

N O V E M B E R 2 0 1 8

the  
**Timely Topics**

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PARENTS ONLY!

**Teaching & Learning at Home and  
in Everyday Settings**

As you may be aware, once you start having children, your lives become very busy. Time doesn't slow down, the errands don't stop, and your other children's practices or playdates don't disappear. Therefore, one of the most important things to understand when helping your child grow and develop more skills is that you can do them anywhere! Young children typically learn and master new skills in the home first. You can provide skills training at home throughout your daily routine. You can also practice skills at the grocery store, in the park, at the library, at church, in a restaurant, or during a sports event.

Another reason why using your child's natural environment when teaching your children skills is beneficial is because you can find so many motivating activities that will help them practice the skills in the moment. The reinforcement is embedded into the task. We always want to be on the lookout for "teachable moments" when our child is showing interest in someone or something as this will make it more likely for them to practice the desired skill. Another benefit to providing interventions in your child's everyday environment is that this helps your child in generalizing the skills. Generalizing is the ability to demonstrate the skill in multiple environments with multiple people. Children should be able to demonstrate skills in at least three environments and three people before we truly define it as a mastered skill. If we only practice waiting at home when there is no one else around, it will be much more unlikely that your child will show waiting behaviors at the grocery store or at grandma's house.

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## Skills to Practice in Everyday Settings

### Skills To Practice At Home:

#### Mealtime

- Practice sitting at the table without distractions (Ipad, phones, etc.) to improve attention.
- Increase face-to-face interactions and joint attention and practice imitating eating, facial expressions.
- Practice following directions while sitting at the table, “Hand me your cup.”
- Practice waiting for food.
- Teach requesting for items.
- Practice fine motor skills with silverware.
- Practice different steps in hand-washing routines.
- Practice eating new foods.
- Sort utensils.
- Drink out of the open-ended cup.
- Fold napkins corner to corner.

#### Playtime (Dependent on Development)

- Practice cause-and-effect play.
- Practice constructive play.
- Practice pretend playing with objects:
  - Use a toy phone as a car.
  - Use toy blocks as pretend food.
- Practice following directions.
- Practice transitions from one favorite activity to another favorite activity.
- Practice increasing playtime with one item or in one activity.
- Teach your child to request for more toys or puzzle pieces by withholding some of the items out of reach until they ask for them.
- Have your child sort toys by color or size.

#### Bath

- Have them practice tossing their clothes into the dirty laundry bin like a ball.
- Teach “clean-up” and have them throw their diaper in garbage.
- Increase sensory tolerance by playing with different toys and items in the bath.
- Practice dipping head back into the water to wash shampoo or soap off.
- Do pretend play by bathing the doll in the water.
- Practice getting water on their face.
- Have them follow directions using words under/over the water, in/out of the bucket.
- Practice fine motor skills by wringing the water out of the wash cloth or using squirt toys.
- Practice letters or shapes by writing on bathtub sides with finger paint, shaving cream or bath crayons.

#### Bedtime

- Practice transitions by using pictures to show them it is bedtime in 2 more minutes.
- Have your child work on fine motor by turning the pages in a story book.
- Ask your child to describe what is happening in the pictures of the book.
- Practice following 2-3 step directions.
- Have your child repeat back something that happened in the story.
- Practice pointing to pictures in the book. Practice fine motor skills by brushing teeth.
- Practice calming strategies when getting ready to go to sleep in the bed.
- Have them predict what will happen next in the story or the next day.
- Matching different items of clothing

## Skills to Practice in the Community:

### **At the Grocery Store**

- Requesting for specific items by pointing or using words.
- Have your child find specific items on the shelves like a scavenger hunt.
- Practice pointing by finding items of specific colors.
- Say hi to three people.
- Wave bye to the cashier.
- Wait in a line, practice “waiting”.
- Have them make choices by pointing or using words.
- Practice successful transitions from the car to the grocery store and back into the car.
- Practice holding hands and walking together.

### **In the Car**

- Count the number of cars that pass by.
- Find letters outside on signs.
- Search for certain color of cars.
- Find different shapes outside.
- Practice waiting to get adults attention.
- Practice singing favorite songs together.

### **Grandma’s House**

- Practice separations and leaving your child with another adult.
- Create situations where your child must ask for help.
- Practice taking turns for activities by sharing materials or playing simple games while at the table with cousins.
- Practice having conversations and waiting to talk while grandma and mom are talking.

## Daily Challenge

**\*\*Try one of these new everyday intervention strategies today with your child! Try a different one each day of the week. Try to a different one in each of the different domains of your routine.**

# How to Increase Non-Verbal and Verbal Communication

## *Do less so that your child does more*

- When providing your child with things at mealtime, don't do everything for your child so that they need to communicate with you for help. Maybe leave a lid on top of their favorite yogurt and just pause to see how your child will communicate the need for help.
- Always prompt one step higher than what they are currently doing. Maybe prompt for eye contact or prompt for them to use the word "help" if they normally just whine. Prompt for two words if they are already using one word.

## *Wait a little*

- Often we want to help our children right away to avoid problem behaviors or to just make life easier for our child. However, if we give the child some time to process that they need something from us, they will be more motivated to use communication than if we always provide it right away.
- Temporarily block your child from a desired activity or item so that they have to use communication.
- Look at their face/eyes so that you can reinforce eye contact as soon as they look at you. This will increase their joint attention skills. Be close to them so that you are prepared to hear or see their attempt at communication.

## *Create lots of practice opportunities*

- When giving your child food or playing with your child, create lots of opportunities to practice the same skill. Provide only a little bit of a snack at first so that they have to ask you multiple times for more. For instance, instead of giving them the whole package of fruit snacks, have them come and request one at a time from you one time per day.
- Don't give them access to all of the toys right away but slowly give them access as they keep requesting. Limit access to preferred objects.

## *Position yourself*

- Find ways to position yourself face-to-face with your child to increase eye contact and joint attention.
- Use Face-to-face time to increase the opportunities that your child has to watch you talk, eat, make facial expressions, sing.

## *Use their favorite toys and activities*

- Place their favorite toys and objects in places that they can not reach or access while they are asleep. When they wake up go on a scavenger hunt or have them go find the items and have them request help from you by having them say "help", point, use words, etc.

# Parent Training!

\*Are You Concerned About Autism?

\*Teaching Children to Learn at Home and in  
Everyday Settings

ADULTS ONLY / NO CHILDREN PLEASE!

## **Training: Are You Concerned About Autism?**

Date: Tuesday, November 13, 2018

Time: 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

## **Training: Teaching Children to Learn at Home & in Everyday Settings**

Date: Wednesday, November 14, 2018

Time: 9:45 – 10:45 OR 12:45 – 1:45

Location: Kauri Sue Hamilton School - Child Development Center

2827 West 13400 South Riverton, Utah

RSVP: Please register for the class by email or phone

Email: [Rachelle.blair@jordandistrict.org](mailto:Rachelle.blair@jordandistrict.org)

Phone: (801) 567-8510

### **Resources provided by:**

An Early Start for Your Child with Autism by Sally Rogers, Geraldine Dawson, & Laurie Vismara

Project SPIES by Utah State University, Center for Persons with Disabilities

Positive Beginnings: Supporting Young Children with Challenging Behavior

Morning Star: ABA Therapy

Problem Solving Therapy: A Treatment Manual