tom Kitten
Reiss, John J.	Numbers Colors
Rey, H.A.	Curious George (and The Curious George Series) Anybody at Home?
Rockwell, Harlow	My Doctor My Dentist Machines I Did It
Scarry, Richard	Best Word Book Ever Cars and Trucks and Things That Go Best Counting Book Ever All Day Long Busy Busy World Find Your ABCs
Sendak, Maurice	Where the Wild Things Are Pierre Chicken Soup with Rice Alligators All Around In the Night Kitchen Really Rosie
Slobodkina, Esphyr	Caps for Sale
Spier, Peter	Fast-Slow, High-Low Crash, Bang, Boom The Erie Canal To Market, To Market
Step toe, John	Stevie
Tresselt, Alvin	Hide and Seek Fog The Beaver Pond The Dead Tree The Mitten

Author	Title
Viorst, Judith	Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day
Waber, Bernard	Ira Sleeps Over A Firefly Named Torchy The House on East 88th Street Lyle, Lyle Crocodile
Wildsmith, Brian	Brian Wildsmith's Mother Goose Brian Wildsmith's ABCs Brian Wildsmith's 1,2,3s Brian Wildsmith's Wild Animals
Williams, Garth	The Rabbits' Wedding Baby's First Book
Yashima, Taro	Umbrella Crow Boy Momo's Kitten Plenty to Watch Seashore Story Youngest One
Zion, Eugene	Harry the Dirty Dog (and the Harry The Dog Series) Dear Garbage Man The Plant Sitter
Zolotow, Charlotte	William's Doll The Hating Book My Grandson Lew When I Have a Son Big Sister and Little Sister Mr. Rabbit and the Lovely Present

### Recommended Magazines for Children

Highlights for Children, 2300 West Fifth Avenue,  
Columbus, OH 43216  
Ages 2-12

Humpty Dumpty's Magazine, Parents Magazine  
Enterprises, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York,  
NY 10017  
Ages 3-7

Jack and Jill, 1100 Waterway Blvd, Box 5678,  
Indianapolis, IN 46206  
Ages 5-12

Sesame Street Magazine, Children's Television  
Workshop, 1 Lincoln Plaza, New York, NY 10023  
Ages 3-5

#### Refer to:

- 8.1 Reading With Your Child
- 8.3 Pre-Reading Skills