



Communicating with your child

Resources:



[Language & Communication Chart](#)



[More about ASL](#)



[More about Cued Speech](#)



[More about LSL](#)

What to know about communicating with your baby:

- Early in life, a baby's brain develops very quickly. This time is often called a "window of opportunity" for language learning.
- Children who are deaf/hard of hearing (d/hh) who get language support services before six months of age can often learn language at the same pace as hearing children.
- Families need to decide for themselves what is the right communication option for their child and family as a whole.
- Do not feel pressured to make quick decisions regarding how you will communicate with your child and know that your decision now does not have to be your family's choice forever.
- Sometimes families will find a single form of communication works best, and other families may use more than one form.
- American Sign Language (ASL) is a visual language. It is a unique, signed language that is different from English. It is expressed using movements of the hands, body and face.
- Cued Speech helps children hear and "see" speech. Teachers and parents make special hand shapes, or "cues," near their faces while they are speaking. This helps children tell the difference between words that can sound or look alike.
- Listening & Spoken Language (LSL) teaches children to rely on their hearing as they learn to speak. Methods may be called "auditory oral" or "auditory verbal."
- Total Communication combines a sign-language system with spoken language. Children are encouraged to use their eyes, ears, voices, and hands to communicate.
- Here are some tips when communicating with your baby:
 - Hold your baby close so they can focus on your face
 - Place your baby so that you are often within sight
 - Minimize background noises
 - Have good lighting (not too dark or bright)
 - Make eye contact often
 - Imitate your baby's sounds and movements and wait for them to repeat them
 - Interact and communicate with your baby throughout the day