

SIMPLIFY YOUR LANGUAGE TO HELP CHILDREN UNDERSTAND

- ✓ **USE A SLOWER RATE OF SPEECH**
- ✓ **USE PHRASES JUST BEYOND THE CHILD'S LANGUAGE LEVEL (if child usually talks in 2-3 word phrases, talk to him using no more than 4 words per phrase)**
- ✓ **THINK OF YOUR LANGUAGE TO THE CHILD AS A MODEL FOR THEM TO "COPY" WHEN THEY SPEAK**
- ✓ **THE CHILD WILL BE MORE LIKELY TO "COPY" YOUR LANGUAGE, AND UNDERSTAND IT, IF YOU KEEP YOUR LANGUAGE SIMPLE (Johnny will not repeat "Ok, let's take your boots off now", but he might repeat and understand "Boots off")**
- ✓ **THINK OF YOUR PHRASES AS "TELEGRAMS" AND REMEMBER YOUR SPEECH SHOULD INCLUDE ONLY THE MOST IMPORTANT WORDS (even if you think you sound silly or grammatically incorrect) i.e. "Big ball. Get big ball."**
- ✓ **USE REPETITION OF KEY WORDS, AND EXAGGERATE THEM IN YOUR OWN SPEECH: "BIG" BALL." "GET THE BIG BALL." (AND you may sign BIG as you say it)**
- ✓ **WHEN GIVING CHOICES, JUST MENTION THE CHOICES: "Want cookie (pause) or cracker?" (NOT "Do you want some cookies today or crackers for snack today?")**
- ✓ **UTILIZE SIGN LANGUAGE TO ENCOURAGE BETTER UNDERSTANDING, EVEN IF CHILD DOES NOT USE SIGN LANGUAGE TO COMMUNICATE**

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(Adapted from "Parent Articles" Communication Skill Builders Inc., 1988)