



Preschool hotline

Winter 2009

Communication temptation

Winter season offers no shortage of temptation. Tasty treats, winter weather and prospects of magical chimney visitors are among the season's coming surprises...and with them, lots to talk about with your little ones!

Spice up play time and help your child's language grow!

How?

Tempt tempt tempt

You may be thinking:

"He'd rather just do it himself "
"She uses her words as a last resort!"



Sometimes, tempting a child to communicate means getting between him/her and the goal (food, toy, help, etc). *Help your little one use language to get things.*

First...

Forget for a moment that you know exactly what your child wants most of the time and...

Encourage a request

Set up situations that require your child to **ask you** for help. Depending on your child, this request will look different (signs, short 2-word sentences, elaborate requests, etc)

Request ideas

- Your child is hungry - place the food just out of reach.
- Tighten a container or tie a bag containing toys or goodies that your child wants it opened, untwisted or untied.

Use these opportunities to model requests, or refine your child's version

child: juice
you: more juice?

Encourage comments

Unexpected or exciting events motivate lots of great communication! Encourage comments about new activities, and expand on what your child says.

child: snow!
you: it's snowing!

Comment ideas

- Do something silly or "wrong". Read a familiar story and make an obvious mistake about a character or what they are doing.
- Try a new activity together - the excitement and novelty will increase chatter from your child!

Encourage singing!

Remember all of those catchy holiday tunes that stick in your head for months? These simple songs are full of new words and concepts. Need winter song ideas? **Turn page.**



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Winter songs

New songs, same tune

Snowflake song

(sung to teddy bear, teddy bear)

Snowflake, snowflake falling down
(flutter hands down)

Twirling, twirling to the ground
(twirl to the ground)

Softly, lightly on my nose
(touching nose)

Snowflake, snowflake icy cold!
(fold arms and shiver)

Build a snowman

(sung to Frere Jacques/are you sleeping)

Build a snowman, build a snowman

Big and round, big and round

Sun is shining on him

Sun is shining on him

He's all gone

He's all gone

Winter books

"Bear snores on"

Karma Wilson & Jane Chapman

Snow is falling and the animals are ready to party! Will brown bear sleep through the fun? Try predicting the ending with your child as you read through the simple rhymes and beautiful winter scenes.

"Snow bear" by Piers Harper

The long winter ends and this little snow bear leaves the den to explore his world! Young children will enjoy feeling the "soft to touch" furry animals on each page.



Activity

Cookie decoration

Modeling and encouraging request



Try... a clever assembly.

Fill jars with decorating materials, but tighten them or place them just out of reach. **Require a request for help.**

Try... controlling the goods.

Be the keeper of any decorating materials. Ask you child questions to elicit a more specific request:

- *How many candy buttons does the gingerbread man need?*
- *Do you want the round ones or the long ones? The red ones or the blue ones?*

Modeling and encouraging comments

Set the example for making comments while decorating then wait and listen for their own thoughts. Continue the back and forth 'conversation' of comments, helping them understand that their communication participation is valued.

How?

- Use all of your senses to describe the experience.
 - taste and smell: sweet? salty? spicy?
 - feel: sticky? gooey? warm from the oven?
 - sight: shape of the dough, colour of frosting.
Watch the cookies rise in the oven, using this opportunity to talk about cause and effect (e.g., the dough warms and rises, cools and hardens)
- Model **action words** like: roll, pound, cut, rise, cool, bake, taste, share
- Talk about concepts
 - Putting cookies **on**/taking **off** cookie sheets
 - Putting sheets **in** the oven/ taking them **out**
 - **How many** candies for gingerbread man buttons?
- Afterward, help your child tell you about all of the steps in the cookie-making process.
First we're going to roll the dough, cut shapes, decorate then bake. Try drawing pictures to help illustrate the story

