Communication Temptation

What are Communication Temptations?

Communication temptations are used when the environment is structured so your child has to use spontaneous communication with another person in their environment (Prizant & Wetherby, 1985).

When could your child use Communication Temptations?

Communication temptations can be used in any environment in which your child shows a need to communicate. Try not to anticipate your child's needs, instead hold off and allow the child to attempt to communicate his/her needs.

Why set up Communication Temptations?

Many individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have difficulty using language or initiating spontaneous communication. Your child may be capable of speaking in full sentences but may not know how to use their language in appropriate situations because they do not see the need to communicate. Therefore, it is beneficial to provide as many opportunities as possible for your child to practice these communication skills.

How could you set up Communication Temptations?

- Set up a game, leaving out an important part (e.g., dice), and say "let's play"
- Set up a painting activity and forget to give your child a paintbrush
- Sing your child's favourite song and leave out a word
- Give your child a CD but not the CD player
- When reading a book don't turn the page until your child says "turn page"
- Place toys and preferred objects out of reach of your child
- Activate a wind-up toy, let it deactivate, and hand it to your child
- Open a jar of bubbles but don't blow any bubbles
- Initiate a game of tickles until your child expresses pleasure then stop the game and wait for him/her to initiate tickles
- While on a swing, give your child a push and then hold the swing until he/she says "push" or "go"

Adapted from Hodgdon (1999); Leaf (1999)

Questions to consider when setting up Communication Temptations:

- What motivates your child?
- How will your child communicate? (using verbal language, sign language, using pictures, PECS etc.)
- What level of communication is my child at? Will I accept approximations or full words?

Before implementing any strategy, remember to:

1) Assess – What is your child currently able to do?
2) Goal – What is a specific goal for your child to work towards?
3) Strategies – How will you teach to reach the goal?
4) Monitor – How will you know if the teaching strategies are working?

References:

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CL0001032020V1