



Recognize the Best Times to Interact with a Discoverer

A child who is very young or who is at an early stage of communication goes through different levels of sleep and wakefulness during his day. Being able to recognize the times when your child is most ready to interact with you helps you take advantage of these times to connect and communicate with your child.

Asleep: Your child may be very still or he may move his arms and legs and change position. His eyes may flutter beneath closed lids and he may smile or cry briefly, but usually goes back to sleep.

Drowsy: Your child is just starting to wake up. Her eyes may be half-closed and she may look very tired. If left alone she may go back to sleep, but if you give her something to look at, listen to or suck on, she may wake up.

Awake and alert: Your child's eyes are open and he is attentive to what is going on around him. This is an ideal time for interaction. Providing something for him to respond to may help him maintain this state.

Irritable: In this state your child is awake and her eyes are open. Body and facial movement increase and she may be fussy. By cuddling and consoling, it may be possible to calm your child.

Crying: Movement increases and skin colour may change. Eyes may be open or tightly closed. This is your child's way of telling you he has reached his limit and needs something from you. He may be hungry, tired, wet, or just need your help to calm him down.





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In addition, your child will let you know in her own special way how she feels and when she is most open to communication. You will get to know your child's unique set of cues and signals. The following summarizes some of the ways your child may let you know if she is ready to interact.

When your child is ready to interact she may:

- stop moving
- look at your face
- reach out for you
- turn eyes or head toward you
- smile
- make sounds
- move arms and legs

When your child needs a break he may:

- hold his hands up
- turn or pull his head away
- avert his gaze
- cry, fuss or make a grunting sound
- yawn or fall asleep
- squirm or kick, arch his back or spread his fingers
- frown or wrinkle his forehead
- breathe too fast

