

Offering choices



TIP! Make sure the two items are out of reach of your child. If they can get it themselves then they don't need to request or communicate with you!

How do I do it?

1. Clearly show the options your child is choosing between and label them one at a time e.g. do you want **apple** (and show apple) or **banana** (and show banana). Remember to use simple language!
2. PAUSE, give your child time to make their choice.
3. Notice how your child makes their choice. Remember every child will communicate differently; some children might look at one option for longer and other children might reach towards the item they prefer. You must be the detective to interpret your child's subtle clues!

Your child might change their mind and want to choose the other item – this is perfectly fine, we all change our minds when making a decision!

4. Once your child has made their choice, remember to reinforce the chosen item e.g. 'apple, want apple'.
5. Praise your child once they have made their choice, e.g. "good choosing!"

TOP TIP: If your child tries to take both items, try offering your child something you know they find really motivating, like bubbles/ balloons, and something boring, like a sock. When your child indicates to you that they want the motivating option, praise them and reinforce the item they have chosen e.g. bubbles, want bubbles – good choosing!

Why should I do it?

Offering choices is a great way to create communication opportunities into everyday routines e.g. snack time (do you want apple or banana?), play time (do you want car or train?), bath time (do you want duck or pouring cup?).

IDEAS!

Toy animals

At the start of play, you could keep all of the animals out of reach of your child, then offer them a choice of who they want to put into the barn/jungle first e.g. "the cow or the tiger".



Doctor's Kit

When it is your turn to be the doctor, you can ask your child where teddy/dolly is hurt e.g. "sore arm or leg?" You can also ask your child how they are feeling e.g. "happy or sad?" or "hot or cold?". When your child has made a choice, repeat it back to them clearly in play.



Toy Food

You can take turns making food for each other. When making food for your child, you can offer them a choice e.g. "orange or apple?".

