

# Communicative Temptations\*

When trying to help your child to actively participate in communication, there has to be a need, an opportunity, and a reward for his or her efforts. Communicative Temptations are a way to make sure that these three things happen.

One of the most important things that we can do to assist in a child's development of communication, is to **not** anticipate his or her needs/wants. By not anticipating, you give your child an opportunity to show what s/he needs/wants. If the need is then fulfilled, there is a great chance that your child's efforts will be rewarded, and that s/he will try the communication method again. Your child can learn to be an active communicator, not a passive communicator.

1. Eat a desired food item in front of your child without offering any to him or her.
2. Activate a wind up toy, let it deactivate and hand it to your child.
3. Give your child four blocks to drop in a box one at a time (or use some other action that your child will repeat, such a stacking the blocks or dropping the blocks on the floor), then immediately give your child a small animal figure to drop in the box.
4. Look through a few books with your child.
5. Initiate a familiar and an unfamiliar social game with your child until s/he expresses pleasure, then stop the game and wait. (peek a boo; where's \_\_\_?)
6. Open a jar of bubbles, blow bubbles, then close the jar tightly. Hand the closed jar to your child. (blow bubbles and wait for him to look at you or make a sound, any kind of interest and you blow more bubbles. Even better get a bubble machine. They are really fun☺)
7. Hold a food item or toy that your child dislikes out near your child to offer it.
8. Place a desired food item or toy in a clear container that your child cannot open while your child is watching. Put the container in front of your child and wait.
9. Place your child's hands in a cold; wet or sticky substance, such as jello, pudding or paste. (or not☺)

Roll a ball to your child. After your child returns the ball three times, immediately roll a rattle or a toy on wheels to him or her.

10. Engage your child in putting together a puzzle. After your child has put in 3 pieces, offer your child a piece that does not fit.

11. Engage your child in an activity with a something that can be easily spilled (or dropped, broken, torn, etc.). Suddenly spill some of the substance on the table or floor in front of your child and wait.
12. Wave and say "bye bye" to a toy upon removing it from the play area. Repeat this for a second and third toy, and do nothing when removing a fourth toy. These four trials should be interspersed throughout the other temptations, rather than be presented in a series.
13. Hide a stuffed animal under the table. Knock, then bring out the animal. Have the animal greet your child the first time. Repeat this for a second and third time, and do nothing when bringing out the animal for the fourth time. These four trials should also be interspersed when presented.
14. Put an object that makes noise in an opaque bag and shake the bag. Hold up the bag and wait.
15. Give your child the materials for an activity of interest that needs an instrument for completion (e.g., piece of paper to draw on or cut; bowl of pudding or soup). Hold the instrument out of your child's reach and wait.
16. Engage your child in an activity of interest that needs an instrument for completion (e.g., crayon for drawing, spoon for eating, or wand for blowing bubbles). Have a third person come over and take the instrument, go sit on the distant side of the room, while holding the instrument within your child's sight and wait.

Molly's additions : All of these go really well with co-speech gestures and speech cues.

- Co-speech gestures are really signs but they mimic the shape or function of the item.

he best toys out there right now are in your house: pots/pans, wooden spoons. The bath tub.

Pots and pans are great for giving you a migraine and for him to bang; put the lid on and off; put stuff in and out of the pans. Try metal pans, try plastic bowls, see what different sounds they make; what happens with a metal spoon? If he's interested, get a pan of your own and copy him.

He'll want to dump and fill. Make a coffee can toy. You take a big metal coffee can, put shelf liner around it (and the inner edges); make a cut out on the plastic lid like a star so the child can push things through it and rattle it around. In and out, grab it out and push it in. Open the lid and dump them out. It's really quite fun. Even better- find a vibrating toy and put it in there. I LOVE the hex bugs for this. They make little ones. Don't forget to dump and fill in the bath tub.

You can put ping pong balls in a hat, put it on your head and they fall out. Pick them up.

Another thing to do is put clothes pins all around the lid and pull them off (sometimes I put them the non-spring end down if the child has more trouble opening the spring side).

Here's another idea that can be fun (and messy- all my ideas are chaotic☺) Get a big plastic tub- rectangle shape. Fill it with aquarium gravel (unless he puts this in his

mouth). You get little toys or objects and bury them so just a bit is sticking up. He finds them- even better-. For right now, putting his hands in the gravel and finding the toy is what it's all about. He can also use a shovel or spoon. And of course, he must have a bucket of some kind because dumping and filling will be a big hit.

Sandboxes are great too.

If he likes balls and cars, great. If he doesn't yet, wait for later. I have a bazillion toys at work because the kids are all different in what interests them. Just find what he likes and go with it☺

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\*Adapted from Wetherby&Prizant; Nona Child Development Centre