

Teaching My Child Basic Sign Language

So you've decided to start teaching your child some basic sign language to help them communicate. You may find yourself asking questions such as: When do I start? How do I start? What signs do I use? Children's Therapy Place is providing you with information to help answer these questions.



BABY SIGNS

At what age do I start teaching my child sign language?

You can begin to use signs to talk about activities and environments you and your child experience at any point in your child's life. Early exposure to any communication interaction is ideal. However, keep in mind that babies are unable to use sign to communicate until around 8 months of age, but they may begin to understand the signs earlier.



How do I start teaching my child sign language?

Keep it fun- use signs that are fun and motivating to your child. Teaching signs shouldn't be frustrating for you or your child.

Lots of praise- provide positive feedback when your child produces signs both independently and with your help.

Repetition- pick a selection of signs you plan to use and use them consistently across different environments and during routines.

Expand- increase your child's signing vocabulary as your child grows and experiences new things. Use signs to talk about activities and environments your child is exposed to.

What signs should I start teaching my child?

Start with signs that are simple and effective. Your child will be more motivated to communicate and learn signs if they help meet your child's needs and wants. Signs such as "more," "mom," "dad," "food," "help," and "all done" help your child communicate basic needs. Expand their vocabulary based on their environment, routines, and activities, and begin to teach them signs for many communication functions including requesting, protesting, labeling, and asking questions.

Online Signing Dictionaries

www.handspeak.com
www.signingsavvy.com

Information obtained from:

<https://www.babysignlanguage.com/basics/#free>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/infant-and-toddler-health/expert-answers/baby-sign-language/faq-20057980>