

- **Encouraging Communication**

- Module 9

- Teachers and Parents: This module, Encouraging Communication, comes from the Positive Parenting Practices for Young Children with Autism and is the last in the series. This program was developed by the Learning Experiences - An Alternative Program for Parents and Preschoolers (LEAP).

- **MAIN IDEAS**

- ✓ How children communicate
- ✓ Why children communicate
- ✓ Strategies for encouraging communication
- ✓ Environmental strategies
- ✓ Incidental teaching

- **Why Should Teachers and Families Encourage Communication in the Child**

Communication skills are best learned in natural every day situations rather than formalized one to one or group instruction.

- Because parents & siblings are the people who are with young children the most they have the most opportunity to teach language skills.

The child needs to learn to communicate about the objects, people and situations that are within home, school and the family's routine.

- **How The Child Communicates**

1. Whines or cries
2. Reaches toward object
3. Points to object
4. Gives the object
5. Uses gestures or sign language
6. Shows a picture of the object

7. Vocalizes

8. Uses one word

9. Uses phrases or sentences

- Why The Child Communicates

- To request – to ask another person for something

- To protest

- To comment

- To answer questions

- ❖ Offering a choice

- ❖ Affirming or denying (yes/no)

- ❖ Asking about past events

- ❖ Asking about concepts

- To ask questions – for information

- When and Where The Child Communicates

- The best time to teach communication to a child is when he/she wants or needs to communicate.

- Teach communication where he/she needs or wants to communicate.

- Responsive Strategies for Encouraging Communication

How to encourage communication:

1. Watch

2. Wait

3. Follow the child's lead

Mirroring

Mirroring means to imitate what the child says or does.

Turn Taking

Turn taking means developing a pattern of conversation or behaviors in which you and the child alternate saying or doing things.

Reflecting

Reflecting means encouraging the child's attempts to communicate by repeating them back to him/her.

Expansion

Adding more words to the child's message. A child can learn new concepts or more elaborate sentence structures when his/her message is expanded.

Self – Talk

Self – Talk means talking about what you are doing, thinking, or feeling.

Parallel Talk

Parallel Talk is similar to self-talk except you describe what the child is doing, seeing, and feeling.

- Environmental Strategies to Encourage Communication

Environmental strategies involve arranging the setting or material you and your child are using to make it more likely that the child will need or want to communicate.

Forgetfulness

Forgetfulness is where you purposefully forget to provide everything needed for an activity. The child will then need to use some type of communication to let you know what you forgot.

Visible but unreachable

For this strategy you can place an object that the child needs or wants out of his/her reach, but still within sight. Child must request the object.

Violate Expectations/Sabotage

When you violate expectations you do something silly

i.e. put doll's shoes on the child's foot.

Sabotage is used by deliberately interfering with an activity.

Piece by Piece

You can encourage the child to ask for each piece as you hold it back from him/her or just give a small snack (goldfish) so the child can ask for more.

● **Incidental Teaching**

Incidental Teaching involves setting up the environment then following these steps to prompt the appropriate communication:

- a) Set up environment
- b) Wait 5 seconds with an expectant expression on your face
- c) If the child does not respond, ask an open-ended question
- d) Prompt the child to tell him/her what to say
- e) Repeat or rephrase the question or statement
- f) Back up to an easier prompt or question, provide assistance as needed for your child to respond and give the desired object