



Making Choices

Learning to make choices is a functional way for your child to start letting you know their likes and dislikes and what they would prefer. It is hard to stop anticipating what your child wants or needs but by waiting a few seconds and allowing your child to come to you shows them the value of communicating with you. Just watching for that look or that slight change in the noise your child makes is enough. You can then step in and ask them to make a choice. This gives them some control over you and their environment.

The principle of making choices is simple, when your child asks for something they get it. During every day there are lots of times when you can offer your child a choice, making this a really easy change to make.

When you would like your child to make a choice, first get their attention then hold up the 2 objects they can choose from (or 2 objects that represent the activities) close to your face and say: **"Do you want X or Y?"**

This way you're giving your child a model to copy and giving them the words you want them to use. Some children find using the words too hard to start with and might show you their choice by either pointing to or looking at the object. This is still them communicating with you and you can still give them what they have asked for.

Here are some ideas of choices you can offer to get you started

Food to eat

Things to drink

Toys to play with

Places to go

Playing inside or outside

Different colour pens

Clothes to wear

Whose lap to sit on

Books to read

Present to open first

Pieces to put in a puzzle

(at birthdays and Christmas)