

Reasons we use our words



Self-Advocate

Get or change something that makes things better for us.



Share and Learn

Learn more or share information about our lives and our world.



Make Connections

Connect with other people and build relationships.

Who understands their words??

*Easy to Understand

Anyone can understand what the word means, especially if you're paying attention

*Pay Attention to Understand

Most people can understand what the words mean if you're paying attention

*Hard to Understand

Only very familiar people can understand what the word means, even if you're paying close attention

Frequently Asked Questions



Will using picture words keep my child from learning to use mouth words?

Great news! Using picture words will not keep kids from using mouth words. In fact, it can help them use more mouth words!



Will using different kinds of words confuse my child?

Nope! Our kids hear and see different kinds of words every day. This approach helps kids make connections between the words they use and the words more people can understand.



Where do I start?

Think of three things your kid is already telling you. Find a picture word that goes with their body words. Then every time they use their body words, Listen Out Loud!

Every Word Counts

*How we talk
and
How we listen*



**EVERYONE HAS
SOMETHING TO SAY**



Body Words

All the ways we communicate using our bodies. This may include: isolated movements like gestures, sign language, or pointing, communication conveyed through facial expressions and eye movements, and whole body movements such as moving closer to or further away from items and activities.

Pointing to a toy

Running to the door

Smiling when a friend comes over

Listen Out Loud

How to listen to the words kids are already saying



1. Say what you see

Describe what your child is doing.

"I see you pushing away the bowl."



2. Make a Smart Guess

From what you know of your child or the situation, say what you think they mean.

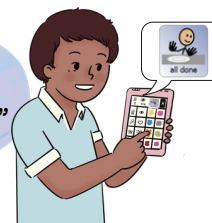
"I think you're saying you're all done."



3. Use a Picture Word

Repeat what they mean, using a different kind of word.

"You told me 'I'm ALL DONE'"



Picture Words

All the ways we communicate with visual representations of language, including line drawn abstract symbols, concrete pictures, and photographs. It can also include objects or other kinds of pictorial supports, whether in an organized system or not.

Pointing to a picture on a menu

Handing a grown up a toy that's broken

Scrolling through youtube or photos to find a specific picture



Alphabet Words

All the ways we communicate with the alphabet. Written words, whether typed, selected, manipulated, organized, or hand-drawn. It includes standard spelling, non-standard spelling, and any other creative way of combining letters to convey a message.

Initials, acronyms, abbreviations

Creative spelling ("ticcol" for tickle, "btadoz" for potatoes")

Text messages, emails, essays, notes



Mouth Words

All the ways we communicate with our voice. These include spoken words and word approximations, but also encompasses other communication forms such as tone and emphasis, memorized phrases such as gestalts, singing, and other paralinguistic forms of communication.

Singing or quoting shows and movies

Using different "tones of voice"

Using words and sentences that are easy to understand