

Six Simple Signs

Primary Objectives

9a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary

Why It's Important

When your child understands that he can communicate using verbal cues and visual signs, he gains confidence in his communication skills. Simple sign language allows your child to use his motor skills to convey his needs when he is not able to do so using oral language.

Materials

None

What You Do

1. Without giving formal instruction to your child, begin incorporating the following signs into your communication with him:
 - Milk**—with your right hand, palm facing left, rapidly open and close palm and fingers twice (simulate milking a cow)
 - Thank you**—place open palm against mouth (fingertips against lips) and move hand outward
 - Play**—make a fist and then extend only your thumbs and pinkie finger on both hands, twist wrists repeatedly
 - Bathroom**—make a fist with the thumb between the first and second fingers and wave hand side to side
 - Ball**—with two open palms facing each other, curl fingers to simulate a ball shape, then move your hands back and forth (as if you were placing your hands on a ball and moving them over the surface of the ball)
 - Car**—put fists in front of the body and simulate turning a steering wheel
2. Use these signs in addition to using the spoken words. Add more signs if your child enjoys using them. As his oral language abilities develop, give him the option of discontinuing the signs when he speaks.