Building Blocks of Expressive Vocal Communication

*Communication* begins during infancy and continues through adulthood. You have already been communicating with your child.

**Why is my child communicating?** Do they want to: request, protest, comment, ask questions, answer questions, etc.?

**How is my child communicating?** Are they using: gestures (pointing, eye gaze, guiding you), signs, sounds, words, phrases, pictures, etc.?

Each vowel (a, e, i, o, u) and/or consonant (d, b, m, w, etc.) sound your child learns to use to communicate will start at the first building block below. He/she learns the significance of word/sound combinations as a way to access a person/item/activity or to escape a person/item/activity.

We teach our Expressive Communication expectations by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Examples:</th>
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| Expect your child’s best word approximations for preferred items, solidifying their knowledge of the word. | **Accept 1-2 word approximations**  
**Expand their vocabulary** |
| Expand their vocabulary by using the 1-Up rule and narrating their daily routines. Ex: During bath time, use 1-2 words to narrate what you are doing, “Wash arm,” “pour water,” “water off.” | **Accept CV, CVC* word approximations**  
**Use the 1-Up Rule** |
| Be consistent with your verbal expectations and make them clear. Expect their best word approximations for preferred items. Ex: If your child is able to say “open,” hold him/her to this expectation before opening a container. | **Build child’s sound repertoire by expanding on vocal back and forth**  
**Increase intentional communication by providing child with opportunities to communicate using voice, gestures and/or visuals** |
| Build on each communication attempt by providing them with an additional word (1-Up). Ex: They say “open,” you say “open bag.” | **Responding to child's vocalizations**  
**Engaging in vocal turn taking**  
**Accepting gestures to communicate (eye gaze, point, reach, give, facial expressions, etc.)**  
**Modeling verbal expectations** |
| After imitating your child’s vocalizations during several back and forth routines, expand on each vocal turn. Ex: They say “a” and you say “ah-m” teaching them new sounds and to expand their vocalization. | **Provide opportunities to communicate by pausing during a favorite song or play routine and continuing after child vocalizes or provides you with a gesture.** Ex: Pause with an expectant facial expression during bubbles and blow the bubbles immediately after child says “b” or provides you with eye gaze. |
| Provide opportunities to communicate by pausing during a favorite song or play routine and continuing after child vocalizes or provides you with a gesture. Ex: Pause with an expectant facial expression during bubbles and blow the bubbles immediately after child says “b” or provides you with eye gaze. | **Expect your child’s best word approximations for preferred items, solidifying their knowledge of the word.** |
| After imitating your child’s vocalizations during several back and forth routines, expand on each vocal turn. Ex: They say “a” and you say “ah-m” teaching them new sounds and to expand their vocalization. | **Respond to your child’s vocalizations throughout the day by imitating them. Teach them the power of their voice.** |
| Respond to your child’s vocalizations throughout the day by imitating them. Teach them the power of their voice. | **Continue imitating your child’s vocalizations and begin vocal turn taking. Teach them the beginning skills of conversation.** |
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| Get on child’s eye level and use child’s brief moments of eye contact as communication. Teach that eye contact can be used as a communication tool. | **Model 1-2 simple words consistently to teach your verbal expectations.** Ex: When child is reaching for the child’s cup, say “cup” when giving it. |

*C= Consonant  *V= Vowel

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**We teach our Expressive Communication expectations**

**By:** Teaching Examples:  
**Practice with your consultant:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Accept 1-2 words</strong></th>
<th><strong>Expand:</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accept approximation:</td>
<td>1-up rule:</td>
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</table>
| **Accept CV, CVC* word approximations**  
**Use the 1-Up Rule** | **Expand on vocal:** |
| **Build child's sound repertoire by expanding on vocal back and forth**  
**Increase intentional communication by providing child with opportunities to communicate using child's voice, gestures, visuals** | **Pause during a routine:** |
| **Responding to child's vocalizations**  
**Engaging in vocal turn taking**  
**Accepting gestures to communicate (eye gaze, point, reach, give, facial expressions, etc.)**  
**Modeling verbal expectations** | **Set-up a situation to communicate:** |
|  | **Respond to vocalization:**  
**Accept a gesture:**  
**Model verbal expectation:** |

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**Notes:**

**Goal for this week:**

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